



North Sunderland Harbour Commissioners

Friday 27th September 2024 – 2pm

General Meeting - Minutes

Present:		Apologies Received:
James Boulton (JB) Chair		Michael Evans (MH)
Toby Douglas (TD)		Kerren Rodgers (KR)
Colin Hardy (CH)		Matthew Stephenson (MS)
William Lawrence (WL)		
Guy Renner Thompson (GR-T)		
Catherine Seymour (CS)		
Colin Frame – Greaves, West & Ayre (left meeting at 2.15pm)		
Paul Brown (PB) Harbour Master (HM)		
Fiona Kibby (FK) Deputy Harbour Master (DHM)		
Kay Barkess (KCB) Clerk		
Notes: Items in bold denote an action, a result or a decision. NFA denotes No Further Action.		
1.	Approval of Minutes	Action
	The minutes from the meeting on 19 July 2024 were unanimously approved.	Clerk
2.	Colin Frame from Greaves, West & Ayre (GWA)	Action
2.1	Colin introduced himself and advised that GWA are NSHC's governance and independent audit of NSHC finances. He has reviewed the 2024 year end accounts	

	and had the following comments;	
2.2	2024 accounts are dominated by the legal case expenses. This led to a deficit in 2024 vs healthy profit the previous year.	
2.3	There was a decrease in marine diesel oil sales vs last year. It is advised the NSHC review the buy/ sell margins to ensure the costs of administration and maintenance of the diesel storage systems are accounted for. Noted that the harbour cannot add unreasonable profit margins. This will be reviewed in the fees and charges review tabled for the November meeting.	FK
2.4	Rental charges – noted that freezer space to be added to rental fees for users. Other harbour site rent increases also discussed and will be reviewed.	
2.5	Bank charges including merchant charges were discussed. There may be some savings from looking at options for PDQ charges.	KB
2.6	Accounts approved by Commissioners and to be signed by Chair.	JB
3.0	Action List/ Matters Arising	Action
3.1	3 (12b) Parking and line marking - Hatching re “No entry” on piers and staff parking to be proposed and quoted.	Complete
3.2	3(13) Debtors letters to be issued to those with debt over 60 days overdue.	PB – see below
3.3	Port Master Plan – discussed at the HUG meeting and to be presented at November commissioners meeting	FK
3.4	Electricity charging – FK gave an update on the meter readings and installation of new pedestals starting October 14 th .	FK
3.5	Code of Conduct draft was reviewed and accepted by the by Harbour Users Group.	Complete
3.6	Garages and Kilns Licences issued.	Complete
3.7	Pontoons – noted there should be spend on this project by year end (March) for funding, survey of walls included in Aspect quote.	FK/ TD
3.8	Duty Holder training has been carried on 27/09/24 for 2 Commissioners. Noted that refresher training will be needed by May 2025. KB to add to diary.	Complete
4	Recruitment	Action
4.1	Paul Brown stood down as Harbour Master and will move to an Advisory role. Fiona Kibby is promoted to Harbour Master and will continue to work two days a week at North Sunderland Harbour on loan from Dunbar Harbour Trust. To be reviewed in March 2025. PB to write to Dunbar.	PB
4.2	Terry Taylor was discussed as a new Harbour Master Assistant recruit. Decision made to proceed with his appointment and not continue to advertise at this time.	FK

5	Scrutiny and Compliance –	Action
5.1	NIFCA have nominated Catherine Seymour as next NIFCA NSH Commissioner and Catherine was in attendance having completed her Duty Holder training with PB.	NFA
5.2	Risk Assessments – FK has completed a review of NSH RA's to ensure that the documented controls are effective and reflect the capabilities of NSH. Training on First Aid and Fire safety is arranged for harbour team (22 nd Oct) to ensure we comply with controls stated in the RA.	Complete
6	Berthing Agreements	Action
6.1	1 berth holder still has to sign agreements. Update at November meeting.	FK
7	Port Master Plan	Action
7.1	The first draft has been circulated to Commissioners and also to the HUG for consideration and input. Final version to be presented by FK at the November meeting.	FK
8	Fishermen's Elections	
8.1	The deadline for nominations for the fishermen's commissioner is 7 th October. If there are more than 3 nominations an election will be needed. Clerk to update after deadline has passed.	KB
9	Decision Making and Representation	
9.1	See paper circulated to all commissioners.	
9.2	This item was added to the agenda to clarify that if Commissioners had any questions on decisions, they could contact Chairman and copy all other Commissioners. Noted that Ron Bailey can offer advice. When the HRO is in place it will give an opportunity to expand and specify on the skills and experience of Commissioners.	
10	Harbour Revision Order	Action
10.1	PB advised that he spoke with Lara Moore, Ashfords LLP, last week and we are still 'in the queue'. It was agreed that G R-T write to our new MP, David Smith, to ask if he can expedite our application.	GRT
11	CCTV	
11.1	Quote from Adhoc Properties was reviewed. It was agreed that in principle the CCTV needed some improvements and repairs.	
11.2	FK to look at using some equipment held already and approve works up to £10K for the first stage including investigation of the server.	FK
11.3	Noted no quote from JD Vision received in time for this meeting	
12	Hydrographic Survey	
12.1	Discussion on the quote from Aspect Surveys on a hydrographic survey that meets NSHC 'conservancy' duty under the PMSC.	

	PB provided some detailed information as to the requirements and obligations of the Commissioners. It was agreed that FK would review quote and confirm if slipway, beach, fluke hole included but otherwise approval was given to proceed.	FK
13	Finance	Action
13.1	Discussion on the allocation of garages and noted that one vessel is no longer operating from NSH and owners garage could, in theory, be recovered for re allocation. FK to make inquiries at Eyemouth to see what the situation is there with storage etc. FK also to present waiting list for garages to commissioners.	FK
13.2	Vat on fuel- commissioners wanted to check the rates of VAT applicable to fuel for larger vessels.	FK
13.3	Harbour rates and charges – Benchmarking against other East coast cost harbours and ensure that NSHC is charging appropriate market rates. This could be presented alongside the November review of charges.	FK
13.4	Harbour Master Cottage – new tenancy agreement has been drafted and new rent (at market rate) in discussion with the tenant. There was a discussion on the level of increase and whether it was appropriate for the current tenant. 2 Commissioners declared a conflict of interest and the matter would need to be discussed at next meeting or through email with remaining Commissioners.	JB
13.5	Aged Debtors Noted sums paid during September towards aged debt (berthing and passenger dues) and aged debt not increasing as invoices are being paid regularly.	FK
14	HM's To Do List	Action
14.1	Update on the new freezers and technical issues – FK confirmed that KDM and Carrier had been giving good support. There is a possible issue with a stable power supply and KDM have been speaking to Northern Power Grid.	FK
14.2	New harbour chartlet to replace 1931 hand drawn edition. ABP Mer are in the process of producing a new chartlet for use with the NSH HRO. No further update. FK/ PB to chase.	FK/ PB
15	Harbour Users Group	Action
15.1	The Harbour Users Group (HUG) was attended by JB and FK on 19 th Sept. There was good feedback and their next meeting will be in December. Note: 1 Commissioner should attend each meeting.	
16	NSH Top Three Risks	Action
16.1	The top three risks in the Harbour were discussed and remain unchanged as below. a – Tripping Boat – boarding and landing b – Diving incident – brought ashore c – Cargo lifting on dockside	

	To date, no risks have occurred in the Harbour.	
17	Any Other Business	Action
17.1	Timing of meetings was raised – agreed that there would be no meetings held on a Friday afternoon or evening but meetings could be held in evening during summertime if more convenient for working hours.	
17.2	The Board gave thanks to Toby Douglas for his input and lead in relation to the freezer project. .	
17.3	Catherine Seymour Expressed her thanks to be invited onto the Board.	
18	Dates of Next Meetings	Actions
	<p>2024: 22nd November</p> <p>2025 Diary invites to be issued.</p> <p>24th January 21st March 23rd May 25th July 26th September 21st November</p> <p>All meetings at 1400 Friday, in the Wardroom, The Olde Ship.</p>	
	Meeting Ended at 1615.	