

# NEWPORT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

## ANNUAL REPORT

**For the year ended 31 March 2021**

### LEGAL STATUS

The Newport Harbour Commissioners is a body created by Statute as enshrined in the Newport (South Wales) Harbour Acts and Orders 1836 to 2003. The Commissioner's area of jurisdiction, as defined in the Newport (Monmouthshire) Harbour Act 1890, is as follows:

*“Those parts of the Bristol Channel and Rivers Usk and Ebbw which lie between an imaginary line drawn in a S.79°W. true direction from Goldcliff until it meets the shore of the Bristol Channel eastward of the Peterstone Wentlooge Church and the bridge over the River Usk at Newbridge and the bridge carrying the South Wales Railway of the Great Western Railway Company over the River Ebbw and the banks and shores of such parts of the said channel and rivers and any works on such banks and shores and all streams, pools, creeks, havens, bays and inlets within those limits”.*

The key responsibilities of the Commissioners are as follows:

A) Safety and navigation

Regulation of navigation within statutory Harbour limits

Provision of a pilotage service

Local lighthouse authority establishing and maintaining lights and marks

Removal of wrecks

Hydrographic surveying of Harbour area

B) Enforcement

To make and enforce byelaws relating to the conduct of vessels

To act upon observations of contracted Marine staff and stakeholders to ensure compliance with byelaws

C) Pollution

Development of Harbour oil spill contingency plans Environmental

Management Duties under Habitats Directive to review consents

D) Other

Prepare Ports Contingency Plans

Comply with Guide for Good Governance for Trust Ports

An annual detailed review of the Commissioner's compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code is undertaken by the Designated Person, an independent expert on the Code. The last review took place in February 2021 and no major deviances from the Code were reported.

### FINANCIAL POSITION

Harbour dues receivable have increased by 19% from the previous period due to increased shipping volumes. This has been achieved in spite of the pandemic and is an excellent reflection of the commercial health of the Harbour. Harbour dues were increased in the prior year, with effect from 1 November 2019 from £0.075 per gross tonne to £0.085 per gross tonne. The Harbour Dues have remained constant during this financial year. The overall financial situation remains satisfactory.

The reported surplus of the Commissioners has been enhanced significantly by a reduction in the contribution paid toward channel dredging. In fact, no dredging was required in the main channel during the calendar year 2020. This cost is £48,909 less than in 19/20.

The Commissioners continue to keep the level of Harbour Dues under constant review.

### **KEY MATTERS ARISING DURING THE YEAR**

- In common with all organisations the activities of the Commissioners have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Board has continued to meet as planned but, as they were not able to meet in person, they have taken advantage of IT solutions to ensure that no meetings have had to be cancelled. The operation of the Commissioners has continued efficiently and all objectives have been met. The Advisory Body also continued to meet during the period.
- There were no new Commissioners appointed during the year. Those Commissioners reaching the end of their terms in office were all re-appointed for a further 3-year term.
- The dredged Channel has remained in a good condition throughout the year. There was no dredging required throughout the period resulting in a material deduction in cost to the Commissioners.
- Trinity House carried out their inspection of the local aids to navigation at Newport during the year and all were found to be in good working and efficient order.
- Constructive dialogue with the Commissioner's stakeholders continued throughout the period, including ABP and the River berth operators. As noted above this has largely been achieved using IT solutions such as Zoom and Teams.
- The Service Level Agreement between Associated British Ports and the Commissioners, which covers the provision of pilotage services and Harbour Master duties remains unchanged.
- The biennial survey of the River Usk was undertaken in October 2020. Matters arising therefrom have all been dealt with satisfactorily.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

In prior years this report has included updates on matters of national importance that would affect the jurisdiction of the Commissioners. There are no such matters to report this year.

**Secretary to the Newport Harbour Commissioners  
June 2021**