

Weymouth Harbour Board
Annual Report 2015/16



Weymouth Harbour Management Board Annual Report 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

Chairman's Review

I join many of my predecessors in reporting that it has been a busy and challenging year for Weymouth Harbour in 2015/16 and one of change.

The continued implementation of the 5-year Business Plan for the Harbour keeps us focused on the priorities and re-investment. The refresh of the harbour governance has been implemented allowing the Board to be more efficient in delivering the service on behalf of the Full Council. This coupled with the ongoing update of the Safety Management System helps us to be confident in having a safe and effective operation. The added challenge has been the financial impact due to the end of Condor ferry operations and work is ongoing to tackle this.

Negotiations are ongoing with High Speed Ferries and it is hoped that we will be successful in delivering a ferry service to Cherbourg in 2017. This would be a great attraction for the town and also help the harbour financially. Meanwhile alternative uses for the peninsula are being considered. The longer term will be subject to the work of the Town Centre Masterplan and its associated projects. It will be essential to blend any future developments with the working harbour which is so important to Weymouth.

Many visitors continue to enjoy the harbour and the exciting programme of events and activities.

I appreciate the support the Harbour and other Council staff have given during the year and recognise the need for this effort to be continued to meet the challenges of the future.

Councillor Colin Huckle
Chair Weymouth Harbour Management Board

Board Members

Until June 2015

Councillor Kate Wheller – Chair
Councillor Jane Hall – Vice-Chair
Councillor Mike Goodman
Councillor John Birtwistle
Councillor Paul Kimber
Dr Neil Humphries – Independent Member

Until July 2015

Commander Anthony Holt RN MBE – Independent Member

From June 2015

Councillor Colin Huckle – Chair
Councillor Jason Osborne – Vice-Chair and Leisure, Tourism and Harbour
Briefholder
Councillor John Birtwistle
Councillor Paul Kimber
Dr Neil Humphries – Independent Member

From November 2015

Karen Brain - Independent Member
Jim Clark - Independent Member
Steve Pitman – Independent Member

Business Plan and 2013 Port Marine Safety Code Audit

The Weymouth Harbour Business Plan 2014 – 2019 was approved by the Management Committee on 5th November 2013. The plan contains 26 recommendations related to the harbour covering a wide range of aspects from governance to operations. This comprehensive piece of work continues to form the basis for defining the main activities of the harbour over the 5 year period and should be a living document reviewed annually. To date 7 of the Business Plan recommendations have been completed. It also extensively covers the financial requirements to start to correct some of the lack of investment that has occurred in the harbour, its assets and infrastructure. It should also be noted that the plan was written assuming there to be a ferry operation and there is work in progress to consider the options dependent on the outcome of current negotiations as covered later.

A Port Marine Safety Code Audit conducted by Regs4Ships, an external consultant, in December 2013 also generated some recommendations.

The following approach has been followed to take forward the combined recommendations and to set the programme of work for the harbour:

- The Business Plan recommendations and the PMSC Audit points have been combined in to one summary table.

- These were then prioritised based on the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)'s categorisation and given a category of Governance (G), Operations (O) and Business (B).
- A programme of work has then been devised using the prioritisation, the known resources and the corporate calendar.
- The programme acts as the task list for the Harbour Management Board, the Harbour Office and all supporting organisations.
- SWAP monitor progress.
- Each recommendation or action will have its own approval path encompassing the range of approval levels including Harbour Master, Head of Service, Director, Harbour Management Board, Management Committee, Full Council.
- The work on the recommendations will be ongoing during the period of the Business Plan (2014 -19).
- The programme is reviewed as a standing item at each Board meeting to monitor progress.

Limited resources, particularly spare time capacity amongst key members of the Harbour Team, hinder progress requiring more realistic timescales to be applied to reflect these challenges.

2015 MCA Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Health Check

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) visited the port in November/December 2015 to conduct a PMSC Health Check. The MCA as the PMSC compliance authority typically only undertake a small number of these compliance visits on an annual basis so a visit to the Weymouth facility was notable. The MCA's health check had specific focus on governance arrangements and the processes that support the SMS including policies, procedures, records and risk assessments.

The MCA review has helped to benchmark performance and similarly provide reasonable assurance that the development of the Safety Management System (SMS) is progressing along an approved pathway to full PMSC compliance. Outcomes of the MCA visit confirmed improvements with governance structures, policy aspects of the SMS and management of the Pilotage service. The MCA also confirmed that the likely timeframe for full SMS implementation was considerable. This view had also been attributed within the 2014 -19 revised business plan recommendations implementation programme, reviewed by the Harbour Management Board at each of their meetings, which supports a 2 year timeframe for completion. The MCA Team will revisit 12 months after their last visit, in November 2016, to check on progress.

Governance

The changes to the governance of the harbour approved by Full Council on 26th February were implemented during the course of the Democratic Year starting in June 2015.

The number of independent members was increased from 2 to 4 with Full Council approving the new nominations in November 2015, adding new expertise to the Board and in line with national best practice. Commander Anthony Holt RN MBE retired after his 2 terms as an Independent Member in July 2015.

Stakeholder Involvement

The Harbour Management Board and harbour staff maintain a strong commitment to wide and open stakeholder involvement. Issues are also raised and considered by the Harbour Consultative Group which meets quarterly. The Group has been embracing the refresh of the Terms of Reference of the Group as a consequence of the governance review including by broadening the harbour users covered by certain representatives to try to be fully inclusive.

The Harbour Team also continues to work closely with Dean and Reddyhoff's Weymouth Marina, a key stakeholder in the harbour who are represented on the Consultative Group.

Port Marine Safety Code Compliance

There is ongoing work to review the Safety Management System (SMS) for Weymouth Harbour which is another high priority Business Plan Recommendation. The Harbour Master in conjunction with an external consultant from Maritime Resolve Ltd have reviewed and updated the Weymouth Harbour's Operation Plan. The September 2015 revision is considered to be vastly superior to that of previous issues being better attuned to the specific needs of harbour operations and the safety management of the harbour. It is an overarching document for the SMS. It combines both the requirements of the Code and also the Council policies and approach to safety management in the wider areas of the jurisdiction of the harbour. The follow-on work will include completing risk assessments, updating procedures and work instructions, reviewing records and evaluating the system. This is a project that will take a number of years to fully complete.

In January 2016 the Harbour Master together with one of the Berthing Officers attended IOSH Managing Safely training that has focus on management health and safety responsibility and the risk assessment process. Further training is being made available through Dorset Councils Partnership for other members of the harbour staff. Staff members from the harbour regularly attend the partnership's health and safety group that has focus on shore based activities and legislation.

Finance and Trading

The Report of Out-turn at 31st March 2016 is given at the Annex. The end of Condor ferry operations in March 2015 has had a significant impact on the financial profile.

A one-off funding contribution of £300,000 was made to the harbour from income set aside by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council. £170,408 was also taken from the uncommitted harbour reserves in order to breach the gap caused by the loss of income from the ferry service. Further savings measures were taken to help both in-year funding and future years. The balance of the budget in this way is not

sustainable for future years and so the budget will be reviewed in 2016/17 to reflect the future plans. The Harbour produced a surplus for the year of £264,420 against the original planned budget. This surplus, which will be transferred into the Harbour Reserve and used to assist 2016/17's budget, includes the savings.

The following statistics provide some indication of the level of activity in Weymouth Harbour during the year 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016:

Visiting Yacht Nights:

5249 visitor nights

- Up 1% compared to 2014/15.
- Down 3% compared to a 3 year average (2011, 2013 and 2014).
- 109 short stays (down 34 on 2014).
- 264 free of charge given on new loyalty card scheme (up 113 on 2014).
- 111 other free of charge given on existing 4 for 3 scheme (same as 2014).

Inner Harbour Moorings:

Occupancy – 66% of 404. (up 2% on 2014)

Harbours and marinas along the south coast continue to experience disappointing levels of trade, both in terms of permanent moorings occupied and number of visiting vessel nights. A proactive advertising campaign continues each spring, along with the associated loyalty scheme, hoping to reverse the downward trend in business. The harbour staff had displays at Portland Marina's Fish and Ships, Beaulieu Boat Jumble and Poole Boat Show. The season seemed to finish early in summer 2015 with persistent gales in August.

Harbour Projects and Developments

The asset and infrastructure plan continues to support the Business Plan so that a structured approach is taken to the upkeep of the harbour and its facilities. This involves payments in to a reserve to save for expensive items in a rolling programme of works allowing the cash flow requirement to be smoothed whilst also completing an in-year improvements programme.

This second year of implementation has been more successful in completing projects but remains a challenge with the number of projects involved and the limited spare capacity in staff. The process continues to be reviewed and refined to make it more efficient.

Some of the items achieved in 2015/16 were:

- Replacement pontoons on Commercial Road. This involved considerable paperwork to gain approval to spend, Marine Management Organisation (MMO) approval and Environment Agency approval. The project was partially funded by the MMO.

- Replacement of the detached pontoon at North Quay.
- New pontoon fingers on North Quay to add 5 in number 15m berths.
- Extensive refurbishment work to the wood fendering of pontoons in Westwey Road.
- Further refurbishment of 13 Custom House Quay.
- WiFi provision to some visitors' berths.
- Pile refurbishments to No.1 Berth.
- Some limited dredging.

Planned major items for 2016/17 include:

- Connection of the Westwey Road toilets to a mains sewer to stop the use of a holding tank.
- Replacement of some electrical bollards.
- Refurbishment to Cargo Stage and Custom House Quay pontoon decking.
- Replacement of slipway pontoons.

The 15-year Harbour Walls Remediation Package has been started with the initial focus being on the Sand Jetty, Nelson's Wharf and the sheet piling at Ferry Steps. No further work has taken place, nor is planned soon, on the Sand Jetty since a missing pile was replaced in June 2014. The main focus is on the Ferry Steps sheet piling which it is planned to repair by placing new piling in front of the existing wall. This is likely to take place in Autumn 2017 with a small chance of it being in Autumn 2016. The initial estimates for the costs of the works are considerably more expensive than the budget and are expected to be in the region of £2M. Work is ongoing to refine the design. The delay in work has necessitated a review of the risks of the existing wall. This has led to the closure of the Ferry Steps and some restrictions on the use of the quayside in the vicinity of the sheet piling but these are manageable. Close monitoring of the condition of the wall is taking place. A ramp has been provided to the pontoon in the vicinity of the Ferry Steps to allow the ferry boat and trip boat operations to continue. There will be disruption to the harbour when the work commences but this will be managed for minimum impact. The sheet piling in the vicinity of Nelson's Wharf will be considered for repair after the Ferry Steps' work has been completed. Some repairs were carried out to the cement supports underneath the Pleasure Pier to extend the life of the Pier.

Work has remained ongoing to capture the activities of various water users on the south shore of the outer harbour including Weymouth Sailing Club, Sea Cadets, Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre and Weymouth Rowing Club. This is to try to find a way forward because each of the organisations is thriving but at the same time running out of space. The use of the water is now different from that contained in the leases so agreement is being sought on the re-allocation of water to reflect current activities. It is then intended to review the leases and agreements and update them accordingly.

Ferry Service

Condor stopped operating from Weymouth on 23rd March 2015 when they transferred their service to Poole using a single trimaran ferry, Condor Liberation.

Some Condor facilities including their Call Centre remained in the Port and Terminal Building until the end of August 2015 when all operations were moved to Poole.

Negotiations have continued with a new operator, High Speed Ferries (HSF), who wish to operate a fast-cat service from Weymouth to Cherbourg. They initially planned to do this from Portland but have identified a ready facility at Weymouth, although there will be a need for changes, particularly for immigration and borders, to allow operations to the continent rather than the Channel Islands. The planned closure of the Restricted Area was suspended by Full Council to allow negotiations to continue until 31st March 2016. The formal Restricted Area was suspended from 1st May 2015 allowing reduced staff cover overnight. It is hoped that the new service will start to operate in January/February 2017 but that is dependent on HSF gaining their start-up backing money. Due to the delay in the start of the operation there is parallel activity to identify any short-term opportunities for the use of the infrastructure in generating income until the Peninsula is potentially developed as covered below.

Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council are leading in developing a Town Centre Masterplan. This plan is focused in 5 areas of the town which have been identified to help regenerate the town if developed correctly. The areas are Lodmoor, the Station Gateway and Park District, Westwey Road including the law courts and gasholder, Commercial Road and the Peninsula including the Theatre and Port. Several of these areas include parts of the harbour operation and it will be essential to work alongside any developments so that the best can be provided for harbour users. Concerns have already been raised about the needs of harbour users including the local fishing industry and how these needs can be incorporated in to the plan. A proposed tidal barrier across the harbour and reduced parking have been hot topics to date. Any ferry operation is limited to a short period so that it does not adversely impact on the development of the Peninsula.

Harbour Staff

Simon Powell assumed the duties of a Berthing Officer as agency staff from September 2015 as part of a trial to increase to 4 in number Berthing Officers. 2 of the Ferry Port staff, James Wiedenbruch and Lindsey Holmes, left Council employment in March 2016.

Ian Gale retired from his Berthing Officer post at the end of March 2016.

Mary Horton is expected to retire from her post as Moorings Officer in May 2016.

The staffing levels will be closely monitored as a clearer way ahead is established for the requirements of the ferry port area and peninsular.

Navigation, Conservancy, Safety, Pollution and Security

No significant incidents occurred in relation to the safety of navigation. All navigation lights and marks have been audited by Trinity House in March 2016 and were reported as satisfactory and maintained to a high standard. All defects and points have been rectified.

A hydrographic survey in November 2015 indicated only minor changes in depths within the harbour and no subsequent dredging operations were undertaken. The survey showed that some limited plough dredging at the harbour entrance had been successful in removing some material on a bar extending down towards the leading lights. This dredging was hard going due to the density of the material concerned. Some areas of the harbour, including the waiting pontoon, some inner harbour berths and Weymouth Sailing Club moorings are suffering from reduced depths after years of accumulating material and will require dredging soon. Work is ongoing to develop a 5 year more comprehensive dredging plan to better serve the needs of the harbour. Material sampling has taken place in support of a marine licence application which is in progress. No significant concerns have been identified to date.

An annual statement of compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code was submitted to the Harbour Board and Full Council in February 2016. Mr Richard Noakes, Dorset Councils Partnership Safety Officer, remained as Designated Person, supporting and reviewing harbour operations.

There is a continued programme of personnel training, equipment training and a review of equipment to ensure adequate preparation is in place in the event of an oil spill. An Oil Spill Response Organisation Audit was conducted by the MCA in March 2016. No significant issues were identified although there was a lack of personnel with formal qualifications in part due to the uncertainty of staff numbers not justifying the expenditure on courses. A tier 2 oil spill exercise was also held in March 2016 with the harbour's provider, Adlar and Allen. This was a very useful serial which allowed the wider support community to consider their responsibilities.

The Harbour Master attended a multi-agency rabies exercise organised by Dorset County Council and staged at Weymouth Marina. It was an enlightening experience in the subject and demonstrated the seriousness of a rabies incident.

Effort continues in reducing the amount of gear stored on pontoons so that there are safe accesses for crews, emergency services and harbour staff and maintaining a cleaner position. Likewise there is a constant drive to manage fishing gear throughout the harbour and to ensure that the Fish Landing Quay is managed correctly and kept in a clean condition.

The nuisance caused by seagulls continues to be tackled by employing a bird of prey and handler with the hope of discouraging the gulls to remain in the area. This has had some success and will continue in to the future, along with an enhanced education process and signing. A publicity day was put on outside the Harbour Office by the pest control company which received favourable comments and interest by the media.

The refreshed pilotage system has been fully used and proved to be a workable solution with over 20 acts of pilotage in the year.

There is still plenty of work to be done to update and review harbour powers in support of better management controls over harbour users. It is intended to consider

invoking General Directions in place of Byelaws. This will be a project in future years.

The harbour's Conditions of Berthing have been updated and issued to all berth holders.

Harbour Events

Many events over the year continue to take place in the harbour or on its boundaries. These have been very successful and attracted large numbers of visitors in to the town both by boat and from the land. Notable events have included the Seafood Festival in July and the second Waterfest in September. Support has been provided to many activities by the harbour team. The more interesting visiting vessels including Tall Ships continue to be a main attraction.

Significant Incidents

The following significant incidents have occurred in the harbour during the reporting period:

- Extensive searches were carried out by the police including diving operations when a Dorchester teenager went missing after a night out in the Town. Although he was captured on the Harbour Office CCTV walking along Custom House Quay, he was not seen after that. His body was recovered some weeks later after it was found floating adjacent to the Ferry Port's Restricted Area.
- The workboat Regis was extensively damaged after a visiting yacht reversed and struck the workboat against the pontoon. Both the pontoon and workboat were damaged, no injuries were reported. All damage has been repaired.
- The RIB engine was also damaged when a visiting workboat collided with the raised leg. This has been repaired.
- Several sickness or injuries to visiting boat crews or harbour users requiring first aid treatment and/or assistance from the emergency services.
- There have been repeated pier jumpers from buildings on the Pleasure Pier and the Town Bridge. The police have been involved.
- The North Quay facilities under Trinity Church were broken in to several times during the winter. There was evidence of drug use and homeless activity. The police have been involved.
- Numerous vessels have been towed alongside by the harbour staff after engine failures.
- A number of low key accidents were reported amongst harbour staff. No causal trends have been identified.

Future Plans and Developments

Some of the priorities for 2016/17 are:

- To continue working on the recommendations from the Harbour Business Plan and Port Marine Safety Code Audit, in particular the Safety Management System.

- To resolve the future of ferry operations in the port.
- To consider the use of the Peninsula with or without a ferry and in conjunction with any Town Centre Masterplan development.
- To address the highest priority faults of the harbour walls and other infrastructure.
- To achieve a balance budget for 2017/18 and beyond.
- To ensure the staff levels are correct for delivering the harbour service.

In Conclusion

The year has once again been challenging with a high level of activity. The lack of a ferry service, change in personnel and the financial pressures are generating change from the traditional Weymouth Harbour operation. This will continue in to the foreseeable future. The Harbour Staff remain dedicated, supportive and determined to give their best for the harbour. Engagement with the harbour users and by Councillors remains key to the success of the harbour as it evolves and faces future challenges. The harbour though remains one of the key jewels in Weymouth's crown but needs to be kept polished.

(Signed on original)

Keith Howorth
Harbour Master

Annex:

A. Budget Monitoring Position as at 31st March 2016.

Appendix 1					
2015/16 Harbour Budget Outturn as at 25 May 16					
Harbour Management Board 29 June 2016					
(Numbered items show linkages)					
	2015/16	2015/16	2015/16	Variance	
	Full Yr Budget	Budget with Savings	Outturn	Full Yr Budget v Outturn	
Summary of Revenue Budget:	£	£		£	
Expenditure:					
Employees	336,665	335,665	407,416	(70,751)	(A)
Premises	188,398	188,398	177,967	10,431	(F)

Contracts	73,815	68,320	66,970	6,845	(F)
Response Maintenance	62,562	42,562	37,724	24,838	(F)
Equipment Supplies	6,884	5,384	4,124	2,760	(F)
Transport	644	644	317	327	(F)
Supplies and Services	90,237	79,737	80,311	9,926	(F)
No 3 Berth Repayment	180,000	180,000	180,000	0	(F)
Service Recharges (Non-controllable)	224,000	224,000	224,000	0	(F)
Asset Management: Improvements - C/F from 2014/15 (Item 2)	208,450	208,450	208,450	0	(F)
Asset Management: Improvements - Year 2 (Item 1)	181,740	108,740	34,364	147,376	(F)
Rolling Programme of Works (Item 4)	272,247	272,247	272,247	0	(F)
Total Expenditure	1,825,642	1,714,147	1,693,890	131,752	(F)
Income:					
Rents and Licences	156,830	156,830	285,959	129,129	(F)
Recoverables	23,098	23,098	30,924	7,826	(F)
Commercial Activities	151,673	151,673	174,803	23,130	(F)
Leisure Activities	745,183	745,183	711,046	(34,137)	(A)
Grant Funding	0	0	6,720	6,720	(F)
Asset Management Improvements -part of £181,740 above (Item 1)	70,000	70,000	70,000	0	(F)
Asset Management Improvements - C/F 2014/15 (Item 2)	208,450	208,450	208,450	0	(F)
Once off funding:					
From Harbour Income Reserve Set Aside From 2013/14	300,000	300,000	300,000	0	(F)

In Year Deficit - from Reserves (Item 3)	170,408	170,408	170,408	0	(F)
Total Income	1,825,642	1,825,642	1,958,310	132,668	(F)
Controllable Surplus / (Deficit)	0	111,495	264,420	264,420	(F)
Predicted year end controllable surplus					
Harbour Reserves Summary	Harbour Reserves General				
Balance b/f Surplus / (Deficit)	910,854				
To fund Asset Management Improvements	(70,000)	(Item 1)			
To fund In-Year Deficit transfer to Revenue Budget	(170,408)	(Item 3)			
To fund Asset Management Improvements (c/f from 2014/15)	(208,450)	(Item 2)			
Rolling Programme of Works Reserves 2015/16	272,247	(Item 4)			
Controllable Surplus/Deficit	264,420				
Total of Harbour Reserves	998,663				
Committed Reserves:Rolling Programme of Works	457,540				
Committed Reserves: To balance the 2016/17 Budget	401,447				
Carry Forward Request	97,660				
Uncommitted Harbour Reserves	42,016				
Summary of Asset Management Plan (Committed)					
In-Year Improvements	£				

Unspent from 2014/15 (Yr1)	208,450	(Item 2)			
2015/16 Contribution	111,740	(Item 1)			
Transfer from Rolling Programme of Works for 2015/16 Projects	70,000	(Item 1)			
Approved Savings	(73,000)				
Expenditure 2015/16	(242,814)				
Unspent balance to Reserves (part of controllable surplus)	(74,376)				
	0				
Rolling Programme of Works	£				
Balance b/f	238,543				
2015/16 (Yr 2) Contribution	272,247	(Item 4)			
Transfer to In year spend for Improvements in 2015/16	(70,000)	(Item 1)			
Year end movements (see report paragraph 5c)	16,750				
	457,540				
Independent Reserves					
Harbour Walls Remediation Works (over 3 years)	£				
Budget	1,037,019				
Committed Spend Year 1 2013/14 and Year 2	(108,000)				
	929,019				
Pleasure Pier Structural Maintenance	£				

Reserves					
Balance b/f	40,000				
2015/16 Contribution	20,000				
Works 15/16	(53,000)				
Expected carry forward	7,000				