



Dart Harbour

Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority

Minutes of a Meeting of the Dart Harbour and Navigation Authority held in The Studio at the Flavel Centre, Flavel Place, Dartmouth, on Monday 10th September 2007, commencing at 1400 hrs.

PRESENT:

Mr S Ellyatt	Chairman
Mr E Fleck	Vice-Chairman
Mr J Distin	
Mr N Hockaday	
Mr R Humphreys	
Mrs S Puddock	
Mrs C Thorp	
Dr J Walker	
Captain D White	

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss R Taylor Administration Assistant

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2. Questions from the Public. There were two members of the public present, Mr F Hawkins, Dittisham and Mr T Andrew, Beechcroft.

Q1) *Does the Authority have a pro-active approach to how the Noss development proceeds?*

A1) The Authority takes a pro-active approach to the proposed development and the Harbour Master and Mr Distin have been consulted in the past by the local authority and the developers. The matter is due to be discussed further in the "In Committee" section.

Q2) *Mr Andrew of Beechcroft asked why he has not received a response to his letter.*

A2) It was explained to Mr Andrew that as he has taken the decision to appeal through the Department for Transport (DfT), correspondence would now be through the DfT. The Authority had been dealing with the issues before the receipt of the letter from the DfT Ports Division (Mr Andrew Bridges, dated 23rd August 2007) and before a written response had

been sent to Mr Andrew in response to his previous correspondence to the Authority. Mr Andrew felt that the lack of response had caused project delays on site. This suggestion was challenged by the Board. Mr Andrew also stated that were two separate issues – mooring a barge during construction work and long term mooring considerations.

Mr Andrew understood that the Authority had undertaken a site visit from the water but urged a site visit on land to fully appreciate the alleged lack of storage space ashore which would demonstrate the need for the barge to be moored alongside the wall. Mr Andrew indicated that he did not wish to use his garden as storage space.

It was reiterated to Mr Andrew that an alongside mooring would almost certainly cause damage in rough weather, and also would mean that the area would be over-developed when Mr Andrew's existing pontoon and running moorings were taken into account, thus establishing an undesirable precedent. In view of the fact that the whole area was within an AONB this was not a viable option for the Authority. The matter would be discussed "In Committee".

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th July 2007.

It was proposed by Mr Humphreys and seconded by Mr Distin with all in favour "***that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting***".

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th July 2007.

Stoke Gabriel Sluice – Harbour Master confirmed that this project was proceeding as planned.

Financial Report – It was agreed that the Duchy Fundus Rent would appear quarterly in financial reports.

ACTION: Finance Manager to implement the Duchy Fundus rental into the quarterly financial reports.

DEEM – Mr Humphreys reported verbally - having declared an interest - that Ken Carter of South Hams District Council (SHDC) had proposed that all partners pay their entire contribution for the year to cover DEEM's wind down costs. Mr Humphreys understood all partners had now paid except for the Authority. Ken Carter had also originally proposed that any surplus contributions after all overheads had been met would be divided on a pro rata basis between partners but had indicated at the last DEEM meeting that he now considered it should be retained to provide an initial start fund for any newly appointed Estuary Environmental Officer within the AONB unit (possibly in April 2008).

A lengthy discussion took place about the demise of DEEM and it was agreed that a financial cut off date was needed.

It was agreed to pay as per previously minuted in June and July.

June 07 - *“The Harbour Master felt that Dart Harbour should be charged pro rata to the closure date and not for a full year.”*

July 07 - *“The Harbour Master reported that an invoice had been received for the full year (£15,000). The Authority would not pay this full amount but only pro rata for the time in the 2006/2007 financial year that DEEM was operational.”*

The future plans to ‘fill the vacuum’ DEEM had left was also discussed. The Harbour Master mentioned that a preliminary discussion had taken place with Capt Ian Gibson (Salcombe Harbour Master) suggesting a post for a Dart/Salcombe Environmental Officer should be considered in light of current contributions as a viable financial alternative.

The board thanked Ray Humphreys for all his efforts and expertise given over the past 10 years.

It was proposed by Mr Distin and seconded by Mrs Thorp with all in agreement ***“that the ‘DEEM’ budget was ring fenced as a contingency for a future post of an environmental officer as the environmental issues on the Dart remain a strong consideration and a priority objective, albeit a cost effective one”***.

ACTION: Finance Manager.

5 Agenda Items

5.1 Strategic Business Plan

The Strategic Business plan was discussed and some amendments were needed.

- Reference to environmental activity needs to remain but the name ‘DEEM’ should be removed.
- Section 4 include the Harbour Guide
- Ref 7.4 amend to 25 year lease.
- Ref 8.9 referring to GIS system. Mr Humphreys asked about the current position. The Harbour Master confirmed that Pear Technology had provided a quote and also offered a machine to trial.
- Section 9 needs expanding. The objectives table needs specific 2008 items to be updated by the end of October in order to discuss 2008 budgets in November’s meeting. The table needs reducing down to specifics with generic headings. Mr Hockaday confirmed that Guy Northcott (Dart Harbour Accountant) had quoted for the preparation of a five year profit and loss forecast taking into account the Duchy, Pensions and the Capital Plan.

It was agreed to set 2008 objectives in the October meeting with a further review due after a period of 12 months.

Action: Senior Administrator to amend as above, ensure GIS added to the agenda for October, circulate communications from Pear Technology as annexe for next meeting, HM to send a holding letter to them. Guy Northcott’s to prepare 5 year forecast.

5.2 Disabled Access at Sharpham Quay (North)

A lengthy discussion took place following perusal of the supplied plans. Pros and cons were discussed for each option considering the materials, history of the area, commercial viability and the Byelaws.

Mr Fleck suggested that the application, so soon after the refurbishment of the quay, would raise concerns of over development and that it would have been better if the application had been submitted in conjunction with the refurbishment application. Mrs Puddock raised the issue of disabled access once passengers were ashore and questioned whether a suitable route was available for this purpose. Mr Humphreys confirmed that there were two routes and the old track would be the most viable as the scenic walk was not currently suitable for disabled access.

Mr Distin and Dr Walker commented on the size of vessels used by commercial operators intending to use the quay; was a 12 seater commercially viable? Mr Distin was keen to know whether the Sharpham Trust have contacted the potential commercial operators to seek their advice on requirements to land passengers there.

There was general concern that any decision taken would be monitored and considered by other commercial operators in the area. Mr Humphreys reminded the board that historically people have been landed there, but a new pontoon may well raise issues elsewhere Greenway, Galampton etc. It was felt that renovating the solid structure in keeping would be preferable to a pontoon. Chairman felt as 4 options already submitted the trust would be open to suggestion.

It was agreed to contact the Sharpham Trust with some suggestions for them to review option two and four and report back to us for further consideration.

Action: Chairman and Harbour Master to write to Sharpham Trust to request reviews of options 2 & 4 with further suggestions as above.

5.3 Licensing Commercial Projects on the River Dart

A discussion took place and most were in favour of the policy, so long as the wording was reviewed taking into account both small and major projects. Dr Walker did not want the policy to discourage the use of the river for delivery of goods. A comment was made that on certain areas on the Dart taking delivery by river may actually be more disruptive than by road. Mr Hockaday requested a caveat in the document covering major projects.

Action: The third objective to be amended to read *“To agree with the Project Management Team in writing the project scope and emphasise the need to monitor progress against agreed bench marks”*.

The document should also request Risk Assessments and Safety Management plans, but it was felt that most reputable contractors would automatically provide these to comply with their own Health and Safety documentation, which would also have to include a Dart Harbour licence.

A veto power was suggested by Mr Humphreys in case of non-compliance but the Harbour Master confirmed that ultimately the DfT hold higher authority. Mr Distin requested the final draft be sent to an experienced solicitor, and the Harbour Master suggested Charles Hattersley of Ashfords, who would ensure that the wording of the document is legally binding. It is important not to lose sight of the fact the Authority encourages river access for construction projects.

Action: Mr Fleck and Harbour Master to seek necessary legal advice on stance with Byelaws and 1975 Act to ensure policy is in place by 1st April 2008. Prepare document with information confirming both the proposal and the consequences of non-compliance.

5.4 Annual Meeting (26th November 2007)

The next Annual Public meeting is planned to follow last year's format including a powerpoint presentation. Board members need to commit to contributing during October meeting as the Annual Meeting is planned for 26th November. The program will need to be finalised at the November Board meeting on 12th November. A decision was made to offer a spokesperson for Noss a presentation slot which should also include a short question and answer session.

Action: Senior Administrator to include the Annual Meeting on the agenda for October. HM to contact Noss to arrange a spokesperson .

6. Stakeholder Groups

6.1 River Dart Non Beneficiary Group (Annex 4)

The agenda for their meeting on 12th September 2007 was discussed. Mr Distin was interested to see Lighthouse Cove appear on their agenda. As they are to discuss Lighthouse Cove, DEEM and Stoke Gabriel Sluices it was agreed that a Harbour Authority presence would be required, it was agreed that both Dr Walker & the Harbour Master would attend.

Action: Verbal report back to board at October meeting.- Dr Walker & Harbour Master.

6.2 River Dart Commercial Users Group

Their next meeting will be held on 15th October. The Harbour Master reported on communications from Mr C Venmore of the Shell Fisherman's Association which, in part, mentioned if there would be any chance of setting up a new Stakeholder Group for the Fishermen. A discussion took place and all were in agreement that a new Stakeholder Group would not be viable therefore the CUG would be the correct route forward. The remaining content of his letter to be discussed "In Committee".

Action: HM to write to Mr Venmore informing him that the CUG would continue to be the approved Stakeholder Group for the Shell Fisherman's Association.

6.3 Leisure Users Group

The Harbour Master confirmed that their new chairman was Mr Walldridge. Nothing else to report.

6.4 Riparian and Mooring Rights Owners Group.

The Harbour Master reported that he had received an e-mail from Mr Jobson of RAMROG requesting the names and addresses of all private mooring holders on the Dart in order to send out a letter to them from RAMROG. Our solicitors have advised that due to Data Protection Act 1998 we are unable to give out details of people registered with us.

Following a discussion it was suggested that any communication sent on RAMROG's behalf would need Board approval and be done at RAMROG's expense, with an accompanying letter from Dart Harbour explaining the Authority's position. RAMROG would, of course, be shown our letter.

ACTION: Harbour Master to report back to Mr Jobson.

7. Harbour Master's Report

7.1 Operations Report

Lynx- Following the mid term MCA survey in June the remaining minor recommended improvements to Lynx have been carried out and the boat continues to perform well when in service.

Maid- No further problems have been encountered with Maid in July and August and she was used as a second yacht taxi during peak periods last month. However, this boat is overdue for a major refit which should be carried out in the autumn in the Hoodown workshop.

Phoebe- The new yacht taxi was licensed on 6th July and all yacht taxi crew were given familiarisation training before being allowed to drive the boat. Apart from the realignment of the throttle cable and the addition of an extra handrail on each side of the wheelhouse to assist passenger boarding, no other improvements were necessary before the boat went into service and passenger comments have generally been very complimentary since its introduction. The benefits of the additional capacity were well demonstrated during regatta and the August bank holiday when the two yacht taxis ran in tandem each day from noon onwards with a maximum loading of up to of 20 passengers.

Ariadne- This workboat refit was completed at the end of July and the boat has been in service without problems since being relaunched.

Triton- The new engine for Triton was installed during the first two weeks of August. Minor adjustments were necessary to the bedplates to accommodate the new engine but this work was carried out by the authority staff before the engine was lowered into place.

Ship Visits- Three scheduled ship visits took place in July and August. HMS Sutherland is now due at 1445 hrs on 7th September for a three day stay.

Southtown Sewerage Scheme - Work is due to restart on this South West Water project on 1 October. All Southtown residents have been contacted by the main contractor to highlight changes in working practices during phase 2 and a public information meeting has been scheduled for the evening of 4th September.

Capital Projects

Stoke Gabriel Sluice- Final plans for the restoration of Stoke Gabriel Sluice will be submitted to South Hams District Council by Paul Carpenter Associates shortly. No work to attempt to crack open the existing one piece gate can start until after 1 October when divers may be required to loosen the eight locking bolts.

The Harbour Master confirmed that he was still in consultation with Perry Lugg about the sluice and that he had also consulted with the SHDC Planning Department and Conservation Officers. Concern was expressed that the local residents may be upset by lack of information on the project but the Harbour Master confirmed that he is to attend a Stoke Gabriel Parish Council meeting to help aid communication with residents. This meeting will also include details of improvements requested by the Stoke Gabriel Boating Association to the northern foreshore area in the creek and proposed improvements to the slipway. It was also suggested that publicising some of our current projects on our website may improve public relations. It was suggested to hold a public meeting but was ultimately felt that good quality consultation via the Parish Council would be sufficient.

Action: Senior Administrator to arrange entry on website. HM to organise an information board and liaise with Stoke Gabriel Parish Council.

Town Jetty Piles- Quotes have been requested for the replacement of the eight pontoon piles on the Town Jetty. Two contractors will have will have piling barges in the immediate area during the coming winter and this should be reflected in the quotes as relocation costs should be reduced.

This was discussed at length. The unknown depth of the current piles into the river bed makes quoting to replace them difficult. However, one quote for pile replacement has already been delivered with a second one expected next week. Piling consultants have informed the Harbour Master that fitting the remaining authority owned piles (76) with static anodes would probably increase the life of these piles by up to ten years and the chairman felt that this option should be closely examined.

Action: Further research and quotes to be obtained - Harbour Master.

Pontoon Power Supplies-Prices have been obtained for the supply of lockable metered power pods to replace the unmetered pods currently in place on the Town Jetty and Commercial Pontoon KP & KQ. Subject to availability it is hoped to install these new pods in the autumn.

It was noted that Kingswear KP Commercial Pontoon now seemed to have domestic freezers onboard which was a Health and Safety issue. This hazard should be addressed as soon as possible.

Action: Harbour Master to deal with issue of non-marine grade freezers on the pontoon and install lockable electrical supply pods as soon as possible.

2007 Regatta- This year's regatta took place in good weather condition with no major incidents. HMS Somerset, the regatta guardship, was a popular attraction for the public and long queues built up on the South Embankment on the two days that she was open to visitors. MV National Geographic Endeavour stayed at the buoys two hours later than planned to allow passengers to watch the fireworks on the evening of Thursday 30th Aug. The intermediate buoys between Nos 3 & 3A buoys which were raised after the departure of the passenger ship provided valuable additional mooring space in midstream for rafted larger visiting boats and were filled almost immediately. The addition of a temporary dinghy pontoon on the North Embankment also provided much needed mooring space and relieved the inevitable pressure on the existing pontoon, which required constant attention from the river staff to control oversize boats.

The Board expressed unanimous thanks and appreciation was given to all staff for doing such a fabulous job once again.

EOS – 90m vessel due to re-visit the harbour from Sunday 16th September for 3-4 days. Times to be advised.

7.2 Financial Report

The increased income on 2006 was noted despite a quieter season; of course price increases are a factor. The figures prove that 'Marina' type berths like the Town Jetty are very desirable and price per berth has not affected the location's popularity. Mr Hockaday was pleased to see income for 2007 up on 2006. The Chairman noted that the report reflected the expected 8% average increase that was necessary to cover the increases in Duchy Fundus Rent. By adopting this planned pricing in policy in 2007 the board should be able to implement smaller increases year on year and thus avoid one large price increase in the future, which will allow affordability to remain a key principle of future pricing policies.

7.3 Office Report

Staff training was discussed and actions agreed.

ACTION: Senior Administrator to amend staff training details.

ACTION: Obtain specific update on Private Mooring Maintenance Invoicing for 2007 – Penny to report at next meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Noss Development - All board members were issued with a copy of the Noss newsletter, which was perused and discussed. It was stressed that this was only an outline and would be further discussed "In Committee".

Action: It was agreed that Mr Fleck, Dr Walker, Mrs Pudduck, Mrs Thorp and Mr Distin would attend the stakeholder meeting on the 24th September 2007.

Yacht Taxi Complaint - Mr Foster – Chairman confirmed to board that this matter has now been resolved. To avoid future misunderstandings regarding Taxi fares it was agreed it needs adding to the agenda in December.

Action: Senior Administrator to include Yacht Taxi fares and clarification of operation procedures on the December agenda.

Board Reselection – Mrs Pudduck, Mrs Thorp and Mr Ellyatt are all due to complete their initial board appointment term at the end of December.

Mrs Thorp wishes to stand down and she was thanked her for both her time and work during her term.

The appointment for new board member will now be advertised as outlined in the DfT Guide to Good Governance for Trust Ports (GGG)..

Both Mrs Puddock and the Chairman have indicated their willingness to stand for reappointment. This process will now be referred to the Board Selection Panel who will proceed in accordance with the GGG. The Harbour Master will contact the panel members and advise them of the situation.

ACTION – Harbour Master to advertise the vacancy.

9. Move into Committee

It was proposed by Mr Humphreys seconded by Mrs Thorp with all in favour, "**that the meeting move "Into Committee"**".

10. Decisions made "In Committee"

It was proposed by Mr Distin and seconded by Mr Humphreys, with all in favour "**to ratify decisions made In Committee"**".

11. **Date of next Meeting** – 8th October 2007 at the Flavel Centre.