



North Devon Council

Report Date: Tuesday, 6 February 2024

Topic: Harbour Charges Review 2024/25

Report by: Ilfracombe Harbour Master

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Harbour Board have delegated authority to recommend changes to Harbour mooring and relevant miscellaneous charges to Full Council and it is considered that there are sufficient grounds to raise Harbour charges for the 2024-2025 season.
- 1.2. Rising maintenance costs and continuing pressure on the public purse require due consideration.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that all mooring dues are increased by 5.0% and relevant miscellaneous charges are increased by 10%

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. The continuing rises in the cost to repair, upgrade and to maintain the Harbour facilities for stakeholders and visitors have been mainly borne by NDC resources. It is felt that users of the Harbour and its facilities should continue to help bear part of these incurred costs

4. REPORT

- 4.1. Harbour charges are reviewed annually by the Harbour Board. The CPI for September 2023 was 6.3% and this is reflected in the recommendation of charges for the coming financial year.
- 4.2. The relevant miscellaneous charges to be increased are predominantly the visiting vessels dues and launch fees. The additional increase is to help bring the Harbour more in line with the majority of the other South West harbours, and also to cover the additional repair costs caused mainly by the visiting vessels unfamiliar with the unique characteristics of Ilfracombe Harbour.
- 4.3. It is recommended that some charges are rounded to enable easier on site collection.
- 4.4. Options Considered :
 - 4.4.1. Hold Charges at 2023-24 rates for all charges.
- 4.5. Reasons for rejecting options :
 - 4.5.1. Rejecting 4.3.1, holding charges at 2023-24 rates has been rejected as it fails to take into account the increasing financial burden of Harbour costs and improving services.

4.6. Consultation:

4.6.1. Consultation was held with the Harbour Users from 10th to the 20th November 2023.

4.6.2. Responses received were in overall acceptance of the proposals in this report, the responses received are included for consideration.

4.6.3.

Responses from Private boat owners,

'Sounds fine to me',

'as facilities and other investments are gradually improving the harbour's offer, I don't have a problem with the Board's recommendations'

'Can't argue with that',

'that sounds very fair, all most 2% under inflation. I would of expected it to be higher',

Reponses from the Waverley and Oldenburg Operators,

' Thanks for letting me know. With Waverley any charitable rate is appreciated since we are not-for-profit and rely on public donations to keep sailing. ,

' 5% for Oldenburg seems reasonable'

Response from S&P Trawlers Ltd,

'Obviously I can understand the need to increase the overall charges as nothing ever seems to come down only ever go up nowadays, but if I can ask you to voice my concerns on behalf of S&P Trawlers Ltd at your next meeting. Before considering a 5% rise I thought it only right to let you know that we have just faced the most challenging times in nearly 40 years of fishing, with the highest interest rate since the late 80's, fuel at a record high, the burden of more regulations from MCA, and also heavy restrictions already put upon us from the MMO, have made it almost impossible for our companies to make any money whatsoever.

A good result for us at the minute is just to stay in credit let alone make any profit and I really am telling you the truth, the challenges have been unbelievable. I can't say I have ever gone through anything like this before, it is almost like the perfect financial storm.

I know these are not your problems and you also have got ever increasing costs. I anticipate that we have got a difficult and challenging 2024 ahead



of us and my intentions as always is to do my best to make sure S&P Trawlers can continue trading but would appreciate that any decrease on the 5% proposal can only help.'

4.7. Conclusion :

4.7.1. The income generated by the Harbour needs to increase to keep pace with inflation and increasing maintenance and service provision costs.

4.7.2. This is not considered to be a key decision

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The recommendation will increase revenue in line with the rate of inflation and will help Ilfracombe Harbour to keep in touch with its competitors.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Having undertaken the Environmental Assessment Checklist. There are no environmental implications arising from these policy proposals

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda: Positive

8.1.2. Improving customer focus and/or : Positive

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development Positive

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article of Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph: 1

9.2. Delegated power

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

11.1 2023-24 Harbour Charges



12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers

Capt. Georgina Carlo-Paat MBE, Ilfracombe Harbour Master