LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 11th May 2022 INCLUDING RESPONSE TO THE HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

At 1700 hrs at RLymYC

PRESENT:

Rupert Wagstaff (Marinas), Chair
Roy Froud (Recreational users – RlymYC, LTSC, Sailability)
Don Mackenzie (Lymington Society)
Cllr Barry Dunning (Lymington & Pennington Town Council)
Peter Lock (Recreational users – LARC, L&DSFC, LSS)
John Clarke (Lymington, Keyhaven and District Wildfowlers Association)
Steve Avery (NFNPA)
Al Mackay (RNLI)
Peter Ferguson (NFDC Coast Protection)

ATTENDANCE:

Ryan Willegers (Chief Executive and Harbour Master)
Alison Towler (Chair, Lymington Harbour Commissioners)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Barry Smith (Wightlink)
Rob Thompson (Commercial boat owners)
Guy Standley (local businesses)

1. Matters Arising From meeting of the 19th October 2021

1.1 Town Quay Washrooms – NFDC's contractors commenced refurbishment works on the 10th January 2022 with an intended completion date of 28th March. However, when undertaking strip out works, unforeseen structural issues with the building were identified. A revised completion date of the 2nd May was agreed. However, on the 27th April NFDC advised that contractors had reported supply chain difficulties and an issue with the flooring. On the 3rd May NFDC advised that they were still in negotiations with the contractor on a revised programme but were targeting the 30th May. Temporary shower and toilet facilities are currently secured up to the 1st June 2022.

1.2 Slipway Development – The improvements identified in the minutes of the previous meeting have been completed with a couple of exceptions. Feedback on the effectiveness of the thermoplastic (mixed with grit) line trial was mixed and a decision was taken not to progress. The new temporary mooring ground chain was laid with two risers as originally requested. However, following feedback, the two riser buoys were subsequently removed as they were getting in the way.

1.3 Eastern Wavescreen – Works to renew the eastern wavescreen have been completed.

1.4 Safety Guards on Propellors – LHC have incorporated a condition in the mooring terms and conditions requiring raised (exposed) propellors to be covered on tenders and on craft moored on all moorings excluding walk ashore berths. This was to address the safety concerns raised by the river users representative at the October LHAG meeting in relation to exposed propellors on swinging moorings and also deal with an ongoing issue of damage caused by raised propellors when boats are not properly moored.

LHC have received communications from a mooring holder who has indicated he has thus far unspecified safety concerns related to fixing a guard or cover and are waiting for correspondence to explain what those are.

It is appreciated that where a cover can't be sensibly attached using a boathook or other similar device, leaning over the stern of a moored boat to reach the propeller may be impractical and pose additional risk. However, as all mid river mooring holders will need to return to the shore using a tender, LHC officers have trialed securing a cover from a tender in breezy conditions on a swinging mooring and found it to be very straight forward and safe. Certainly, the risk is considered lower than the transfer of persons between tender and moored craft which is considered acceptable.

It is accepted that in windy conditions, particularly on moorings in the exposed lower reaches, fixing a cover may be difficult. In these circumstances, one would question the wisdom of making a tender transfer to go boating in the first place. However, should this occur, the mooring licence holder can simply make a risk based judgement to not install a cover and notify LHC that this was due to adverse weather at the time. This would be regarded as an acceptable reason for not covering the propeller.

2. LHAG Membership

2.1 Since the last meeting of LHAG Bob Chapman has retired from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trust (HIWWT). LHC are still waiting for details of who the Trust will nominate to replace him.
Guy Standley's first term of office as the Lymington and District Chamber of Commerce representative for local businesses comes to an end on the 07th July 2022. LHC would be grateful for confirmation on whether Guy wishes to stand for a second term or receive details of a new representative from the Chamber.
Peter Fergusons current term of office as the NFDC (Coast Protection) representative comes to an end on the 30th September 2022. LHC would be grateful for confirmation on whether Peter will continue for a further term or receive details of a new NFDC representative.

3. Commissioners

3.1 Since LHAG's meeting last September, the following changes to the Commissioners have taken place:-
Reappointments/New Appointments
Darren Longley appointed for a 1st term – ends 31/12/2024 (Finance Committee Chair)
Robert Willows co-opted for 12 months - ends 31/12/2022 (to advise on Environment)
Retired Commissioners
Andrew Richards retired on the 11th January 2022

Chair/Vice Chair
Alison Towler appointed Chair on 14th March 2022

John Morrow appointed Vice Chair 14th March

Tim Harford stood down as Chair 14th March
Alison Towler stood down as Vice Chair 14th March

4. Strategic Plan
4.1 Prior to the meeting a copy of the most recent report to Commissioners (May) setting out progress to date on the Strategic Plan 2022 objectives was circulated, no comments from LHAG on this.

5. Environment
5.1 At their January meeting the Commissioners approved progressing an application for a Marine Licence for a trial to move some or all of the dredged mud that has been beneficially placed in Boiler Marsh since 2014 higher up in the tidal frame to achieve the level needed to allow new saltmarsh to colonise.

The bottom placement technique currently used is effective at raising intertidal mud in front of saltmarsh but cannot achieve the height needed to create new saltmarsh. LHC are working with Land and Water Earth Change on this trial scheme as they are seeking to pilot a new technique for moving intertidal mud to a higher elevation. The proposed technique is to use a drag bucket on a wire to pull mud placed in front of the marsh, higher up the tidal frame to a level that will allow new saltmarsh to colonise. Currently it is proposed that the marsh end of the drag wire will be secured and winched from a modified amphibious excavator and the seaward end of the drag wire would be secured by a barge. They can then move along the marsh in a west to east direction pulling mud up onto the marsh. It is likely that if consented, this technique will only be permitted for areas where there is intertidal mud or poor quality marsh lower in the tidal frame which is in transition to intertidal mud.. It is proposed that the marine licence application will also apply for an alternative technique to pump the same mud ashore using a cutter suction dredger as it is likely this will be more acceptable to the regulators for regenerating areas of existing marshhigher in the tidal frame, although with a higher water content.

If the application for a marine licence is successful, Land and Water Earth Change will undertake the trial works at their cost. If the trial proves successful at creating new saltmarsh this may open up commercial opportunities for creating new saltmarsh on a larger scale to sequester nitrates from the water and carbon from the atmosphere. As well as improving the environment, the creation of new saltmarsh would also offer the opportunity of delaying the need for some future phases of breakwater construction and, subject to changes in legislation, could be sold as nitrates mitigation for other developments around the UK.

Separately, the Solent Forum is progressing a marine licence application to use the bottom dumping technique used in Boiler Marsh to fill the creek that has split Cockleshell Island to the west of the river entrance in order to try and slow down the wind / tide erosion in this area. If successful, this will allow (under licence) other Solent harbours with suitable material to beneficially place mud in this area. The Solent Forum application also includes a further site on the eastern edge of Pylewell Creek bay.

6. Commercial Fishing Quay

6.1 Electric Crane - In response to the request from Commercial Fishermen, LHC has now obtained planning consent to install an electric crane to load and unload equipment, bait and their catch. As the scheme has been costed at £80k, because of the small size of the fishing fleet, there is no realistic prospect of securing a commercial return on an investment of this size. The Commissioners will therefore only be able to progress this project if LHC can obtain grant funding to offset part of the cost of provision through the MMO Fisheries Seafood Scheme or similar.

6.2 Response to Safety Concerns – The commercial fishermen have highlighted safety concerns about the increasing numbers of members of the public ignoring the safety signage and entering the commercial quay area while mooring, landing, maintenance or vehicle movements are underway or planned thus putting themselves and others at risk. They felt the situation had also been compounded by a local cafe who had been allowed to use part of the NFDC area of the quay for tables and chairs in recent years and was not doing enough to prevent them being moved onto the working quay.

LHC Officers and Commissioners shared their concerns and agreed to the fishermen's request to install a fence and gate to secure the area when potentially hazardous activities are taking place or are scheduled to take place. The fence will also allow the area to be secured when future cranage operations are underway. When hazardous activities are not scheduled or underway, the fishermen have been asked to keep the gate open.

In recognition that the location is within a heritage area, LHC were keen to ensure that the fence/gate will be in keeping and not obstruct views of the quay. The wrought iron gate and fence rails are hand crafted and will be 1.2m high to match the height of the existing stone wall. They will be powder coated in black to match railings elsewhere on the quay. The posts were installed on the 20th April and the foundations left to cure before the gate and fence are connected.

Barry Dunning asked if a request to install a power socket for the Christmas tree lights had been considered as part of the current works being undertaken, Ryan Willegers said he would liaise with the Council on their requirements..

7.0 Harbour Development Plan

7.1 A 12 week public consultation on the draft HDP commenced on the 4th April 2022. LHAG discussed the proposals at this meeting and the below can be considered their formal response.

The LHAG agreed the Harbour development Plan was a thorough document that set out the objectives clearly.

Some further clarifications were sought on some of the data in the key findings, these are shown below:

BREAKDOWN BETWEEN RESIDENT MOORING TYPES (MOORING MIX BEFORE & AFTER)

CURRENT	Number	% of Overall Berths	% of Waiting list Demand
Walk Ashore	166	24.9	62.2
Mid River (Subtidal Dredged)	330	49.6	30.9
Mid River (Restricted Access)	151	22.7	6.6
Commercial (Subtidal Dredged)	19	2.8	0.3
TOTAL	**666**	**100%**	**100%**

HDP PROPOSED**	Number	% of Overall Berths	% of Waiting list Demand
Walk Ashore	278*	41.7	62.2
Mid River (Subtidal Dredged)	219	32.8	30.9
Mid River (Restricted Access)	151	22.6	6.5
Commercial (Subtidal Dredged)	19	2.8	0.3
TOTAL	**667**	**100%**	**100%**

** Incorporates Fortuna Development and new Wavescreen Moorings
* Includes 6 dinghy moorings

PRICING

The difference at todays money between a Fortuna walk ashore berth and a mid river sub tidal berth after implementation of phased increases to cover the cost of provision would be as set out in the table below. Pricing excludes Harbour Protection Levy which remains same for all. The charges are shown in 1m intervals as the banding arrangements differ between Fortuna pontoon and moorings.

LENGTH	5m	6m	7m	8m	9m	10m	11m
Mid River (adjusted to cover cost of provision)	596	596	787	1007	1007	1237	1547
Fortuna walk ashore (Business plan assumptions)	1226	1226	1226	1429	1582	1736	1889
Fortuna walk ashore (current pricing)							
• Inside berths £	1362	1362	1454	1638	N/A	NA	NA
• Outside berths £	NA	NA	1991	1991	1991	2083	2267

LHC also confirmed that as stated in the final paragraph of the HDP (Section 5.2) that although the 151 mid river drying/restricted access moorings also do not cover the full cost of provision, charges for restricted moorings are broadly in line with other harbours, excluding Chichester where prices are considerably higher. Given some of these moorings have in the past not had a waiting list and

have at times been difficult to fill, LHC do not propose to increase charges for these 'entry level' moorings beyond annual adjustments for inflationary pressures.

On the 17/05/22 support ratings from the feedback received thus far from 50 respondents are as follows: -

OBJECTIVES (50 responses to each – compulsory fiedls)	**SUPPORT RATING %**
To optimise the mix of berthing provision to future demand.	90.2
To reduce impacts on and protect the environment.	86.3
To improve access to the water.	94.1
To improve safety and navigation.	92.2
To make the Bath Road slipway more user friendly and improve safety.	84.3
To take advantage of opportunities to improve harbour infrastructure that arise from the New Forest District Council and the Environment Agency coastal defence strategy for Lymington.	92.2
To put a timeline and cost to replace life expired infrastructure.	92.2
To develop the harbour protection scheme at a pace commensurate with ensuring that the harbour remains sheltered.	94.1
To review the funding strategy to facilitate replacement of life expired assets and new projects.	88.2

PROJECT	**SUPPORT %**	**UNSURE %**	**AGAINST %**
Fortuna Redevelopment (50 responses – compulsory field)	76.5	13.7	9.8**
Bath Road Slipway (50 responses – compulsory field)	88.2	9.8	2
Dan Bran Pontoon (utilisation of 'waterlocked' area) (50 responses – compulsory field)	78.4	21.6	0
A Row (N-S) (17 responses – optional field)	13 supportive. 4 commented but not for/against.		
Beneficial Use (18 responses – optional field)	13 supportive. 5 commented but not for/against		

** 3 of 5 objectors misread the plan and thought the Fortuna development would result in a net loss of 33 moorings. The actual net reduction is 8 or 2 depending on whether you count the proposed 6 new dinghy (as opposed to tender) berths.

7.1 Replacement of Life expired infrastructure

Rupert Wagstaff questioned the timeframes on the expiry of pontoon infrastructure of the Dan Bran mooring area. He felt that these pontoons that were built to modern standards will last significantly past 2035.

7.2 Fortuna mooring area

The statement that electric power can easily be installed into the Fortuna area to facilitate the transition towards zero emissions boating was questioned. The power requirements of electric boats will be far greater than the current infrastructure will be able to support, both in terms of current duct size on pontoons and the shore side power grid infrastructure. The Harbour Master clarified that this statement related solely to ensuring that new pontoons come with services ducting in preparation for future electrification. He shared Mr Wagstaff's wider views and confirmed that the decision on ducting provision will be made on the best available information at the time of commission.

The scheme as a whole was broadly supported and LHAG can see the benefit of providing walk ashore berthing in this area of the river, particularly as part of a scheme to replace time expired infrastructure.

7.3 Bath Road Slipway

LHAG expressed disappointment by the decision to defer improvements to the slipway for almost 10 years. Despite the lack of income from the slip, it is a really vital part of harbour and really important to the community, visitors and to the yacht clubs etc. and LHAG would suggest that improvements are really needed much sooner than proposed.

7.4 A Row (North – South) Moorings

No comments from LHAG apart from it seemed a sensible idea.

7.5 Commercial Quay Upgrades

No comments

7.6 Other Development opportunities

No comments

7.7 Potential opportunities arising from the coastal defence statement

LHAG broadly supportive of any opportunities that can be taken to benefit from works undertaken by statutory authorities as part of a wider flood defence scheme.

7.8 Harbour Protection Breakwaters

LHAG are hopeful the works to replenish the saltmarsh and the beneficial use of dredged material will delay the requirement to extend the breakwaters.

7.9 Environmental Enhancement Project

LHAG supportive of this scheme

8. Funding Strategy

8.1 Harbour Protection

LHAG recognise the huge funding requirement for the breakwaters and how they are the only long term options to safeguard Lymington Harbour and are pleased that monies raised through the Harbour Protection Levy are ring-fenced for this project and cannot be used for other harbour development schemes.

8.2 Other harbour development and environmental enhancement projects.

It was confirmed by LHC that the XOD moorings are subtidal dredged moorings and so will be subject to the 7.2% annual price increase on top of the annual inflation based increases for the reasons set out in Section 5.2 of the draft plan..

8. AOB

Barry Dunning questioned the orientation of the XOD fleet and if they would not be better facing the opposite way. Roy Froud subsequently has spoken to Phil Brewer, Lymington XOD Captain setting out the wider views of the XOD association and a response will be submitted as part of the RLymYC feedback on the plan.

Minutes taken by R. Wagstaff