

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 11th June 2007, commencing at 1400 hrs.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs P Johns Senior Administrator

APOLOGIES: Mr N Hockaday
Mrs S Pudduck

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr Hockaday and Mrs Pudduck. Mr Distin gave his apologies for the early part of the meeting and joined the meeting during item 5.3.

2. Questions from the Public

There were two members of the public in attendance. Mr Hawkins had two questions for the board.

Q1 What had the board learnt from their visit to Poole?

A1 This topic is being discussed on the agenda and answer would be covered at that time.

Q2 Could questions from the public be taken at the end of Board meetings as well as at the beginning to enable comments to be made on the items under discussion?

A2 The board usually try to address questions at the time, however sometimes the questions are complex and require a considered answer which will then be provided at the next meeting. It was pointed out that the beginning of the meeting was chosen for the convenience of the public, as meetings are sometimes drawn out over the whole afternoon and holding questions at the end would mean a long wait. The board concluded that they would continue to take questions at the beginning of the meetings.

Mr Andrew of Beechcroft asked why the Authority had declined permission for his contractors to moor a barge adjacent to the property. Mr Andrew feels that this decision is causing delays to his project. The logistics of accessing the site meant that a barge was the most appropriate method for delivering materials and providing a platform to work from. Mr Andrew considered that two summers would be needed to complete the work. Mr Andrew also queried why a jack up barge had been given permission by the Authority to give access to another property on the river.

The Harbour Master responded that the works by South West Water would necessitate the need for scaffolding on the other property to be removed and it was suggested that a jack up barge would be a more appropriate way of working.

The Board were concerned over health and safety and navigational aspect. The swell in the area was considerable and there was a risk that damage may be caused by the barge. The Chairman responded that it would be useful to make an inspection of the site.

It was agreed that the Chairman make an inspection of the site with the Harbour Master.

ACTION: Chairman/Harbour Master.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 14th May 2007

It was proposed by Mrs Thorp and seconded by Dr Walker with all in favour ***“that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting”***.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes held on 14th May 2007

Moorings Project – **It was agreed** to report back to the Board when more information was available from Pear Technology and to send them the letter which Mr Humphreys drafted immediately after the presentation

ACTION: Harbour Master and Senior Administrator to arrange to send letter to Pear Technology

5. Agenda Items

5.1 DEEM

Mr Humphreys reported verbally. The DEEM Steering Committee had met on 1st June. The Steering Committee had been unable to confirm a budget and the decision was taken to wind up DEEM with effect from 31st August 2007. Discussions had taken place between Dart Harbour and South Hams District Council (SHDC) to consider the future of the environmental management of the Dart. SHDC were also intending to meet with the Environment Agency and Natural England to examine the option of an Estuary Officer in the AONB to cover all the estuaries in the area.

The Chairman expressed the Authority's regret and sadness that DEEM was ending and thanked Mr Humphreys and his staff who have done an excellent job over the last 10 years. The Chairman has met with SHDC and are now waiting to hear their proposals, as local authorities have an obligation to provide an Environmental Management Plan as a statutory function which includes estuaries. The DEEM Steering Committee are holding another meeting at the end of July.

Discussion took place over the need to continue the Dart Harbour environmental commitment to the river. Mr Humphreys reported that he will draw up a list of priority projects. He was concerned that the partnerships developed with various agencies through DEEM may be lost.

Mr Fleck was concerned that Mr Humphreys' access to planning applications made may be lost but it was pointed out that all applications are available on the SHDC website.

Mr Humphreys reported that the financial obligations will be met and that partners will be invoiced for their contributions.

The Harbour Master felt that Dart Harbour should be charged pro rata to the closure date and not for a full year.

ACTION:

Senior Administrator to monitor SHDC website to obtain copies of relevant planning applications and to include DEEM on the agenda for July.

5.2 Annual Accounts

The annual accounts were approved subject to the following amendments:-

Company Information – Mr S Ellyatt (Chair – from 1st January 2007), Mr E Fleck (Vice Chair – from 1st January 2007)

Page 2 – Authority Members. Mr Distin and Dr Walker were Chair and Vice Chair respectively until 31st December 2007.

Page 7 – Actuarial Loss on Pension Scheme should be (see note 23).

Page 11 - A query was raised on the numbering sequence.

Page 16 – No 19 columns 2005 and 2006 to change places and 2005 to appear italic and not bold

Page 19 – Why had the Duchy of Cornwall rent for 2006 decreased?

Letter from Authority – to be updated with new letterhead and style. Date to be changed to 2007 in first paragraph.

It was proposed by Mr Fleck and seconded by Mr Humphreys with all in favour ***“that the Annual Accounts for the year to 31st December 2006 be approved by the Board”***.

5.3 Capital Programme and Pricing Strategy

The Chairman circulated a paper at the meeting. This outlined the proposed timetable for the pricing strategy for 2007/2008 and 2008/2009.

Following discussion

It was agreed to keep the banding levels the same in 2008/2009. A surplus is required to facilitate the capital programme, the Duchy rent and other financial commitments. The board emphasised that the Authority is a not for profit organisation.

It was agreed to monitor this year's figures and to meet the stakeholder groups in the autumn with a proposal for the 2007/2008 price increases giving a clear explanation of why the Authority need the proposed surplus.

It was agreed to consult with the stakeholder groups with a proposal for price increases giving a clear explanation of why the Authority need a surplus.

ACTION: Chairman

Commercial Pontoons – the Chairman and Harbour Master reported on a meeting with the Shellfishermen's Association. The Dart Harbour capital investment programme was discussed together with a variety of topics which included the deterioration of the fishermen's pontoons, storage, health and safety, waste and electricity. The Association can help to alleviate the problems and come up with suggestions for a solution. They have been invited to reply to us before the September board meeting. The Chairman would like to see a solution on paper for implementation in 2008.

Commercial and Passenger Compounds – Charges need to be considered and kept under review.

Visitors – Town Jetty. Mr Distin was concerned over comments from visitors relating to visitors' charges at the Town Jetty (per berth prices). Discussion about whether it was intended to charge a per berth price or a per band price. The Chairman was keen to solve the problem if the situation continued.

ACTION: Harbour Master to monitor the situation and take appropriate action if required.

Capital Expenditure and Major Refurbishments - The Harbour Master circulated the Capital Expenditure and Major Refurbishment programme.

- Hoodown Phase 2 improvements to remove asbestos and refurbish staff facilities to include showers is likely to run into 2009. This project will need planning permission and the Authority would like to see the Stage 2 plans which had previously been prepared. No cost estimate has yet been received.
- Repairs to Piles – this is a priority action.
- Stoke Gabriel Sluice – Harbour Master has a meeting with the owner on 14th June.
- North Embankment Disabled access – discussion took place concerning this project. Dartmouth has limited disabled access facilities and the project needs to be considered for possible implementation in the future.

It was agreed to contact Dart Sailability and Mr Bob Skull of the Leisure Users Group for their input, to develop a design and then make contact with SHDC and Dartmouth Town Council.

ACTION: Harbour Master to make contact with Dart Sailability and Mr Skull.

Mr Fleck suggested the following item be included in capital programme.

- Facility improvements for the Dartmouth North Embankment.

5.4 Selection Procedures for Dart Harbour Members

Mr Distin referred to his paper circulated with the agenda. During discussion the following points were raised:-

- According to the Harbour Revision Order 2002 the Board of Dart Harbour is properly constituted when it has 7, 8 or 9 members. It was agreed that 9 would be better than 7 to keep the constitution effective.
- Each summer a decision needs to be taken on whether it is appropriate to convene a selection panel later that year.
- Normally, Members should not be reappointed by the board chairman on consecutive occasions.

- The Chairman to ascertain if current board members due to complete their term are willing to stand in the future. If this is the case the Chairman should meet with the other selection panel members in September to agree a way forward.

It was agreed to make contact with the Selection Panel for the Board Selection Process and to contact Members due to stand down on 31st December 2007 to ascertain their intentions.

ACTION: Chairman

5.5 Board Training Day Feedback

Thanks were extended to Mr Humphreys for organising the very informative visit to Poole.

- Cobbs Quay – MDL Marina and excellent dry stack facilities.
- Poole Harbour Commission – success in prosecuting for speeding.
- Marine Skills Centre – may be relevant at Noss in the future.
- RNLI Base – Excellent training facilities
- Weymouth – Olympics – May be spin offs for Dart Harbour from visiting super yachts looking for venues.

Members commented that:-

- The event was every bit as useful and informative as last year.
- Dry Storage facility was very impressive.
- Poole Harbour Commission had offered to pass on their experiences of successful speeding prosecutions and to give staff training in the autumn.
- Useful contacts made.
- Disabled access and facilities at Weymouth.

5.6 Sign Audit

The sign audit has been completed by staff. This is a working document. A number of new signs have been installed and the visitors' flags have been put in place on Deepwater and DA pontoons.

The main office flags will be purchased shortly.

It was agreed that emphasis be made to ensure continual commitment to the brand and corporate identity and to review progress in the Autumn.

New installations (eg Commercial Dinghy Pontoon) will be provided with new signs and others will be replaced as required through wear and tear, but most signs should be replaced within 3 years.

Front Door signage at the Harbour Office is to be progressed. However, it was pointed out that the Authority is legally obliged to continue to display its official title at the entrance. Dr Walker will attend the AGM of Dart House in July. The previous Dtwo Creative designs are to be considered again.

ACTION: Mr Fleck, Harbour Master and Senior Administrator.

6. Stakeholder Groups

6.1 River Dart Non Beneficiary Group – The Harbour Master reported on a letter received from the Non Beneficiary Group suggesting a Stakeholder Group Review.

It was agreed to wait for the Department of Transport Review of the Trust Port which may include a review of stakeholder group's duties.

6.2 Commercial Users Group – One meeting has been attended, nothing contentious was discussed.

6.3 Leisure Users Group –nothing to report.

6.4 Riparian and Mooring Rights Owners Group (RAMROG) – nothing to report.

7. Harbour Master's Report

Lynx- Most of the outstanding items on Lynx have now been completed and the electrician has signed off his work programme. The vessel is due for an intermediate MCA survey by Mecal on 15 June and already been used to board and land the pilot from three passenger ships.

Hercules- Two new engines have now been fitted to Hercules during the course of a full refit and she is now back in service. No further large scale maintenance is anticipated before she starts her winter moorings programme.

New Yacht Taxi- The new yacht taxi has been delivered from Kinsale to Baltic Wharf and is moored at Hoodown. New white gunwhale fendering needs to be fitted along with all the equipment required for SHDC licensing before she goes into service. The final cost for this project will be slightly below budget with the final payment to Fitzgerald Marine expected to be E5619.

Ship Visits- Passenger ships MV Polar Star, MV Ocean Majesty and MV Le Diamant have all completed successful visits. The French Naval Training ship Lion has been added to the list for a visit between 14th to 18th June and will berth at the Sand Quay.

North Embankment Sewer Overflow- Temporary repairs to this overflow pipe have been completed by Falmouth Divers with minimal disruption to berth holders on DA and DB pontoons.

Mainstream Moorings- The renewal of No 3 mainstream buoy riser and associated connections was completed on 13th May after the departure of MV Polar Star. No further major renewals for the mainstream buoys or ground chains are anticipated before 2009 when the next comprehensive survey is due.

Range Speed Buoys- Delivery of four 6 knot speed buoys for the Range have been delivered and were installed recently. In general the buoys seem to have had the desired effect in reducing speeding in the range.

Commercial Dinghy Pontoon- This pontoon has been delivered and is at present moored in midstream awaiting a convenient date for fitment. Commercial mooring holders are aware that the pontoon will be replaced.

Sign Audit- The Dart Harbour Draft Sign Audit from the port outer limits to the weir at Totnes was completed in May. SHDC have agreed to our request that they update and replace all their signs on all the North and South Embankment steps, many of which are now unreadable. They have also agreed to carry out remedial maintenance repairs to the North Embankment scrubbing grid.

Dittisham Pontoon – Upgraded lifebuoy housing will be installed on the walkway with high visibility lifebelts and throwing lines and an attached flexible ladder. If effective these will be installed on all pontoons in addition to other aids.

The board commented that all the Authority vessels looked well maintained and smart.

7.2 Financial Report

Bank Accounts

	May 06 £	May 07 £	Capital Expenditure		
DHNA	118,805.94	75,451.32	Item	Total Cost	Paid
Cater	796,076.69	928,176.48	Commercial Pontoon	£20,720.00	£20,720.00
Pilot	8,713.74	9,573.34	Taxi	£27,000.00	£16,793.00
Waiting List	74,597.32	92,000.00			

The board were pleased to see a commentary on the financial reports. Thanks were extended to the Finance Manager.

Discussion took place over the level of surplus and that this was needed to be prepared for the capital expenditure programme. Provision should be made in the monthly figures for the Duchy rent. The capital expenditure table should show a running total for the whole year.

ACTION: Finance Manager to incorporate Duchy rent and Capital Expenditure each month.

7.3 Office Report

A report was circulated with the agenda papers outlining progress of a number of office based activities.

8. Any Other Business

Yacht Taxi - A letter of complaint had been received concerning the new yacht taxi charges, complaining that the Authority was not operating within the 1982 Supply of Goods and Services Act. The Harbour Master pointed out that the location of this particular mooring was outside the prescribed taxi operating area and that the complainant had been

made aware of this in writing in January 2006. The Harbour Master has already confirmed the current requirements with the Exeter Trading Standards Office.

It was agreed that the Harbour Master follow up the letter. The yacht taxi drivers are to be fully briefed on the taxi operating conditions.

ACTION: Harbour Master to reply to the letter and taxi drivers to be briefed.

Beechcroft – There were concerns over how the site at Beechcroft was being operated and it was felt that a barge was not suitable in that particular area for navigational and health and safety reasons. The Authority do not want to hinder people from justifiable building works and it was suggested that a meeting be arranged with Mr Andrew after the site inspection which be an opportunity to put forward our concerns.

ACTION: Harbour Master to arrange appropriate meeting for relevant parties.

9. Move into Committee

It was proposed by the Harbour Master seconded by Mr Distin with all in favour, "***that the meeting move "Into Committee"***".

10. Decisions made "In Committee"

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

11. Date of next Meeting – 9th July 2007 at the Flavel Centre.