

Weymouth Harbour Consultation Group (WHCG)
Wednesday 8th of February 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
Dave Brown	DB	Weymouth Harbour Assistant Harbour Master
Karen Womack	KW	Weymouth Harbour Assistant Harbour Master
Cllr Mark Roberts	MR	Chair of the Harbours Committee
Cllr Colin Huckle	CH	Weymouth Town Council Representative
Neil Bedwell	NB	Boatfolk Representative
Tanya Budd	TB	Centre Manager of WOEC
Tim Day	TD	Clubs of Weymouth Representative
Charlotte Lidgley-Ryan	CL	Weymouth Beach / Leisure Users Substitute Representative
Mary Harris	MH	Harbour Traders Representative Substitute and Weymouth Harbour Watch
Dan Bell	DB	Commercial Passenger Carrying Vessels Representative Substitute
Andy Alcock	AA	Commercial Fisherman Representative
Alaric Little	AL	Community Highways Officer Dorset Council
Sarah Johnston	SJ	Minute Taker

1. INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

AS welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Apologies from Will Holmes, Alison Roberts, Dawn Heath, Cllr Rob Hughes, Alan Hale, Dave McCune, Dave Caddy, Callum Seggie and Rob Gray.

AS – Introduced the new Harbour Master Ed Carter.

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. **DB** confirmed that they replaced the cover but not fixed the drain. **AS** advised that there is video footage of the problem and **DB** requested it be forwarded to him. **DB** to review and send onto Highways.

AS The Town Bridge north leaf repairs, when will this be happening? **SJ** confirmed that Simon Arscott has confirmed that this will take place at the end of September similar time frame and dates to the repair work of the southern leaf.

DB covered the matter arising from the previous minutes regarding the material used to infill the railway tracks in the Tramway/Loop car park. Engineers have tested various materials using cold deferred set asphalt on the South of the Esplanade. With the amount of traffic that's gone over there is very minimal movement. So, they used that material.

4. WEYMOUTH HARBOUR UPDATE

- The harbour team are working extremely hard on the permanent moorings and the renewals are being sent out. The response so far is incredibly positive, and it looks like we are currently around 76% full in the inner harbour, swing moorings at 100% and

commercial currently at 72%. We are also taking visitor bookings which are higher than we normally have had the past.

- **Conservancy** - The replacement of the visitor pontoons stretching from the Pavilion to just past the harbour office is set to start work in March. The replacement work will start at four berth / Alpha pontoons, closest to Pavilion.

Engineers are going to be onsite in the Pavilion carpark to conduct a number of digs to expose some of the wall tie backs, they will also be working on the North wall. They hope the work will only last 6 to 9 weeks. We will have to close off the pleasure Pier, but it will be re-opened ASAP.

We have also created a temporary area in the commercial area where pallets of fishing gear can be stored, whilst we are waiting for the new fish landing quay and storage area.

- **Staff** - We are currently advertising for a Berthing Officer to replace Karen Womack's promotion to Assistant Harbour Master. And welcome Ed as the new Harbour Master.
- **Commercial Berths** – We have had an incident where a stretch of commercial pontoon had become trapped on a spring tide. We are currently investigating the causes, as it is not clear if the weight of the fishing gear on the pontoon caused the incident in conjunction with the spring tide. We have divers going to assess the condition of the metal and woodwork to see if actions can be taken to prevent it happening again. We are also now looking at marking areas on the pontoons for fishing gear and nothing is to be stored, on the pontoons outside of these marked areas. The marked zones will be in keeping with our terms and conditions of berthing, 227 litres and place to ensure that the pontoon is kept level.
- **Special Direction** – We have issued a Special Direction Notice to leave the harbour to a vessel. It had been left and was not in a fit state, so it was issued to be removed from the harbour, it has now left.

Peninsular Regeneration Development Project - The pleasure pier, we are looking at replacing the handrails and we are receiving quotations for this work and hope to get this project completed as soon as possible. Knights Brown have been to site and will be commencing some test digs around the fuel storage area along with the fish landing Quay. They will be onsite again on the 10th February 2023. This will mark a big step forward for the project. We have had to clear the area and received help from the fishing community with sorting their gear out and the area is looking a lot clearer.

AA – When the tie backs are checked at the walls around the pleasure pier and it will be closed, when will that be and for how long? As the Angling juniors' fish from the pleasure pier on a Monday night. **DB** to provide exact dates and times when information has been confirmed so alternatives can be found.

5. CONSULTATIVE GROUP UPDATE

- **TB – Training & Education Schools.** WOEC has put an expression of interest to join in partnership with Swim England and the RNLI to run some swim safe sessions which are free swim awareness in the open water sessions the local community so if that's successful we'll be hopefully running those. We have joined up with Weymouth Gig Rowing Club to see if we can help provide schools and transport for the schools to get down to them to join in the Dorset School games and do a gig rowing sort of inter school competition and some free training sessions down there. There's a few linked partnerships happening and establishments going on hopefully some positive things and getting more people engaged in water sports and generally being safer in the environment that we're in.
- **MR – Harbours Committee.** Welcomed Ed, Karen and Dave confirming that we now have a full complement of staff at all 3 harbours providing resilience, adequate cover and suitably qualified people to assist at all times. The change in governance of the Harbours Committee, which now reports to the Cabinet rather than the full council via Cllr Ray Bryan who is the place portfolio holder. This will ensure faster decision making on large financial requirements, and it also clarifies the duty holder

position under the Port Marine Safety Code and rather than it being the committee, it is the portfolio holder Cllr. Ray Bryan is the duty holder now for Port Marine safety. The annual budget for all 3 harbours has been approved by the Harbours Committee and is now gone to the cabinet, on Valentine's Day there will be a full council meeting where we hope to have the budget for the harbours approved. The Council has been sensible about increases with only 5% being applied across external services a balance that they feel is appropriate in terms of inflation and the need to increase income. With one or two differences where it was felt that it didn't, or it shouldn't go up because there's been a big step in the previous year. In Weymouth there's a slightly higher increase to do with the jet skis and their operational fees because of the popularity of them. It's always been oversubscribed, so that budget will go through. The Levelling Up grant that we have been awarded is 19 million with a contribution of about, I think 2.5 million from Dorset Council, principally for the regeneration of Weymouth. We hope we will be able to do is speed up the replacement of some of the walls. It will enable us to find the capital funding to get on with that so that we can start then to think about the regeneration of that whole area. West Bay Harbour has discovered cracks in a wall in the inner harbour, the site behind the Harbour Master's office and at the moment we have had to shut the public toilets there and we are monitoring the conditioning to see if it's the harbour wall. It could be fairly big job but I think at the moment we are resurfacing and hope to have it reopened again shortly. At Lyme Regis we have had the approval of a business plan by the Environment Agency for the refurbishment of the COB and that the process is now being worked out to start in 2024. Since the last meeting I was asked to judge the Christmas light competition at the Boatfolk marina, there was double the entries on last year and perhaps it could be looked at as a harbour wide competition in Weymouth for next year. **TD** – asked about the bore holes that are being made on Greenhill currently. **CH** confirmed that they are test holes to see if the gardens required underpinning. **CL** confirmed an email received advising that this is for investigation over a few weeks.

- **NB – Boatfolk Marina.** Confirmed that it looks to be a good season ahead but they had difficulties in providing visitor berths during the summer months, due to having most of their berths taken with annual customers. Looking forward to working with Ed and the team at Weymouth Harbour. Confirmed that Cllr Mark Roberts will be presiding over the Easter bonnet competition as well this year.
- **TD - Clubs of Weymouth Representative.** The Rowing Club is still rowing as they continue all year round and the WSC have now hoisted most of their boats out, returning back to the water in March. Most of their buoys have been recovered though some have gone missing with reports of them appearing near the Red Lion public house at Winfrith and one has been found on top of Redcliffe. If seen please let WSC know, they need to be returned to them. The Squibb nationals will be taking place in June on the 24th to the 30th and have 60+ entries. They will require berths and the Harbour Office to look at providing them.
- **DB - Commercial Passenger Carrying Vessels Representative Substitute.** NTR.
- **MH - Harbour Traders Representative Substitute.** Concerned if there is going to be any road closures in the summer and noticed a new road sign advising reduced speed limit on Trinity Road. Confirmation that it has been there for some time. Brewers' Quay redevelopment safety fence has encroached over 2 parking bays, could they be moved to release the bays by the Galley restaurant. **CH** and **KB** confirmed that it's planning enforcement and will investigate. Is anything planned for the King's Coronation on the 6th of May? **CH** confirmed that WTC would be encouraging community events. **AS** advised that several businesses are current undergoing refurbishment and that the Nothe Tavern and Chef Eric have recently received more awards.
- **CH – Weymouth Town Council Representative.** WTC very interested in the Levelling Up grant and being included in the discussions on where the funds are being applied to. Including the harbour walls, north quay and improving

infrastructure in the town.

- **KB - Head of Environment and Wellbeing.** Currently updating the Terms of Reference regarding the questions around the tenure of the Chair, Vice Chair and Substitutes and exceptional circumstances. Clarification around this will be reported back through the committee or directly to the Chair. **AS** requested, to share it with the group so everyone is aware of it.
- **AA - Commercial Fisherman Representative.** Regarding work now required on the commercial pontoons concerned about that having an impact on the start of the season for the fishermen berthed there. **DB** confirmed that the Harbour Office will be guided by the contractors and are current cleaning the ladders to ensure that they are suitable for use. Advised that fishermen had raised concern that the Commercial Waiting List was not being addressed quick enough with some vessels giving up their berths in the harbour. **SJ** confirmed that the waiting list is extensive and difficult to fulfil customers specific requests. It will be addressed once the renewals have been completed this month.
- **AR – Dorset Marine Police.** Report read out by **SJ**. The Pool Harbour Security Afloat event is being held tonight with PCC – David Sidwick, ACC Rachel Farrel, Insp Danny Tamblin together with Poole Harbour Watch Chair Jackie Hardy and Alyson Moore from the Resilient Community’s Team. They identified that they needed to educate members of the marine community to remove, photograph, record the serial numbers and tag expensive items of marine equipment. The RNLI are there offering to check life jackets for free by their safety team and Selecta DNA are selling marine and trailer security kits. Crime stats since November for Weymouth and Portland are – the theft of crabs and lobsters at Weymouth Harbour by the Town Bridge – Suspects identified, but due to evidential difficulties no further action taken. 1 ASB at Portland Marina – Drunk in charge of boat – Details obtained but no offences. And 1 suspicious incident where a rucksack was found by the sea but the owner was identified. Work being carried out to rejuvenate Christchurch and Poole harbour watch. Intension is to carry this through to Weymouth and facilitate communication between the HW schemes so that everyone can be kept apprised of incidents, should there be an overlap. Police will be attending regular meetings and will seek to conduct accompanied patrols with security boats when available in order to gather and develop intel / conduct water patrols. Ongoing joint water patrols with Sifca & WHM when conditions allow. Ongoing investigations into marine nominals seeking to take action against them for any offences (land or water based) / develop intel. Joint operation with FSG in the planning stages for multi-site operations throughout the winter for thefts from boats. Regular land patrols of boat yards and yacht clubs during evening shifts – application for drone work over these sites and associated berths will be submitted for consideration during winter months. Prevention engagements – seeking to educate members of public regarding security and byelaws on the water. Op seagoing 2023.
- **AS – RNLI.** Advised that there is a site called The Big Help Out where you can sign up to help a local group on Monday 8th of May a lot of national charities have already signed up. The refurbishment of the boathouse is being planned and hopefully will be commencing this year. RNLI shouts have been quiet this year with just one of a missing person at Redcliffe, which turned out to be a false alarm. Statistics last year are the ILB saved 7 lives, majority of them were paddleboarders off the Chesil. Both vessels are working fine now after a double engine change.

6. AGENDA ITEMS FROM MEMBERS

- **DC** - Update on drain under town bridge as still not been repaired. There is a video of this if required. Covered in section 3 Matters arising from previous minutes.
- **DC** - Future works on town bridge in spring or leaving till autumn? Covered in section 3 Matters arising from previous minutes.
- **DC** - Anglers having parking tickets whilst going to Angling Centre to collect permits. **AA** explained that the permits are not issued in time to cover the period when the

ticket machine comes into effect. **DB** to contact the Parking Team regarding the period allowed to acquire a permit for the charter customers.

- **Weymouth Harbour Watch** – Mary advised that from the previous meeting the Port Watch app presented by Amanda Anderson from Dorset Police has been dropped due to the app being chargeable after August. After a recent meeting with Ali Roberts from Dorset Marine Police and the Harbour Office plans to promote Weymouth Harbour Watch have progressed with stickers and posters with QR codes being generated to link to the website. These will be distributed to the Harbour Office and Boatfolk to promote in their offices and via social media. Any crimes or serious concerns should be reported through the correct channels of 999 or 101 to the Police. Looking to run promotional events around the harbour in May possibly the 2nd or 3rd week with support and will be asking for volunteers for an hour or two. And in the autumn hold a similar event as to the Poole Harbour Watch for Weymouth.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- None.

8. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Harbour Consultative Group

- 3 May 2023 at Weymouth Town Council Chamber and online via Teams.

Harbours Committee

- 15 March 2023