

Dart Harbour and 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 14th March 2011, commencing at 1400 hrs.

PRESENT:	Mr N Hockaday	Chairman
	Mr J Scott	Vice Chairman
	Mr M Cast	
	Mr O Hill	
	Ms H Meacock	
	Mr J Murtagh	
	Ms S Pudduck	
	Mr R Giles	Harbour Master
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs P Johns	Senior Administrator

One minute's silence was held as a mark of respect to Mr Ernest Fleck who passed away on 18th February 2011.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr Pollard.

2. Questions from the Public

There were two members of the public present and the Assistant Harbour Master in attendance.

(1) Dr John Walker asked about progress on the Dittisham Pontoon in relation to a number of safety concerns.

The Harbour Master reported that he had met with the supplier of the pontoon and three options had been identified to improve the grip of the pontoon. The best option of the three was to paint with a suitable a non-slip solution. It was noted that replacing the planking may weaken the structure, so was dismissed as an option.

The design of the pontoon was supposed to have movable planks located in various positions that may be lifted to rescue anyone falling in and going under the pontoon. These had not been provided when the pontoon was delivered. The suppliers have agreed to fit these safety panels free of charge.

It was also noted that the horizontal walkway and bridge were not DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant and quotes have been received for a new bridge and upgrading the walkway.

Mr Hill asked whether the standard finish was BSI compliant, as in that way the Authority could be confident over the standard of finish and also would have some recourse if not BSI.

Mr Murtagh noted that the finish on the Double Steps pontoon was of the same material and that consideration should be given to applying the same finish to this pontoon.

ACTION: Harbour Master to investigate application of non-slip paint to the Dittisham pontoon if the surface is not BSI compliant.

(2) Mrs Melanie Holman, of Darthaven Marina requested that pontoons be made available in the centre of the river for the Regatta period for the use of vessels over 40ft..

ACTION: Harbour Master to give consideration to the request.

3. Stakeholder Groups

3.1 River Dart Non Beneficiary Group – the next meeting will be on 17th March 2011, at 1930 hours at Ashprington. The Harbour Master will attend.

3.2 Commercial Users Group – some of the commercial users are keen to conduct environmental surveys in the form of dives and sampling, at no cost to Dart Harbour. It was recommended to support the group involved.

3.3 Association of Dart River User Clubs (ADRUC) – Nothing to report.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 14th February 2011

It was proposed by Ms Pudduck and seconded by Mr Scott with all in favour “**that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting**”.

5. Matters Arising from Minutes held on 14th February 2011

Board Appraisals

The Chairman reported that Board Appraisals had taken place. Two areas had been highlighted where the Authority may be vulnerable one being environmental matters and the other area media and PR. **It was agreed** that Mr Cast take the role for media and PR. All board members felt that the Authority was heading in the right direction.

6 Agenda Items

6.1 Estuary Officer

Nigel Mortimer, South Devon AONB Estuaries Officer provided an update on the new Marine Protected Areas and a report and handout was provided to board members. The report and handout is available in the Harbour Office.

The following points were considered relevant to Dart Harbour.

The Hoodown Project had been affected by one of the new Zones and an additional fee paid because the development was within 1,000m of the Zone.

Planning Applications – Ms Pudduck asked about information concerning planning applications and it was noted that the Authority regularly receives the planning application list from South Hams District Council (SHDC) and is consulted more specifically on applications concerning foreshore developments.

The Environment Agency would like all estuaries to be protected so they can run the Water Framework Directive. The Estuary Officer will attend any relevant meetings in order to find out about the new responsibilities and to gauge the level of engagement.

The Chairman highlighted that there are only two or three activities that take place in the Dart that would be relevant to the new areas or restrictions. These being crab pots, anchoring and dredging. He had not seen anything in the report that would affect this and asked whether Dart Harbour could relax.

The Estuary Officer responded that the Authority could probably relax but he could not be 100% sure. He highlighted that in Salcombe, which is a SSSI dredging for scallops takes place even within a designated area.

Dredging is important for ports and it was considered that any port not prospering would have no available funding for conservation. It was considered that a FEPA licence for dredging would be well received due to the turbid nature of the river.

There was concern over restrictions on anchoring in eel grass locations and the Estuary Officer indicated that leisure anchoring was unlikely to be affected.

It was considered necessary for some level of attendance at meetings and that harbours and port gateways need to do adequate research into new frameworks.

The Estuary Officer expressed hope that common sense would prevail and that as all parties were interested in the health of the river Dart a sensible outcome would ensue.

Signage for The Green Blue initiative is proposed for slipways at Totnes and two other locations in Dartmouth.

Signage to show habitat cubes is also proposed for the marshes on the east side of the river near Totnes and at Greenway Quay.

It was agreed that the Estuary Officer make his next report at the June board meeting.

6.2 Easement Across Foreshore at Dittisham

Mr Hill reported that he had inspected the file concerning the Easement at Dittisham and advised that this particular matter was now closed, with the Easement permitted. However, he advised that consideration would need to be given to the likelihood of similar registrations in the future. He explained that if someone can show a continuous period of 12 years use without permission then squatters' rights can be established. Therefore as soon as an incident of such use is noticed, then permission should be given and then withdrawn. The Authority will need to familiarise itself with the likely areas where this may happen and take an up to date audit of these areas. A photographic record or video of the foreshore would be a useful source of such information.

A local filming company had indicated availability to carry out this filming and costs would be investigated.

ACTION: Harbour Master.

6.3 Dittisham Pontoon

Discussion on this item took place during Questions from the Public.

6.4 Young Champion Award

Ms Pudduck reported that a meeting had taken place with Phil Scoble to assist the Authority in driving forward the Young Champion Award for 2011. A brief had been prepared to outline the targets required from him. However an additional £500 will be required to ensure the project's success and in order to obtain printing. Mr Scoble is very enthusiastic about the project and is keen to get started.

It was agreed to fund an additional £500 for the Young Champion Award scheme in 2011.

ACTION: Mr Scott, Ms Pudduck.

6.5 Noss on Dart

Nothing to report.

6.6 Dredging

This topic will be covered "In Committee".

6.7 Health & Safety

As per the CEO report, no significant incidents have taken place.

6.8 Environmental Matters

Covered under item 6.1.

7. Reports

7.1 CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted and reference made, in particular, to the following:-

4.4.5 The Totnes Boating Association has requested that Dart Harbour investigate relinquishing DHNA moorings in Totnes to them and also the prospect of permitting pontoons either mid-stream or alongside the TBA club house. Investigation has taken

place, and it is concluded that moorings cannot be released as this is not in accordance with the Moorings' Policy. Furthermore, pontoons are assessed to be un-viable due to occasional fresh water surges being outside pontoon operating parameters.

It was agreed to respond to the TBA to refuse permission for both relinquishing moorings and the installation of pontoons.

ACTION: Harbour Master.

2.11.1 Hoodown Phase 1. The Harbour Master reported that the water enabling works had commenced that morning, there had been delays in obtaining relevant local authority consents, but work had started as soon as these consents had been received. Clarification is still awaited on the final agreed price with SMS and clarification is still being identified regarding the concrete fabrication and information from Paul Carpenter Associates. The completion date is now expected to be 22nd July 2011.

2.11.3 ICT Project. Mrs Meacock asked about the relevance of the ICT project highlighted in the report. The Harbour Master advised that as the current server is due for replacement then it would be a useful opportunity to gain more capability which would include more efficient cash handling, digital mapping and mooring information. Also as part of developing the staff team, all staff would be given their own login on computers instead of sharing email accounts. The project will be prepared in conjunction with the Senior Administrator.

ACTION: Harbour Master & Senior Administrator to plan the ICT project.

Reception Area. The Harbour Master advised that improvements to the reception area in the harbour office could be made by moving the whole reception desk back in order to give customers more space. There are also plans to improve the entrance sign, the notice board and to give a visual impression of the river using a navigational chart in the reception area. All visitors will be required to report in and sign a visitor's book.

Customer Facing. Some additional signs, particularly for the visitor's moorings were being prepared to make it easier for visiting vessels to locate the visitors' facilities. The Chairman indicated that it would be good to analyse the level of complaints against the Authority and suggested that an annual report be prepared for the board.

ACTION: Annual Complaints report to be prepared for the October Board meeting,

Website. Improvements to the website will be considered by the Harbour Master and Senior Administrator in conjunction with the website developer. A wish list will be prepared and a meeting arranged in due course with the website developer. One of the areas for consideration will be a separate Board members section to the site, where documents can be posted for download or review by the Board. Ms Meacock was very impressed with the current website especially comparing it to other harbour authority sites.

Waiting List. Investigations are taking place into the operation of the waiting list with the intention of improving turnover. Consideration is being given, in conjunction with the Moorings' Officers, to amend the rules so that once someone has turned down a mooring three times their name goes to the bottom of the list. Allocations also need to take place earlier in the season so that customers on the waiting list are not already committed to an alternative berth and therefore not in a position to accept a mooring once offered. The current system is complicated, the aim for the next period is that of streamlining.

ACTION: Harbour Master to report back.

7.2 Finance Report

Bank Accounts

	February 2010 £	February 2011 £
DHNA	42,605.55	139,943.67
Cater	740,495.59	945,317.88
Pilot	11,324.48	11,864.48
Waiting List	120,455.00	115,155.51

The Finance Report was noted. Particular reference was made to the new facility of online payments which was proving very popular. A few minor glitches on the online payments system would be rectified for 2012.

8. Any Other Business

Friends of Dart Harbour.

Mr Cast requested that this item be placed on the agenda each month. The next meeting for this group will be held on 23rd March. Mr Scott will be attending. The Senior Administrator reported that three new members had been recruited so far as a result of the newsletter.

ACTION: Senior Administrator.

9. Move into Committee

It was proposed by Mr Cast and seconded by Mr Hill with all in favour, "***that the meeting move "Into Committee"***".

10. Decisions made "In Committee"

It was proposed by Mrs Meacock and seconded by Mr Murtagh, with all in favour "***to ratify decisions made In Committee"***"

11. Date of next Meeting – Monday 11th April 2011 at the Flavel Centre, Dartmouth at 2.00pm.