

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2018

A meeting of the Newport Harbour Commissioners was held at the offices of ABP, Alexandra Docks, Newport, on Wednesday, 14th Day of February 2018, at 09:30am

PRESENT

Mr J.C Neale (in the Chair)

Messrs M.C James, G Jug, A.R Speight, R Steed, E.J Watts MBE DL, Captain R.M McDonald and Councillor
J.A Guy

APOLOGY

Mr S.P Davison has apologised for non-attendance.

IN ATTENDANCE

Captain R Lewis was in attendance.

MINUTES

3431. It was resolved on a motion by Mr A.R Speight,, seconded by Mr R Steed, that the minutes of the last meeting of the Commissioners, which took place on 10 January 2018, (a copy of which had been sent to every Commissioner), be taken as read, received and adopted..

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

3432. Mr J.C Neale declared an interest in Agenda item 3282 in relation to the proposed new M4. Mr R Steed declared an interest in Agenda Item 3433(b) relating to Liberty Steel Newport Limited.

HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT as prepared by ABP

3433. The Harbour Master's Report, as prepared by ABP, is attached.

The following further matters were noted:

a) East Usk Lighthouse

The Chairman and Harbour Master met Trinity House on 17 January 2018 to discuss sustainable solutions for the future of the East Usk Lighthouse. A report from Trinity House is awaited, but there are three potential options, all of which involve material expenditure. The options are to modernise the Light in its current format, maintain a narrow front sector light with a white rear light or replace the current arrangement with solely a narrow beam light. The options will all be considered and discussed with stakeholders, including the pilots. The Chairman agreed to draft a consultation paper when the Trinity House report is received.

It was noted that a set of leading lights to replace the lighthouse was not feasible as a new structure would have to be constructed. Due to the situation this could not be achieved.

b) Liberty Steel Newport Limited

Mr R Steed declared an interest and took no part in the discussion (see above)

A detailed review of the parameters currently in place at Liberty Steel, detailing the vessels which can operate at the berth, has now been completed by the Chairman and the Harbour Master. Captain R.M McDonald had also reviewed the available evidence. The conclusion was that the restrictions currently in place should be continued. The Chairman and Harbour Master noted that they were content to discuss the review and its findings with Liberty Steel if useful.

c) Bird Port

Mr A.R Speight noted that, at a recent meeting of the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, visitors to the port had considered access to vessels at Bird Port to be dangerous. Some crew had declined to disembark. The Harbour Master concurred and noted that this did not comply with the Safety in Ports Code of Practice. There is also a concern for the safety of pilots although usually steps are taken to improve matters when the pilots are due to arrive.

The Chairman noted that, with regard to pilots, if there are specific examples of occasions where safety is compromised, this should be reported to the Commissioners. Pilots should not put themselves in a position of danger. It would also be appropriate if MNWB wrote to Bird Port to bring this matter further to the attention of Bird Port management.

The Harbour Master noted that a vessel had to abort sailing from Bird Port. This had occurred for a variety of reasons and the vessel had to be taken back into Bird Port which had been a challenge. There had also been an aborted docking – a vessel had arrived to dock but a vessel already docked had not moved to make space. The vessel attempting to dock had to return to the anchoring area.

d) Designated Person Audit

The PMSC Audit took place on 18 January at ABP Cardiff. Mr A.R Speight and Mr R Steed attended, together with the Chairman, Harbour Master and Secretary. The report produced by the Designated Person had been circulated. He appeared very satisfied with the position and had stated that a letter to MCA confirming compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code could be remitted. It was agreed that such a letter be remitted at the appropriate time. There were some recommendations within the report that would be addressed. It was agreed that periodic reports to the Commissioners would be made on progress made. Next year's review may be undertaken remotely with the Designated Person attending a Board meeting to discuss his findings.

e) Safety Plan

The draft Marine Safety Plan 2018 - 2021, produced by the Chairman, was considered and discussed. It was resolved on a motion from Captain R.M McDonald, seconded by Councillor J.A Guy, that the document be adopted. This would also be disclosed on the Website.

f) Vessel touching ground

A vessel touched the ground whilst approaching Newport on 12 February. The vessel's approach was aborted – there was no incidence of pollution or damage. An investigation is underway although it appears that the vessel was outside the dredged channel when the incident took place.

g) Remembrance Day

Mr A.R Speight reported that there is a national campaign to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War. Included in this is for all vessels to sound their horns at 11am. It was agreed that this should be taken up with the Council.

MATTERS ARISING FROM BOARD MINUTES

Minute 3164 NHC/ ABP Service Level Agreement

This matter was again deferred.

Minute 3282 Proposed new M4 Motorway

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

It was noted that ABP had withdrawn their objection to the proposed new M4 motorway. It was understood that their objections had been successfully mitigated as the impacts on the docks had been sufficiently addressed. A letter had been received from Persona Associates asking whether the Commissioners continued to object and whether they wish to attend the Public Enquiry and be heard.

The Commissioners considered this matter in detail. It was agreed to reply to Persona Associates noting the following:

1. The Commissioners had supported the objection from ABP. Given the circumstances this was now withdrawn;
2. The Commissioners had also objected to the Compulsory Purchase Orders which had been put in place as they appeared to disallow the running of Newport as an Open Port and restricted the ability of the Commissioners to undertake their duties. The Commissioners require confirmation that the rights as a Statutory Harbour Authority are unaffected by the CPO and details of the CPO generally before the objection was withdrawn.

Minute 3392 Wetlands 10th Anniversary

Mr M.C James noted that this anniversary appeared now to be low key, consisting of a photographic competition to be judged by the Commissioners.

Minute 3407 Old Debts/ ABP Charges

The Clerk reported that the very old debts had now been settled.

MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

3425. The accounts for the current month were examined. It was agreed unanimously that the attached accounts amounting to £5,158.97 be paid.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

3434. The statement of the Commissioner's revenue was examined. They disclosed monthly bills of £14,133.50 compared to the budget of £18,000.00. Income had been affected by the planned replacement of the Dock Gates. Expenditure for the month totalled £4,480.17 compared to the budgeted figure £3,925 and £188,541.17 for the year to date compared to a budget of £195,765.00.

INVESTMENTS

3435. It was confirmed that the amounts at present invested were as follows:

Monmouthshire Building Society	£76,047.08
Nat West	£38,879.81
Santander	£25,000.00

3436. Mr A.R Speight questioned the level of reserves to be maintained. The paper on the level of dues agreed in December and the Commissioner's Finance Policy were noted.

CORRESPONDENCE

"The Tide"

3437. Correspondence relating to a proposed film entitled "The Tide" was noted.

BPA Website

3438. BPA are re-designing their website. It was agreed to send them the information concerning Newport Harbour as requested.

ABP Website

3439. Mr A.R Speight noted that the ABP Website disclosed the old byelaws of the Commissioners. It was agreed to write to ABP requesting that they update their Website to include the new byelaws.

Safety Management Systems

3440. The Commissioners confirmed unanimously that they had received and understood the latest version of the PMSC. They signed the control sheet accordingly *[Following the meeting, the one Commissioner absent from this meeting also agreed to sign the control sheet]*

Mission to Seafarers

3441. Mr E.J Watts MBE DL stated that the senior management of the Mission (Regional Director of Europe) would be pleased to attend a meeting of the Commissioners to describe the work taking place. It was agreed that this would be beneficial, possibly combining this with a meeting at the Mission and inviting members of the Advisory Body.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____