

# **ADVISORY BODY TO THE NEWPORT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS**

**7 MAY 2014**

A meeting of the Advisory Body to the Newport Harbour Commissioners was held on board the vessel "Dame Shirley", moored in Alexandra Docks, Newport, on Wednesday, 7th day of May 2014, at 10:00 hrs.

## **PRESENT**

Mr A Hemmings (in the Chair)

Messrs M Beale (MIR Steel), W Mitchell, R Morgan (Natural Resource Wales), R Steed (MIR Steel), R Van-Der-Meer (Isca Boat Club) and E Watts (Mission to Seafarers).

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs N.E Challenger (Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers) and P Lyon (SMS Towage).

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr C.P Crick (Chairman - Newport Harbour Commissioners) and Captain M Chidlow (ABP – Harbour Master) were in attendance. Mr P.H.C Davies (Commissioner) and Mr W Heeps (Designated Person) was also in attendance.

## **MINUTES**

123. It was agreed unanimously that the minutes of the last meeting of the Advisory Body, held on 23 October 2013, (a copy of which had been sent to every Member), be taken as read, received and adopted save for one amendment to the third sentence of Minute 119 to read "*It is thought that Crown Estates/Residual Lands may own much of the land*".

## **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

124. It was agreed unanimously that Mr R Morgan (National Resource Wales) be elected Vice Chairman of the Advisory Body. The Chair congratulated Mr Morgan on his appointment.

## **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF NHC**

125. 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 rationale behind the recent increase in the level of Harbour Dues was explained.
- b) Dredging had taken place over the period, although this had not been extensive.
- c) The Oil Spill Table Top exercise had taken place very successfully. Some 33 people had taken part in the event, and the MCA had expressed satisfaction both with the exercise and the Plan. The Plan had now been approved for 5 years.
- d) The Commissioners, together with ABP, had met a consultant appointed by the Welsh Government and ARUP to discuss the proposals for the M4. The meeting had been constructive, and the consultant had fully understood the concerns of NHC. The details of the proposals remained vague - they did not for example include the height of the bridge. Recent press comment indicated that a decision may be made this summer.
- e) Further questions from the Department for Transport on the proposed byelaws had been answered, and it is hoped that they will now be approved.
- f) Reference was made to the findings of the Silk Commission. It is likely that further devolution of Port-related matters may occur.

The Chairman thanked the Chairman of NHC for a comprehensive and positive report.

## **HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT**

126. The Harbour Master's report for the period to March 2013 had been circulated to all members. The Harbour Master noted the following:

The following points were noted:

- a) Trinity House continued to offer a good service on the maintenance of lights, buoys and other navigational aids. It is helpful that their vessel "Mair" is stationed in South Wales as this allows prompt responses.
- b) Issues had arisen at Bird Port in relation to towage, availability of boatmen etc. The Harbour Master and deputy Harbour Master had met to discuss these matters, and agreed the way forward.
- c) The number of pilots available had increased during the period. The Pilotage function remained well-maintained.
- d) There had been very bad weather this winter. However, there had been no material damage in the River Usk area affecting navigation. Damage had been sustained to the entrance locks to the enclosed docks, but this had now been fully repaired.
- e) Work continued in relation to the pontoons and other structures along the River Usk, with a view to imposing minimum safety rules and a regime of regular inspections.
- f) Discussions continued on the security arrangements, as they relate to the River, for the forthcoming NATO meeting. Regular meetings with the Police are taking place. It is not yet known what restrictions will be put in place.

The Chairman thanked the Harbour Master for a helpful and detailed report.

## **RIVER FLOOD PROTECTION**

127. Mr R Morgan (Natural Resource Wales) reported on the proposed flood alleviation works at Crindau Pill. There was likely to be only minimal works in the River that would affect the Commissioners. Most of the work was above high water mark. This is likely to be the only scheme close to the River in the foreseeable future. Mr W Mitchell made reference to the plans for a marina close to Crindau Pill, and considered that liaison between all interested parties (including the Canal Trust) was necessary.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Regeneration of Newport**

128. The meeting noted the recent report concerning proposals to regenerate Newport. The report had made reference to the River Usk, and the requirement to make greater use of this natural resource (extract attached). Many of the comments made by Commissioners previously had now been recognised. The Chair noted the importance of seeking to ensure that these recommendations were acted upon.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Advisory Body is scheduled to take place on 15 October 2014.

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

