

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2017

A meeting of the Newport Harbour Commissioners was held at the offices of ABP, Alexandra Docks, Newport, on Wednesday, 11th Day of October 2017, at 10:00am.

PRESENT

Mr J.C Neale (in the Chair)

Messrs S.P Davison, G Jug, A.R Speight, Captain R.M McDonald and Councillor J.A Guy.

APOLOGY

Mr W.L Mitchell apologised for non-attendance.

IN ATTENDANCE

Captain R Lewis was in attendance.

The Chairman noted that this was to have been Mr W.L Mitchell's last Board meeting, but unfortunately he had been unable to attend. On behalf of the Board, he thanked Mr W.L Mitchell for his contribution during his term, and for his knowledge/expertise which had been invaluable.

MINUTES

3393. It was resolved on a motion by Mr G Jug, seconded by Mr S.P Davison, that the minutes of the last meeting of the Commissioners, which took place on 13 September 2017, (a copy of which had been sent to every Commissioner), be taken as read, received and adopted..

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

3394. Mr J.C Neale declared an interest in Agenda item 3282 in relation to the proposed new M4. Captain R.M McDonald declared an interest in Agenda item 3377 in relation to the appointment of new Commissioners. Mr S.P Davison declared an interest in the Agenda item 3392 relating to the celebration of the anniversary of the Newport Wetlands.

HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT as prepared by ABP

3395. The Harbour Master's Report, as prepared by ABP, is attached.

The following further matters were noted:

a) New Leading Lights/ Trinity House Inspection

Trinity House had recently undertaken their annual lights inspection, and their official report was awaited. There were continued problems with the St Julian's Pill Lights. The Harbour Master has suggested that the suppliers of the equipment meet on site to agree on the remedial action required.

b) New Buoys

It was confirmed that the new No2 and No3 buoys had now been deployed. However, the shackles on the West Usk buoy had been found to be worn. It was intended to replace these shackles by the end of October.

c) East Usk Lighthouse

It had been reported that some of the glass panels on the lighthouse had started to "glaze". The action required would be considered and the light brought up to modern specifications. The Harbour Master would ensure that the key to the outer padlock was held at the Security Office at ABP Newport.

d) Liberty Steel

The parameters currently in place at Liberty Steel detailing the vessels which can operate at the berth are being reviewed by the Chairman and the Harbour Master.

e) Bird Port

The Commissioners continued to await confirmation of a further meeting with Bird Port to discuss operational matters relating to vessel berthing, towage and other pilotage-related issues. It was understood that Global Maritime was assisting Bird Port with these matters.

f) Pilotage

SE and SW Wales pilots are now working on a single rota which should enhance the service available in Newport. In addition, a new pilot recruitment process is underway. There was a general discussion on pilotage services in the River.

g) Reporting on compliance with PMSC

It was noted that the Commissioners must re-confirm that they act in compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code by 31 March 2018. In addition, it was understood that other berth operators must also comply with the same deadline. The Harbour Master would be raising this with berth/ port operators.

h) Designated Person

The Harbour Master reported that Mr W Heaps was leaving ABP and joining a marine-related consultancy company. The Chairman noted that negotiations for Mr W Heaps to continue in the role were ongoing.

i) Grounding

The Harbour Master noted that a grounding had taken place in the River Usk last night (between No2 and No3 buoy but outside the marked dredged channel). The vessel was grounded for 10 minutes and there was no pollution/ injuries. A report to MAIB will be made.

MATTERS ARISING FROM BOARD MINUTES

Minute 3164 NHC/ ABP Service Level Agreement

This matter continued to progress, and the matter was deferred until the next meeting.

Minute 3282 Proposed new M4 Motorway

Mr J. C Neale declared an interest and took no part in the discussion (see above)

The Enquiry had re-commenced after recess, but marine issues will not be discussed until December.

Minute 3374(c) Responsibilities of the Commissioners

The meeting considered the responsibilities of the Newport Harbour Commissioners at berths/ ports. In particular, the draft Ports Good Governance Guidance stated that “SHA’s are responsible for landside safety within the Harbour”. Mr A.R Speight referred to the term “tied up alongside” and considered that an accurate definition of this would assist. The Chairman referred to the phrase “All fast” which the Captain is obliged to note in the Ship’s log book, the time of which the vessel is said to be safely moored.

It was therefore vital that Commissioners fully understood the extent of their responsibilities. It was therefore agreed to:

- Write to HSE seeking clarification of the point at which the responsibility of the SHA ceases.
- Write to DFT noting that the Commissioner’s primary objective is conservancy and to ensure the public’s right to safe navigation, and enquiring whether they can assist with the overriding question of responsibility and
- To examine the regulations of the Commissioners to ascertain whether they clarify matters with regard to high water marks etc

Minute 3377 Appointment of new Commissioners

Captain R.M McDonald declared an interest and took no part in the discussion (see above).

The Chairman noted that prospective Commissioners had been interviewed on 29 September. Following detailed deliberation, the sub-committee recommended that Mr Martin James and Mr Edward Watts be appointed for a 3-year term and Mr R Steed be appointed for a 1-year term, all to commence on 1 November. The Chairman explained in detail the rationale behind this recommendation and, after due consideration, it was agreed unanimously to confirm the recommendation and to appoint the above-named applicants. It was agreed that the Secretary would write to Messrs James, Watts and Steed to confirm their appointments.

Minute 3383 Training Day

The training day had taken place on Friday 29 September and had been most useful for all Commissioners able to attend.

Minute 3392 – Wetlands 10th Anniversary

Mr S.P Davison declared an interest and took no part in the discussion (see above).

A meeting with RSPB is to be arranged to discuss how/ if the Commissioners would be involved given that the wetland anniversary coincides with the 125th Anniversary of the East Usk Lighthouse.

DRAFT PORT GOOD GOVERNANCE GUIDANCE

3396. The Draft Port Good Governance Guidance was noted. It was agreed that the Chairman would produce a note of the salient points, in particular noting the matters that do/ do not relate to Newport.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHANNEL DREDGING

3397. The last meeting of the Joint Committee had taken place immediately before this meeting. There had been no major dredging in the last three months but work had been undertaken on the river bank near the mouth of the River Ebbw.

REPORT OF DESIGNATED PERSON

3398. The meeting considered the detailed report produced by the Designated Person in 2016 in order to monitor progress in dealing with the action points. The administrative matters raised were addressed by the Secretary, and it was noted that they had been dealt with fully. The marine issues would be considered further, although the key issues had also been addressed.

MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

3399. The accounts for the current month were examined. It was agreed unanimously that the attached accounts amounting to £5,871.52 be paid. In addition, a bill totalling £642 for new shackles (see above) was passed for payment.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

3400. The statement of the Commissioner's revenue was examined. They disclosed monthly bills of £20,639.74 compared to the budget of £18,000.00. Expenditure for the month totalled £5,129.17 compared to the budgeted figure £16,260 and £138,947.53 for the year to date compared to a budget of £153,780.00.

3401. A quotation for Mr W Heaps to be retained as the Designated Person was considered. It was agreed that the number of hours required to undertake the work was considerably less than disclosed on the quotation, and it was agreed to revert seeking a revised quotation.

INVESTMENTS

3402. It was confirmed that the amounts at present invested were as follows:

Monmouthshire Building Society	£76,047.08
Nat West	£3,879.02
Santander	£25,000.00

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3403. The Chairman noted that BPA were arranging a course in London on Port Marine Safety Code Compliance for non-marine employees/ Commissioners. It was agreed to furnish details of the course to Commissioners to ascertain whether they wished to attend.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____