

RIVER DART COMMERCIAL USERS GROUP

Minutes of Annual Meeting held at Dartmouth Yacht Club on 21st September 2009

Present: P Sheardown (Chair), B Hollis, T Hoile, N Brown, H Meacock, D White, J Holman, M Holman, J Holtom, M Smallwood (Minutes)

ACTION

Apologies Ian Noble, Shaw Smith

Minutes of the previous Meeting Having been proposed by Melanie Holman and seconded by Tony Hoile, these were approved by all and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Mr David Fry of Blackness Marine had become a member of the CUG.

Chairman's Report

Decision on whether RDCUG's ratified Minutes should be made public via Dart Harbour website It was proposed by Barry Hollis and seconded by Norman Brown and agreed by all that the ratified Minutes could go on the Dart Harbour website. The Minutes would be ratified by a quorum of members (five), confirming they accepted the minutes content, by an email to the Secretary. Thereafter the Secretary, if there were no objections, would forward them to Dart Harbour.

MS

Dart Harbour Board Selection Representative The Chairman explained he had been approached by John Baron of the Non Beneficiaries Group who had pointed out that the representative on the Selection Board for 3 years had been a CUG member. Terry Connolly, a parish councillor and member of the Non-Beneficiaries, had been put forward by their Group. As RAMROG had dissolved and LUG was not active at the present time, the choice could only be made between the two groups. P Sheardown had confirmed to J Baron that he had no objection to Terry Connolly going forward as the Stakeholder Groups representative on the Selection Panel. The CUG felt that the decision-making had been a little vague on this occasion and a more formal procedure had been applied in the past. This should be reverted to in the future.

Dart Harbour Young Champions Award It was explained this was an initiative organised by Penny Johns of Dart Harbour as an incentive to local youth and awards would be given to three different age groups at the Dart Harbour Annual Meeting next year. The project was being funded by Dart Harbour and would be launched on 1st October. It was agreed by all that this was a very good idea. P Sheardown stated that Canoe Adventures had offered a small award to the winners. The launch of the Young Champions Award will be on Thursday 1st October 2009, 1530-1830 at the Flavel Centre, Dartmouth.

Hoodown Improvement Scheme D White reported that the planning application had been withdrawn at present as Dart Harbour were awaiting for reports relating to: a bat survey, a flood risk assessment and environmental samples. Once these were all in the application would be resubmitted. The finance for this would

come from the Capital Spending Programme, not from Maintenance. The buildings and facilities were very out of date, i.e. asbestos was present; there was only one toilet and insufficient equipment to lift some of Dart Harbour's commercial craft to work on them. However, in relation to this work, Dart Harbour did not intend to change its last two policy and charging statements.

Treasurer's Report

In Ian Noble's absence, Tony Hoile circulated the Treasurer's Report to those present. He would forward the finance tables by email to the Secretary who would forward these on to all members. Acceptance of the Report was proposed by Barry Hollis, seconded by Tony Hoile and agreed by all.

AH/MS

Noss Marina Development

D White stated that comments on the new plan needed to be received by Stephen Mundy of SHDC in the next four days. Two letters objecting to parts of the plan would be going from the Dart Harbour Board. D White showed the plan of the site and stated that Dart Harbour had not agreed with Noss Marina the outline of the Marina or its size.

Members in general supported the principles of the development but concern was expressed by some about the narrowing of the foreshore; particularly as the river in that area is extensively used by BRNC, ferries, South Devon College and Dart Sailability.

Jason Holtom the Noss representative, confirmed that a 12 seater ferry would be available to ferry people from Noss to the Dart Harbour pontoons in Dartmouth. At present there were no plans to direct the ferry to Kingswear. The ferry would work fairly long hours with regular departures. Noss Marina intended to support the ferry service. He acknowledged a larger ferry might be needed if a lot of people started using it, but the Noss pontoon would have space for this.

He stated that Noss Marina were fulfilling a need for berths in the river and creating jobs. The Marina was going further up and down the river but not going further out. As a shipyard many years ago, very large ships would have been seen. He did not think the visual impact would be detrimental. Dart Harbour had been asked to flip only two of their moorings.

The Chairman spoke of his concerns:

- Narrowing of the river considerably
- Natural character would disappear
- Extending far too much to the west
- Navigational safety

Jason stated that Noss Marina expected only 10 movements a day of boats from the moorings. A 30 ton crane and a 22 ton loader would be installed so all sizes of boats in the river could be handled. He had done a survey over Regatta of the number of boats in that part of the river and did not feel it was an area of navigational stress.

There was concern about the increase in the River of recreational boats and the higher risk of collisions. The increased use of small inflatables going to and fro

to Dartmouth and back could be a safety issue.

D White stated that none of the 9 outside moorings belonged to Noss in that part of the River and Dart Harbour would not allow any reduction in the channel.

Further concerns were expressed that the development came up a little too far; particularly at that part of the River. Yachts would need to leave the marina pontoons at right angles and could hit another boat coming north. This had not been taken into consideration.

Jason Holtom stated that he had spoken with the Harbourmaster at Cowes which is very similar to the River Dart in size, but much busier and constricted; it works there and it is not dangerous.

It was pointed out that the uniqueness of the River Dart was very special and those living and working on the River did not want to be another Cowes.

It was agreed that the Chairman would write a letter to SHDC stating the concerns of the CUG members, namely over

- Congestion
- Area of the proposed pontoons
- Safety
- Narrowing of the main navigational channel

PS

AOB

J Holman reported that Dart River Young Sailors Association had particularly asked for the ferries to be thanked for their understanding and helpfulness during DRYSA Junior Sailing Week at the end of July. There had been one ferry only (a blue Castle ferry) that had been criticised for its behaviour towards the young sailors.

The Harbourmaster was pleased to report that there had been no complaints received on the sailing organised by South Devon College in the Noss area.

J Holman raised the problem of small boats using the river at night without lights. The Harbourmaster confirmed this was a problem but the difficulty was catching the culprits.

N Brown complained about the spotlights on the Higher Ferry at night. He requested the lights be turned down when it comes into shore.

The next meeting would be held on Monday 7th December at 7.00pm at DYC.

Chairman

Date