

Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority

Minutes of a Meeting of the Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority held at The Clifton Room, The Guildhall, Victoria Road, Dartmouth on Monday 8th January 2018, commencing at 1830 hrs.

PRESENT:

Mike Burden (MB)
Zoe Briant-Evans (ZBE)
Captain Mark Cooper (MC) - Harbour Master/CEO
Tim Dewing (TD)
James Dodd (JD)
John Ellwood (JE)
Tristan Harwood (TH)
Owen Hill (OH)
Mark Hubbard (MH)
Tony Tudor (TT)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Penny Johns (PJ) Senior Administrator
Nick Clarence (NC) Deputy Harbour Master

001/18 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

MC asked if there were any nominations for the position of Chairman of the Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority. **It was proposed by TD and seconded by JD that Mark Hubbard be elected as Chairman for 2018. There were no other nominations and on being put the vote was carried unanimously.**

Mark Hubbard took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

MH asked if there were any nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority. **It was proposed by TD and seconded by TT that James Dodd be elected as Vice-Chairman for 2018. There were no other nominations and on being put the vote was carried unanimously.**

002/18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from DW. MC advised that that DW is very unwell and being cared for in hospital. The Board paid tribute to him and wished him their best wishes.

003/18 Board Member Representation

003/18.1 Young Champion Award

A discussion took place about whether to continue with the Young Champion award. **It was agreed that:-**

- a) This is good PR for the Authority and should continue.
- b) Someone needs to take on the strategic responsibility to identify potential Young Champion candidates and additional activities.
- c) It was suggested that a suitable person could be co-opted to run the Young Champion scheme.

ACTION: MC to approach Kit Noble at the Royal Dart Yacht Club to ask if he would be interested.

003/18.2 Pilotage

It was agreed to talk to Richard Eggleton with a view to co-opting him onto the Board for his pilotage advice.

ACTION: MH to approach Richard Eggleton to ask if he would be available to be co-opted to the Board for pilotage.

003/18.3 Board Representation

It was agreed that these areas of responsibility would be covered as follows:-

Legal Matters	OH and TT
Health and Safety	TH and ZBE
Finance	TD and TT
Young Champions	Co-opt new member
Marketing/Communications/Tourism/Leisure	MH
Pilotage	DW and Co-opt Richard Eggleton
Environmental/AONB	JD
Commercial User Group	ZBE
Non Beneficiary User Group	JD
Association of River Dart User Clubs	JE
Formal Staff Liaison Contact	Chairman
Friends of Dart Harbour	JE

004/18 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th November 2017.

It was proposed by JD and seconded by TT with all in favour “that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting”.

005/18 Action Grid - Status of Actions set on 13th November 2017.

005/18.1 Completed Actions

Issue/Min No	108/17
Description	Operational Report (including PMSC and Safety)
Action Required	Christmas opening hours to be circulated to customers
Notes	
Status	Complete

Issue/Min No	109/17
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Description	New Board Members
Action Required	Chairman and Senior Administrator to inform the new Board Members of the approval of the Selection Panel recommendations
Notes	
Status	Complete

005/18.2 Ongoing Actions

Issue/Min No	111/17
Description	Environmental Workshop Resume
Action Required	Establish Dart Estuary Forum (as a cross stakeholder meeting plus environmentalists) with Nigel Mortimer and James Dodd (Chairman)
Status	Ongoing and moving forward.
Discussion	A group of key people are moving this forward. It will be key to pull in SHGs to be proud owners of the forum. A meeting is taking place this week to plan for April/May. It was agreed that all actions need to be taken out the Board Action Grid and moved to reporting for the Dart Estuary Forum

Issue/Min No	112/17
Description	Marketing, Communications and PR
Action Required	MC to progress website update, social media improvements, implementation of Mail Chimp and to develop a PR plan
Status	Mailchimp – Complete Social Media Improvements – Complete Website Update - Ongoing
	MC to identify one of the workshop sessions in 2018 for a discussion on Marketing, Communications and PR
Status	Ongoing – for discussion as agenda item.
Discussion	MH still some questions of whether the Authority is comfortable about long term trends. This needs to be done as a separate activity to get a good picture.

Issue/Min No	113/17
Description	Budget
Actions Required	MC to implement the agreed budget for 2018 as follows:-
Status (including actions below)	Not all complete
Discussion	Progressing all items budgeted for 2018. MC will carry out operations and meet budget for 2018 MC expressed nervousness about three key areas that are not driven by us:- a) RNLI/LWL/DA/DB in relation to the timing of when we do our rebuild. b) Premier activity and ferry terminal.

	<p>c) Third is the fishing vessel pontoon 2020/24. The timing is difficult as the EU has just closed funding pot. There is currently no information about whether the UK government will continue this kind of funding.</p> <p>d) The DHM is working on the potential to extend the DC pontoon into trots to include SHG involvement.</p> <p>e) TD – need a UK replacement for EU grant – approach MP.</p> <p>f) Board session to look at clear capital plan for future budget items to move into a capital plan.</p>
113/17.1	<p>Build cash reserves – but not to fall behind on capital maintenance being aware of what Premier and SHDC/RNLI are doing</p> <p>Maintain DA/DB/LWL to keep the facility safe</p> <p>Support Premier Marinas development of the potential DYC pontoon</p>
113/17.2	<p>Develop options for DA/DB improvement with timing to align with any development of Coronation Park</p> <p>Develop options for reworking trot moorings in Kingswear with potential replacement with pontoons.</p> <p>Wider advertising of unallocated moorings locally, in maritime magazines and with businesses with local interest</p> <p>Plan for reposition of moorings that remain unallocated (with no demand)</p> <p>Investigate interest and potential funding for Stoke Gabriel facilities</p> <p>An additional option not considered in June 2017 but included in discussion was the Premier development of a ferry berth in Dartmouth</p> <p>2017 -Utilise underspend in 2017 to purchase 2 temporary pontoons (like the one already trialled in Dittisham) to provide a pontoon for Stoke Gabriel trial of potential ferry landing and to bridge DA/DB pontoon to provide more annual walk ashore. Cost £30,000</p> <p>2017 – Purchase pontoons or pontoon sections for assembly that would replace the inner section of LWL since this would reduce safety risk and also provide generic pontoons that could be used in other parts of the river or in LWL/DA/DB. Cost TBC</p> <p>2017 – Contribution to improve Dartmouth Yacht Club shower facilities Cost £5,000</p> <p>2017/18 -Tackle the issue of the pilot boat Lynx – either purchase alternative boat for 2018 upgrade by DHNA staff (Cost £50,000) or schedule lift out and maintenance of Lynx by contractor (2017 work to be paid for in year)</p> <p>2018- Rework trot moorings to replace with pontoons (limited trial of facility to fit with pile driving schedule in river) cost – as much or little as required to maintain cash reserves and allow DHNA support to Premier development on the embankment</p>

113/17.4	Note the intention to reduce 2017 corporation tax liability in view of the level of cash reserves identified post Octobers Board discussion
	Increase the majority of charges by RPI – In order to ensure DHNA has the resource to continue to improve our facilities as demanded by users and those on the waiting list.
	Exclude Harbour Dues for small vessels and personal watercraft - In order to encourage use of the river by small non-polluting vessels (including those used by children). It is proposed that vessels that are not fitted with propelling machinery and for any vessel of less than 4m in length would be exempt
	Freeze Visitor HDs and Mooring charges – In order to continue to attract visitors
	Reduce Yacht taxi charges by 50% – Taxi charges should not deter visitors including those with families (with children) and should encourage use of the taxi to reduce unnecessary berthing alongside in small boats.
	Set a contingency of £20,000 for environmental projects – To reflect DHNA importance of safeguarding the environment
	Increase the website budget line by £10,000 – In order to enhance our transparency to our stakeholders and the general public in improving our website including the viewing experience from mobile devices
	Increase the marketing budget by £10,000 to reflect the need to develop, refine and implement the Communications strategy. This would include self employed contractor wages as well as marketing related purchases

Issue/Min No	091/17.1
Description	Develop policies for seasonal pontoons
Action Required	MC to develop policies for seasonal pontoons for 2018
Notes	Consideration will be given as to how to police the seasonal pontoons.
Status	Ongoing – February/March - develop principles on how to employ them and rules for use for when in position during April/May

Issue/Min No	092/17.2
Description	Empty Moorings
Action Required	MC to develop an active management system and policy consideration for unused moorings.
Notes	A discussion took place and it was agreed that active management and a softly, softly approach was desirable for this issue
Status	Ongoing – MC advised he had written to 26 people with vessels in poor condition and to 2 customers with empty moorings. Responses have been received from 14, 2 of which gave up their moorings. MC will follow up on those who have not yet responded.

Issue/Min No	097/17.1
Description	Regatta
Action Required	MC to write to the Stakeholder Groups
Notes	It was agreed to write to stakeholder groups to get their feedback from their members and to feed this into the Regatta Committee.
Status	Done except ADRUC – will be covered at their next meeting.

006/18 Urgent Business brought forward at the discretion of the Chairman

006/18.1 Port Marine Safety Code Training

MH reported that the PMSC training he attended had brought a number of questions to the fore on how the Board manage their duty under the PMSC. The main questions were concerned with:-

- a) Whether there is active questioning of the activities of the designated person (DP) by the Board
- b) Do we have a good working relationship as a Board,
- c) Is the DP doing the right things to provide protection to the Authority.

Following a discussion **it was agreed** to:-

- i. Discuss more fully at the February Meeting.
- ii. Board Members to make themselves aware of the PMSC in view of the collective responsibility the Board holds.
- iii. Review advice from the South West Regional Ports Association (SWRPA) and British Ports Authority (BPA).
- iv. Give consideration to the employment of a commercial company to carry out the audit.

ACTION: MC to arrange a briefing for new Board Members and for the matter to be discussed at the February Board Meeting.

007/18 Declarations of Interest

Board Members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests including the nature and extent of such interests.

There were no changes in previously recorded registered interests.

008/18 Questions from the Public.

There was a 15 minute period for questions from members of the public.

There were no members of the public present.

009/18 Stakeholder Groups

009/18.1 River Dart Non Beneficiary Group (Non Bens) (9th Feb)

JD advised that the next meeting is scheduled for 9th February in Kingswear and Mike Pearey will be the Chairman and Sue Pudduck as the secretary. MC advised that he is keen to involve the group in the Estuary Forum as they have a strong environmental interest, but that they should still have a purpose in their own right. It was noted that the Authority needs to be proactive to put forward items for them to consider and follow up. It was also felt that the group should be a conduit back to the parish councils and lines of communication in both directions should be a key aim of the group and the Board. It was also noted that the group should not be limited to parish councils, but broaden out to other organisations with a relevant interest.

ACTION: JD/MC to give this feedback to the next Non Bens meeting.

009/18.2 River Dart Commercial Users Group (CUG)

The next meeting is to be held on 29th January.

009/18.3 Association of Dart River User Clubs (ADRUC)

MC advised that currently the main area of interest of this group is the introduction of the registration fee scheme. MC advised that although more consultation could have taken place it was noted that this is executive work and was a commercial decision.

MC advised that of the 667 invoices raised he had received only 15 letters or emails, to which he had responded. The main feedback was that it was a good idea but that we should have informed customers earlier. **It was agreed** that JE needs to advise ADRUC that consultation takes place in relation to the Moorings' Policy and not on individual commercial decisions.

ACTION: JE and MC to give this feedback to the next ADRUC meeting.

010/18 Item 10 – Operational Report (including PMSC and Safety)

MC reported on the Operational Report, and the following matters referred to:-

Training – It was noted that MC is undertaking the HM Certificate Training for one year. MC advised that this would present an opportunity to submit policies for peer review.

MAIB – It was noted that the MAIB are unwilling to offer advice on 24 hour port best practice.

Capital -MC advised that the increase in expenditure had been allowed for tax purposes, which had taken the Authority out of paying corporation tax.

Finances– The finance chart (bank forecast against performance and spending) shows that the Authority will have a cash reserve in the region of £550,000 to £650,000. It was noted that the Adler and Allan matter is still not resolved. MC advised that the registration

fees will bring in around £130,000. **It was agreed** that the Authority is in a strong position for the coming year and for capital planning.

Waiting List – MC was asked to give an update in view of the amount of work done on the waiting list and was asked if he was more comfortable with the waiting list position. MC advised that the waiting list numbers do not change and that the numbers on lists naturally level out, with some coming off/allocated berths and others joining the lists. He advised that there are still difficult areas, for example Stoke Gabriel and Dittisham pontoons, with many waiting for a dinghy place. These people will be waiting for a long time as the Authority still needs to allocate tender spaces. MC advised that everything he has seen through the year matches the waiting list research and work done at the June workshop. MC felt that he had made the right decision in changing trot moorings to pontoons and by taking 18 mud swinging moorings out and moving to deeper water. Work is progressing on this with 14 moorings ready to lay and 2 or 3 to make up.

011/18 Cruise Ship Report

011/18.1 Background

Tricia Daniels has been involved in encouraging cruise ship visits to the Dart since 2013. But at the beginning of her engagement the effort was a team affair with assistance from Dartmouth Tourist Information Centre (TIC), Dartmouth BID, Dartmouth Town Council (interest of mayor) and DHNA. But the situation changed with demise of the BID and the uncertainty surrounding the future of the TIC in 2017.

At the end of 2017 cruise ship season a number of discussions and meeting were held in order to fully scope DHNA and Tricia's responsibilities and activities in relation to cruise ship visits. The issue driving these discussions surrounded a need to ensure that the town council and community played an appropriate role in the tourist aspects of cruise ship visits. The discussions also provided a useful forum for the Authority to understand their options to allow Tricia to play a less active role.

011/18.2 Relevant Issues

Responsibilities for large ship visits fall naturally into three categories:

Unless the Authority was to decide to curtail large ship visits it was felt that the first two responsibilities would need to be led by the Authority but might be supported by others. Specifically, the connection between marketing (selling Dartmouth as a great place for ships to visit) and "on the ground" tourist activity dealing visitor reception suggest that DHNA might ask for assistance with marketing from the town council or SHDC.

- a) Marketing - responsibility for attracting vessels to the port including marketing, PR, and most importantly maintaining relationships with key members of the industry who influence port calls. This activity includes keeping close contact with key industry contacts and ensuring that their awareness of Dartmouth as an attractive port is maintained. This includes routine updates on the town and specifically events and excursion possibilities. In addition to attendance at key trade fares DHNA has also hosted key industry contacts to give them first-hand knowledge of the attractions available.

Most other ports lead their own marketing activity although some are closely supported by other organisations including private contractors and council tourism and business development staff.

- b) Port Operations – responsibility for the safety responsibility for arrival arrangements including piloting, mooring and harbour services. All other ports have responsibility of port operations for ship visits but are assisted in this role by ships agents appointed by the cruise companies and these arrangements are most unlikely to change.
- c) Passenger Co-ordination – responsibility for co-ordination and reception arrangements for passengers who disembark from the ships.

It was clear that DHNA had assumed almost sole responsibility for passenger co-ordination in 2017 and that this role would be best led by the authorities responsible for tourist activities.

Following discussion on November 2017, the newly appointed TIC manager (Karen Perrow) confirmed that the town council would commit funding and TIC resource in order to lead all aspects of passenger co-ordination. It is understood that DHNA will support this activity primarily through sharing information on visitor numbers and timings and also by preparing the town jetty secure reception area for tender berthing.

011/18.3 Financial Implications

Figures from 2017 show the Authority had an income of around £44,000 from visits and directly attributable costs of £38,000 based on 8 visiting ships from a schedule of 10 planned visits. Taking into account other savings that could be made in the event of a decision to cease cruise ship operations the Authority makes a loss. But it is not difficult to justify the operations and the need to either maintain visiting ship numbers or to cease operations – the consequence of fewer visits would be greater owing to some of the direct fixed overheads.

It is difficult to judge the benefits of visits in contributing toward the thriving community aspects of the DHNA vision. But judging by the very rough raw data available (MC survey of 4 shops, and feedback from the reception team when visitors embark at the end of a day ashore) there does appear to be an overall net benefit to the town.

It is even more difficult to assess the financial impact of marketing on the success of DHNA cruise ship operations. Numbers of ship visits in 2016/17 did rise following a concerted marketing effort in 2014/15. Having now built up a base of contacts and repeat bookings it is impossible to forecast the effect of a reduced marketing effort. However, the sole cost to the Authority from the marketing effort is the travel expenses for attendance at the cruise ship convention (£3,500).

There is an implication of minimal loss of income if it decided to not actively pursue cruise ship visits (number of visits could halve) reducing profit in the region of £30k per annum. Alternatively, revenue might be increased by 50% with increased ship visits.

011/18.4 Discussion

A discussion took place:-

- a) The Authority used to be part of Destination South West, which including shared marketing and a stand at the cruise ship conference in Miami, but that consortium has since ended.
- b) MC attended the cruise ship conference in 2017, but he felt that he was not the best person to promote the port as there were no enquiries about port issues.
- c) Tricia maintained marketing communications through her contacts with ships
- d) The meet and greet of passengers was passed to the TIC.
- e) The key beneficiary from cruise ship visits is the town and it was felt that the town is not sufficiently engaged with that fact. It was also felt that the town should contribute to the marketing and meeting/greeting and the Authority should handle the safe passage of the ships.
- f) It was felt that with the Mayflower 400 approaching 2018 would be a crucial year to attend the cruise ship conference.

011/18.5 Recommendation

The report and discussion was considered and **it was agreed to** continue to support cruise ship marketing but look for a substantive discussion for the future and the Board noted:-

- a) In the view of those involved in the arrangements for large ships visits there is a need to review the Authorities commitment. It should also be noted that bookings are already in place for 2018 and some for 2019 and that any decision for a change in strategy would need to take this into account.
- b) That Tricia Daniels is content to continue to be the marketing lead and is willing to attend the Miami cruise ship convention in Florida in 2018.
- c) That DHNA should continue to be the lead authority for port operations for ship visits pending any review of commitment.
- d) The TIC have taken responsibility for Passenger Coordination for 2018.

011/18.6 Actions

- a) Review the Authority's commitment to cruise ships
- b) DHNA to continue to lead on cruise ships in Dartmouth
- c) Tricia Daniels to continue to be the marketing lead for cruise ships and to attend the Miami cruise convention in 2018.
- d) The Authority should engage with Dartmouth Town Council and the TIC.

012/18 Marketing Report

The Board reviewed the Marketing Report:-

MC advised that he was struggling with social media and that the PR consultant appointed during 2017 had not achieved the desired aims. A discussion took place about the way ahead and the following suggestions made:-

- a) MC asked how much should be invested to improve marketing.
- b) MH advised that a PR consultancy in the marine market place could be engaged.
- c) A PR consultancy and a professional marketing coordinator to optimise communication would need to work together.

- d) Current PR activity involves MC writing stories and a consistent style of writing is needed
- e) It was felt that over next few months the Authority needs to increase marketing and identify target markets.
- f) The correct profile information, which contributes to capital plan needs to be established to ensure the Authority has a defensive position.
- g) Communications needs to be improved.
- h) Visitor numbers were about 250k in total of 1.5m in 2008 and there has been a drop of approximately 15% between 2008-2010, but these numbers have now levelled out. It was felt that Dartmouth could potentially get more of the visitors' market.
- i) Website needs to be improved and updated for mobile devices as 70% of website traffic is now from mobiles.
- j) A suggestion was made to invite a professional to generate ideas at a Board workshop meeting to assist in identifying messages and the mediums we should utilise.
- k) Any PR consultant will need to be close enough to the work of the Authority to be able to generate stories themselves to avoid giving MC extra work.
- l) The Authority needs to grow market share and needs to communicate more effectively through different channels.
- m) It was suggested that MC should train "tech savvy" staff to generate social media activity.
- n) There is potential in employing someone to carry out PR and social media activity, but first the role needs to be defined. This could be based on an hourly rate and not be a long term commitment.

It was agreed: To increase the website budget and to begin the recruitment of the PR/Marketing contractor using the principles - competed, interviewed and companies with 8 people or more with an approximate hourly rate £30 per hour.

To discuss this more broadly in one of our workshops with market research and mooring analysis.

ACTION: MC to progress the recruitment of a PR/Marketing contractor and the website upgrade.

013/18 Correspondence

Board Members to advise on any correspondence received.

There was no relevant correspondence.

014/18 Any Other Business

014/18.1 Mayflower 400

The Board noted that MC and JE are on the maritime committee for the Mayflower 400 celebrations taking place in 2020. It was noted that a pageant is planned and proposals to get more cruise ships to Dartmouth for 2020. The relationship between the Authority and the organisation of this event will be similar to that for the regatta.

014/18.2 Board Meetings 2018

The discussion topics for the workshop style Board meetings was agreed as follows:-

April 9th Capital
June 11th PR/Marketing
October 8th Budget

015/18 Move “In Committee”

It was proposed by ZBE and seconded by JD with all in favour, “*that the meeting move into Committee*”.

016/18 Decisions Made “In Committee”

IC 003/18 Item 16 – Board Members

MH advised that Sarah Dunn had resigned from the Board because of work commitments. When the Selection Panel made their recommendations to appoint TH and JB, they also recommended that should a position become available before the next round of Board interviews, that Julian J Distin be offered a place on the Board.

A discussion took place and it was noted that Julian J Distin:-

- a) had been a Board Member for a considerable period of time and had previously held the position of Chairman.
- b) Had declared interests that he was a commercial operator and related (cousin) to an employee of Dart Harbour and the owner of a competing business.
- c) Would be a good ally in terms of communication with the wider community.

It was agreed to offer a position on the Board for the remaining period vacated by Sarah Dunn (December 2019) to Julian J Distin.

ACTION: Chairman to write to Julian J Distin

It was proposed by TD and seconded by TT with all in favour “to ratify decisions made In Committee”.

017/18 Date of next Meeting

12th FEBRUARY 2018 – Clifton Room, The Guildhall, Dartmouth at 1830 hrs