

Weymouth Harbour Consultation Group (WHCG)
Wednesday 17th of May 2023 (WTC Chamber and Teams, 19:00-21:00)

Present

Andy Sargent	AS	Chair and RNLI Representative
Ken Buchan	KB	Head of Environment and Wellbeing
Ed Carter	EC	Weymouth Harbour Master
Cllr Mark Roberts	MR	Chair of the Harbours Committee
Dave Caddy	DC	Vice Chair and Harbour Traders Representative
Neil Bedwell	NB	Boatfolk Representative
Alan Hale	AH	Boat Owners Inner Harbour Representative
Tim Day	TD	Clubs of Weymouth Representative
Will Holmes	WH	Weymouth Beach / Leisure Users Representative
Callum Seggie	CS	Training & Education Schools Representative
Rob Gray	RG	Commercial Passenger Carrying Vessels Representative
Jamie Pullin	JP	Charter Boat Association Representative
Mary Harris	MH	Harbour Traders Representative Substitute and Weymouth Harbour Watch
Dan Bell	DB	Commercial Passenger Carrying Vessels Representative Substitute
Amanda Anderson	AA	Dorset Police Resilient Communities Co-Ordinator
Sarah Johnston	SJ	Minute Taker

1. INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

AS welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Apologies from Alison Roberts, Cllr Colin Huckle and Andy Alcock.

SJ – Apologies for technical issues delaying meeting start and facilities.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

AS asked if everyone was happy with the previous minutes and that they were accepted.

AS followed up the issue of the flooding under the Town Bridge has still not been resolved.

DC confirmed that it is still happening every time it rains or there is a spring tide. **EC** to follow up.

AS Dates to be provided to Andy Alcock regarding the closure of the Pleasure Pier. **EC** advised that it will be covered in the **HM Update**.

AS Brewers' Quay redevelopment safety fence has encroached over 2 parking bays. **EC** has not addressed this; apologies given and will follow up on it.

AS Updated Terms for HCG have been forwarded to everyone, no comments or feedback.

KB confirmed that they will be updated.

AS Commercial Operators waiting list update to be provided after the renewals process.

SJ confirmed that after the renewals various customers changed their vessels. After these issues were dealt with the commercial offering had been reviewed. **EC** advised that we have a healthy waiting list that needs to be balanced with existing berth holders. There are concerns with previous rafting and channel width within the harbour. A bigger review is underway but will require more time in post to understand the requirements before any new proposals are brought forward. **JP** confirmed that following his meeting with **EC** he had advised his neighbouring berth-holders not to move their vessels without contacting the Harbour Office first. **EC** acknowledged and thanked **JP**; and that all Commercial Berth-

holders had received an email requested that any changes in requirements or thinking of changing a vessel need to be communicated to the Harbour Office first due to the impact and knock on effect of this.

AS Angling Shop car parking tickets. **EC** no further issues with this and **JP** confirmed that apart from forgetting his permit and getting a ticket no one else had been ticketed.

4. WEYMOUTH HARBOUR UPDATE

1.0 General Harbour Use

- The harbour has seen a slow start to the 2023 season. Periods of very windy and wet weather, coupled with an early Easter, have held things back.
- Visitor numbers for the time of year are lower than hoped. PWC Permit revenue and Slipway use is down on last year but with rallies and bookings being taken we should see it improve.

2.0 Notable Incidents

- The Harbour team have attended the usual mix of incidents over the last quarter:
 - Life rings thrown into the Harbour.
 - Missing tenders.
 - Pier jumpers.
 - Minor collisions between vessels.
 - Broken trailers at the slipway.
 - PWC user refusing to pay.
 - Report of graffiti.
 - Reports of fly-tipping.
 - A trapped Swan.
- No notable marine incidents have occurred since the last Consultative meeting.

3.0 Alpha/Bravo/Charlie pontoons

- Work is slightly behind schedule to replace the visitor pontoons in the Outer Harbour.
- Alpha is complete, but due to a delay in the delivery of the services bollards, the Bravo pontoon is currently without water and electric supply.
- Works on all three pontoons are scheduled to be completed by the first week in June.
- The pontoons are robust and very high quality, we are very pleased with them.

4.0 Fishing Storage Compound

- A 24-hour access compound has been created within the commercial area of the port.
- Commercial fishermen that have a berth in Weymouth, can hire either a 6 pallet or 12 pallet storage area, which they can secure with their own padlock.
- Within the storage area, a facility has also been created (in partnership with the Weymouth & Portland Marine Litter Project) where fishermen can leave their plastic waste (old nets, buoys, fish boxes etc) to be sorted and taken for recycling. They will also be using this as a hub for their litter picks along the shoreline.
- Uptake and response to the facility has been very positive.
- The use of the storage area will help to inform decisions for the new areas planned through the Quay Regeneration Project.
- Thank you to Andy Alcock for his input into the creation of this storage area.

5.0 Oil Spills & Response

- We have had a couple of recent spill response events; one where oil was placed in a waste bin on Custom House Quay, and one where a slick was discovered in the Inner Harbour. On both occasions the OSCP has been put into action.
- We urge all persons to be vigilant, and diligent in reporting to the Harbour Office.
- We are here to help. Accidents happen, and if it's not an accident we need evidence to take things further.
- Oil spill contingency training is going on all this week with Oil Spill Response Limited. Boom is being deployed at the Harbour Entrance on 18th May, to practice deflection and collection techniques.

6.0 Commercial Berths

- Following some issues earlier in the season, a letter has been sent out to all commercial berth holders reminding them to contact us to discuss berthing arrangements and/or vessel changes. Thank you to Jamie Pullin for communicating this to the Commercial boatmen.
- Further to the partial capsize of the commercial pontoon at Custom House Quay earlier in the year. Repairs have been conducted and the pontoon is fully operational. The gangway for this pontoon has also been repaired. **JP** asked if the definitive cause was discovered. **EC** confirmed that it has not been found.
- Further to an inspection of the pilings along Custom Quay by a diver, it was found that several the pilings are due for replacement. Discussions are being had with the Flood Defence and Coastal Risk teams to tie in the piling replacements to quay wall repairs. The area is being closely monitored by harbour staff.
- Repairs have been made to the gangways to the commercial pontoons adjacent to Custom House Quay and Cosens Quay. Repairs are now being planned for the gangway to access the pontoons in The Cove. These gangways are used constantly by berth holders and members of the public accessing charter vessels and ferries. The repairs were much needed to provide safe access. **JP** asked about the wall along Commercial Road where he is berthed as there is a large hole in it with wildlife utilising it and a potential problem. **EC** will check with the appropriate team.
- Further to concerns raised about broken glass and unauthorised persons on pontoons outside The Anchor & Rendezvous, we have spoken to the Dorset Council Licensing Team.
- The Licensing Team have spoken to the owners of the premises in question, and fencing is now going to be deployed during 'music festivals' to prevent people accessing the sea wall with glasses, and security personnel will be in place at the gangway head to prevent access by unauthorised persons. Will monitor over the summer and go back to the Licensing Team if required.
- Concerns have also been raised regarding the lighting in this area of pontoons. During the night, the pontoon area is dark, and theft of items has been reported. We are speaking to Planning Officers to ascertain whether we can put extra lighting in this area, and whether planning permission is required.

7.0 Commercial Port Berths

- The vessel LECHLADE, berthed in Weymouth Harbour for almost 16 years was towed away on the 4th of April.
- VICTORY, the last remaining tug of the Griffin Towage fleet was confirmed sold in April. We are waiting on final confirmation from the new owner. She will be doing some jobs and leaving during the summer.

- The tug KINGSTON remains berthed in Weymouth and is now operated by the company Aquatic Towage.

8.0 Pleasure Pier

- A contractor has been appointed to carry out a replacement of the railing surrounding the Pleasure Pier.
- The old railings are being removed, and the new railings (black Marshalls Ferrocast) are being sited slightly in from the old, as the wooden beams on the outer pier edge are deteriorating.
- The contractor believes that it will not be necessary to close the pier while works are taking place. They will work on a section at a time and secure the working area from the public with Heras fencing.
- The railings will continue right across the top of the stepped areas. These steps will remain usable, cleaned, and maintained, but out of bounds for all except emergency access.
- Signage is being refreshed around the pier, providing compliance with current safety standards and warning of the prohibition of, and the hazards presented by, jumping from the pier.
- ASB persists in this location. We are working local police and the Community Safety Team to tackle issues, and we are arranging Conflict Resolution Training for Harbour Staff, which we are hoping will be run by PC Ali Roberts from the Dorset Police Marine Engagement Team. We have also scheduled a meeting with a Crime Prevention Officer at the end of the month, to discuss our approach to discourage this behaviour.

9.0 El Galeon

- The Tallship 'El Galeon' is visiting Weymouth from Thursday 18th to Monday 22nd of May. The vessel will be berthed alongside the ALPHA visitor pontoon, where she will remain for the duration. The vessel will be open to the public (charges apply) where they can view the ship, and the displays and exhibits onboard.

10.0 Sea Bins

- PortBin is an innovative solution to help combat litter in ports and marinas.
- Placed in an area where litter is known to gather, the Portbin unit sits just underneath the water's surface and traps litter that floats in, to be removed and disposed of.
- While we are considering financing a Portbin, at a current cost of £5,865 ex VAT we are inquiring to see if there is any local interest in sponsoring a unit, either in full or part. **JP** suggested contacting the crab fishing line recycling company.
- If anyone is interested in discussing, then please contact the Harbour Office.

11.0 Fayre in the Square & Wessex Folk Festival

- These two large events are taking place on back-to-back weekends on the 27th/28th May and 3rd/4th June.
- Road closures will be in place during the events, all berth holders in the area have been notified. We have specified with the event organisers that clear, safe, and unrestricted access to the pontoons is to be always maintained. **AS** advised that Fayre in the Square had not been in contact with the RNLI.

12.0 Other Notable Marine Events

- Rowing Regatta 27th May
- Squib Nationals 23rd – 30th June

5. CONSULTATIVE GROUP UPDATE

- **NB – Boatfolk Marina.** Slow start to the season as well due to the weather but anticipated an increase on the next Bank Holiday weekend. Oil spill update has been sent out to all their berth-holders.
- **RG - Commercial Passenger Carrying Vessels Representative.** Also confirmed a very quiet start to the season.
- **AH - Boat Owners Inner Harbour Representative.** Only issue is a berth-holder is regularly complaining about the water on the North Quay pontoon – noted under the Agenda Item. **EC** to investigate further.
- **JP – Charter Boat Association Representative.** The Charter boats also experienced a slow start to the season due to the weather. **JP** to provide a full list of dates of future Angling Events to **EC**.
- **TD – Training & Education Schools.** May Bank Holiday is going to be very busy. Rowing regatta on the 27th of May from the pier along the white buoys and WSC IRC regatta on the Saturday and Sunday with keel boats going out, and the Sailing Academy will be racing further up the bay, which will result in it being very busy. The Squibs (70 of them) will be starting around midday so they will be going out around 10.30/11.00 – they will be held out if it conflicts with a bridge lift. Hooker's dock, the lower dock at the Sailing club has problems with the trees overhanging causing damage to vessels. **EC** to review if the land is part of the Harbour or if Dorset Council need to deal with them. Old Sandbanks Ferry chains have been removed as part of a tidy up and the Sailing club building is 100 years old today, after being purchased from Mr Bussell.
- **CS - Training & Education Schools Representative.** Starting to get back into it after a few good weeks over Easter and ready for half term. Reminder that their vessels are back on the water by Nothe Fort please mind the wash when going past especially at lower springs. Welcomed Ed and invited him to visit the Sea Cadets to meet Sarah the centre Manager.
- **WH - Weymouth Beach / Leisure Users Representative.** Relatively quiet with a busy bank holiday, the lifeguards are on the beach 7 days a week now.
- **MR – Harbours Committee.** The Harbours Advisory Committee is the new name for the Harbours Committee, which now reports to the Portfolio holder rather than the full council this has sped up decision making which has been seen with the pontoons and the budget. On February 14th the harbours budget was approved by the full council and that included fee setting. At the last committee meeting the principle of the remove of pilotage was approved and now will go out to the necessary consultees as it is not a public consultation. This will enable us to move forward with tenders especially now that the new pontoons are able to take passengers. At Lyme Regis the OK International 13 countries with 149 boats entered happening at the Bank Holiday weekend as well. The Lyme and West Bay Consultative group have been debating about PWC's, working towards a trial to hopefully process this. An Independent Member is required for the Harbours Committee and advertisement is going out soon. If anyone is interested, it would be for 4 meetings a year.
- **DC - Harbour Traders Representative.** Local restaurants are struggling to get front of house staff at the moment. Comments received about the fencing stored under the town bridge that is used by Rendezvous when various events are held. **EC** to investigate. On the South side of the harbour concern has been raised regarding the structural integrity of the Sand Jetty with weight restriction signs being added to the area where the cars currently park on it. **EC** to speak to engineers regarding the current state of it.
- **MH – Weymouth Harbour Watch.** Launch event this weekend outside the Harbour Office, Police cadets will be there to mark up property. Request as many people as

possible to attend. Stickers have been produced and would like to be put around the harbour – check with **DH** about where these can be put. Leaflets have distributed around the local businesses around the harbour. Wessex FM and Jurassic Radio will be promoting it. Dorset Echo will also advertise this week. The Facebook site and website are live listing the reporting procedures. Thank you to Sarah for her help with getting this up and running. **SJ** to contact DC Coms to promote as well.

- **KB - Head of Environment and Wellbeing.** Nothing to report.
- **AR – Dorset Marine Police.** Report read out by **EC**.
 - **Theft** - Saturday 8th April 2023, between 06:00-18:00pm theft of crabs from pot – Custom house Quay. Pot with remaining crabs left out of the water. Between 8th-9th April 2023, there was a festival along the Weymouth Harbour. Due to the volume of people CCTV negative. Other fishing trade persons were made aware and reported their concerns to the HARBOUR MASTER as well. Fortunately, the HARBOUR MASTER requested increased patrols on the Sunday 9th April 2023, which did happen, and this resulted no further issues the next day - with thanks.
 - **Public Safety Incidents** – Three reports of concern for welfare along the beach front and pier. All parties safeguarded and signposted to support services.
 - **PWC** – 22/04/2023 Personal watercraft data tag AH2098 causing issues for Harbour Staff. No trace on data tag (not registered) associated vehicle shows that DVLA have recorded no longer keeper earlier in the year.
 - **Since the last meeting....**
 - Stolen vessel from the Isle of wight recovered Ham beach.
 - Reports elsewhere in the county of PWC key being cloned and ski being taken without the consent of the owner – For awareness. Requires someone to sync the electronic control unit to a laptop or device. Does not require the original key to do this.
 - **Planned events / Operations and training.**
 - Weymouth Harbour Watch / Security marking event –
 - Saturday 20th May 2023 launching Weymouth Harbour Watch with the Police & Crime Commissioner attending. Promoting the marine community coming together and working with police and other agencies to prevent, detect and deter marine crime and anti-social behaviour. Cadets, using Selecta DNA will mark items of marine equipment to assist in deterring individuals from stealing items and increase our chances of returning stolen items to the rightful owner should a theft occur.
 - **DATA Tag checks**
 - Saturday 20th May 2023 carrying out Data tag checks on PWC's on Weymouth slip to ensure that riders conform to the harbour rules in having registered their PWC's and ensure that no skis have been reported as stolen – checks on trailers will also be carried out
 - **Op Seagoing / Op Seabird – 2nd July 2023 (Weymouth slip)**
 - Slip way engagement with water patrols to follow – Education and warnings for PWC and power boat riders in relation to their conduct on the water with regards to byelaws and marine wildlife disturbance.
- **AS – RNLI.** A quiet start to the year, a couple of shouts dealing with vulnerable people on the pleasure pier and a couple of broken-down vessels. Lifeboat week will be taking place between the 23rd – 29th July. The display this year will be a similar structure to previous years but to encourage more audience participation it will live streamed on the RNLI YouTube channel – they need 1000 likes to be able to do this as they are currently at 800 likes. The refurbishment of the station has been delayed so they are reassessing for some slight modifications to take the extra crew kit now held. Restructuring should commence next year but is subject to change.

6. AGENDA ITEMS FROM MEMBERS

- **AH** – Water supply to berths on the North Quay Pontoon.
- **AS** – Cruise ship coaches' chaos in Rodwell Ave. When there are 2 cruise ships in then the coaches block the road and passengers have been waiting a long time. A coach also got stuck on the roundabout there. **EC** advised that the problems are being addressed by another department within Dorset Council.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **NB** – Requested help to get in touch with the department responsible for the sluice gates on Westham Bridge. **EC** will provide **NB** with the contact details.
- **RG** – Raised a request regarding an individual vessel's berthing, which had been previous raised with the Harbour Office. **EC** confirmed that issues with individual berths would not be discussed in this forum, it has been discussed with the customer and if they wanted to come into the office to discuss it again, they are welcome to.
- **JP** - Requested that the Council and Harbour Authority continue and improve consultation with all the harbour users, noting that it is vital to ensure that things don't just go round in circles. **MR** acknowledged that in the future the council need to consult constantly on plans that might be happening or changing. **EC** commented that consultation forms the backbone of Port Marine Safety management, and he encourages it, his door is always open. **AS** advised that any individual issues should be raised through the Harbour Office before escalated at the meeting.

8. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Harbour Consultative Group

- 16 August 2023 at Weymouth Town Council Chamber and online via Teams.

Harbours Committee

- 7 June 2023
- 21 September 2023