

ADVISORY BODY TO THE NEWPORT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS
13 MAY 2015

A meeting of the Advisory Body to the Newport Harbour Commissioners was held at ABP Port Offices, Alexandra Dock, Newport, on Wednesday, 13th day of May 2015, at 11:15 hrs.

PRESENT

Mr A Hemmings (in the Chair)

Messrs M Beale (MIR Steel), M Johnson (Gloucester Harbour Trustees), R Morgan (Natural Resource Wales) and E Watts (Mission to Seafarers).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs R Steed (MIR Steel).

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr C.P Crick (Chairman - Newport Harbour Commissioners) and Captain M Chidlow (NHC Harbour Master) were in attendance.

MINUTES

138. It was agreed unanimously that the minutes of the last meeting of the Advisory Body, held on 15 October 2014, (a copy of which had been sent to every Member), be taken as read, received and adopted save for a correction to the sixth line of Minute 134 where “2013 Pilotage Act” was replaced by “2013 Marine Navigation Bill”.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF NHC

139. The report of the Chairman of NHC had been circulated to all members. The Chairman of NHC expanded upon the following matters in particular:

- a) The deadline for comments from the general public on the draft byelaws is today.
- b) The Commissioners continued to stress the importance of the Harbour to the economic well-being of South Wales.
- c) It had been agreed to write to the Department for Transport to seek their advice on the Competent Harbour Authority Status of the Commissioners. Since the last Advisory Body meeting, the Commissioners had received two letters from key stakeholders stating their wish for the Commissioners to maintain their CHA status. Two meetings had been arranged for this to be discussed, and the Commissioners had also debated the issue further.
- d) Unfortunately the Training Trip had to be cancelled due to major repairs required to the “Dame Shirley”. It is planned to rearrange the event, once the vessel is in full working order.
- e) It was noted that the recent visit by HRH The Princess Royal had been extremely successful.
- f) The major investment being undertaken by ABP in South Wales was noted – it indicated the strength of the Welsh economy and the confidence in the Ports sector.
- g) New EU Ports Legislation was noted, and a watching brief would be maintained.

The Chairman thanked the Chairman of NHC for his detailed report.

Mr M Johnson (Gloucester Harbour Trustees) noted that GHT were having difficulty engaging in discussions on the Tidal Lagoons. The Harbour Master referred to the significant affect that the Lagoons could have on the natural regime of the Harbour of Newport, and also that, should more than one lagoon be constructed, there would certainly be a cumulative effect. The Chairman noted that no similar projects had been constructed and so there was no prior history for the modelling to consider.

Mr E Watts (Mission to Seafarers) reiterated the success of the recent Royal visit, and thanked everyone involved for their assistance. He noted that it was the intention of the Mission to invite Welsh Assembly Senior Management and AM's to an event later in the year.

HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT

140. The Harbour Master's report on the period to April 2015 had been circulated to all members. The Harbour Master noted the following in particular:

- a) The MCA plan to undertake a health check of the Commissioner's compliance with the PMSC later in the year.
- b) The East Usk Lighthouse and the Leading Lights are generally in good condition but work is required to fix drainage and electrical issues
- c) The Swansea Coast Guard station had been closed in March 2015. No reduction in service had been noted.
- d) An issue relating to illegal jetties being constructed on the west bank of the River Usk was being considered
- e) The Balmoral will be visiting the River Usk in 2015 but will not be embarking/ disembarking passengers there.
- f) The results of a multi-agency exercise looking into crimes perpetrated by the users of the Port were noted. Mr E Watts (Missions to Seafarers) noted that it was likely that further exercises would take place in the future.

The Chairman thanked the Harbour Master for his very useful report.

Mr E Watts (Mission to Seafarers) referred to the work with the fire service and, in particular, the requirement for drills to practice dealing with fires aboard vessels. It was noted that, in the first instance, seafarers evacuated from vessels would be taken to the Mission.

The Chairman referred to the ongoing discussions relating to the CHA status of the Commissioners. He reiterated the process to date, and it was agreed that all were content with the way this matter was being handled. It was agreed that this would be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting of this Body. Mr M Johnson (Gloucester Harbour Trustees) noted the complexity of the different rules and regulations relating to pilotage, particularly in the Severn Estuary. The Chairman stated that this may be exacerbated when powers over this are devolved to the Welsh Government.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Merchant Navy Reserve Board

141. Mr E Watts (Mission to Seafarers) informed the meeting that the MNRB are arranging a function at Cardiff Civic Hall to raise awareness of the Merchant Navy and their importance to the British economy.

Other flood alleviation works

142. Mr R Morgan (Natural Resource Wales) updated members on the fire service's requirements for a slipway onto the River Usk.

Next meeting:

The next meeting is planned for Wednesday 21 October 2015 at 11:15am.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____