

ADVISORY BODY TO THE NEWPORT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS
28 MARCH 2012

A meeting of the Advisory Body to the Newport Harbour Commissioners was held at the ABP Offices Alexandra Dock, Newport, on Wednesday, 28th day of March 2012, at 11.45 hours.

PRESENT

Mr N.E Challenger (Newport Shipbrokers) (in the Chair)
Messrs A Hemmings (Atkins), R Morgan (Environment Agency – Wales), R Van Der Meer (Isca Boat Club), W.L Mitchell and Mrs S Newbold (Royal Yachting Association).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:

Messrs M Johnson (Gloucester Harbour Trustees), S Ferrier (Tarmac) and Ms G Otlet (Newport Unlimited).

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr C.P Crick (Chairman of the Newport Harbour Commissioners) and Captain M Chidlow (ABP – Harbour Master) were in attendance.

MINUTES

100. It was agreed unanimously that the minutes of the last meeting of the Advisory Body, held on 26 October 2011, (a copy of which had been sent to every member), be taken as read, received and adopted.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF NHC

101. The report of the Chairman of NHC was tabled. The Chairman of NHC expanded upon the following matters in particular:

- a) The Safety Management System and Strategy and Management Plan of the Commissioners have now been fully updated.
- b) It had been agreed that harbour dues would be held at the same level, to be reviewed again in July 2012.
- c) There had been a small dredging campaign lasting 3 days in January 2012.
- d) The campaign to clean parts of the River Usk had been successful, and referred to in local press.
- e) The Commissioners have responded to a document produced by the Welsh Government on, inter alia, The Future of Welsh Ports. A more detailed response was now being drafted. The essence of the response would be to continue to question why Welsh Ports were treated differently to English Ports with respect to back-dated business rates.
- f) An update on the redrafting of the byelaws was given. A meeting had recently taken place with the Royal Yachting Association and their objections discussed and resolved.
- g) Training for Commissioners was being organised and this would include an inspection of the River. The Commissioners intended to invite 1-2 members of the Advisory Body to attend this training day.
- h) It was noted that the work undertaken by the Environment Agency on the banks of the River was of a very high standard and some of the processes adopted would be used in other areas in the future.
- i) The Chairman enquired where the proposed new pontoon landing stage would be situated in the River Usk. Mr W L Mitchell replied that the original thinking was that the pontoon would be placed near the theatre but the actual decision would depend upon the external study being undertaken. Concern was expressed by several members about the levels of window of opportunity to utilise this pontoon given the tidal range. The Chairman also noted recent press comments about revisiting the Usk Barrage project.. Mr A Hemmings (Atkins) considered it

essential for projects such as the proposed pontoon to be considered carefully. This could assist greatly the development of Newport. Mr R Van Der Meer thought that, at present, and without a barrage, such a pontoon could only run for 4hrs in any 24hr period. It was agreed that the consultant's report would be considered by Commissioners in due course.

M4 ENHANCEMENT

102. Mr A Hemmings (Atkins) referred to the current consultancy round concerning M4 enhancement. The different options being mooted were considered, and it was agreed that Mr A Hemmings would send the Clerk to the Commissioners the information that he so that Commissioners could become involved. One option related to construction around the South side of Newport, which this could clearly affect the usage of the River.

HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT

103. The Harbour Master's report for the period to March 2012 had been circulated to all members.

The following points were noted:

- a. The Oil Spill Response joint exercise was planned to take place in May. It was hoped that this would be a multi-agency event, as this made such events more useful.
- b. The proposed development of off-shore renewable energy turbines off Lundy remained a concern and discussions were on-going.
- c. Several meetings had been undertaken concerning towage with Svitzers. It has now been agreed that a different company, SMS (Towage), would provide three tugs to service the South East Wales Ports (Newport, Cardiff and Barry). This new arrangement appeared to be working well.
- d. A survey of the River Usk and the Newport Deeps would be undertaken at the end of May. This would include the Church Street Wharf which may then be used for the Waverley.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Severn Barrage

104. Mr R Morgan (Environment Agency Wales) asked whether Commissioners were engaged in discussions concerning the proposed Severn Barrage. The Commissioners were not aware of recent matters of recent progress but would make appropriate enquiries.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Advisory Body is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 24 October 2012 at 11:45hrs.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____