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Harbour Board

Harbour Forum (HF) Report

I took over Chair of the Harbour Forum (HF) with the first meeting 17/10/2017. It was as a result of having significant interest in all harbour matters and as a resident in Ilfracombe. At the time there was concern for continuation of the HF due to no one wanting to take up the role.

The meetings to 29/07/20 have overall been very constructive as have brought harbour stakeholders together, all with the common interest to see the harbour managed effectively, sharing matters of concern, providing positive news and offering vision. All with the aim to provoke group discussion to improve the harbour infrastructure, general working operations, visitor offer, opportunities and broadening appeal and drawing potential investment.

These meetings have been useful in that the Harbour Master (HM) has provided updates in the form of a report. This avoids potential gossip & hearsay! The meetings have also provided best opportunity for stakeholders to discuss any items in this report. The meetings have been minuted and agreed via HF Chair and HM prior to being submitted for inclusion to Harbour Board Meetings that follow. The Harbour Forum Members have always taken some reassurance that these minutes have been raised in the HB meetings with any resultant action being fed back via the Harbour Master with further transfer of this information deemed urgent via email to the HF Chair or where less urgent at next HF meeting.

In past meetings representation has unfortunately been in the form of a small number of stakeholders with either more representatives from those individual groups than the original constitution would allow or with new individuals representing those stakeholder groups. Some stakeholder groups would rarely provide representation so any matters agreed and put forward as minutes to the HB would not necessarily have had those stakeholders input unless that input had come via another group present.

From a personal perspective ongoing work load combined with covid combined with a sense that the HF had lost it's significance put pay to future meetings. The general thought is there has evolved despite the opportunities of inclusion a lack of comprehensive representation of stakeholders with the constitution detail not being adhered to. With my focusing on other more personal matters it has sadly lost it's momentum.

I have maintained good communications with the harbour master and would welcome a revisit of the current constitution with the ambition to reboot profile and welcome a broader range of stakeholders who are specific harbour users. This would not necessarily need to go beyond the realms of the immediate harbour area i.e. not necessarily involve stakeholders beyond this area.

As the harbour has evolved with new personnel, infrastructure, operations, businesses, with new and a broader range of stakeholders investing time and energy in harbour activities it would be the most appropriate time to propose a change.

Again from a personal perspective I would still welcome representation on behalf of the Ilfracombe Aquarium as the harbour has progressed significantly in certain ways but there remains ongoing matters that can be improved on. The harbour with it's justified appeal remains a huge draw to businesses, leisure activities and visitors and it remains in every stakeholder's interest that we unite in our efforts to address impactful matters

and do our bit as individual stakeholders to improve things as well as provide collective support for positive action.

Your sincerely,

Lawrence Raybone