

Folkestone Harbour Company Minutes
Meeting 20th March 2019
The Quarterhouse, Tontine Street, Folkestone – 9.15 for 9.30

Attendance

Trevor Minter OBE (TRM) – Sir Roger De Haan private office
Lorraine Hughes (LH) – Harbour Manager – Folkestone Harbour
Tom Miller (TM) - Folkestone Harbour Authority
Andy Whitham (AW) - Folkestone Harbour Authority
Jeremy Smith (JS) - Folkestone Harbour Authority
Steve Godfrey (SG) - Works and Maintenance Manger - Folkestone Harbour
Diane Dever (DD) - Folkestone Harbour Arm
Barry Pluck (BP) – Shepway Sports Trust
David Harvey (DH) – Folkestone Sea Sports and Folkestone Rescue
Trevor Hart (TH) - Folkestone Harbour (Volunteer)
Honei Jackson (HJ) – The Hatch (Local Trader)
Richard Jackson (RJ) – The Sunny Sands Café
Dougie Pilcher (DP) – Folkestone Fisherman
Don Falvey (DF) - FYMBC
Pat Boon (PB) - FYMBC
Paul Gill (PG) - FYMBC
Tony Wright (TW) - FYMBC
Colin Thompson (CT) - FYMBC
John Beasley (JB) - FYMBC
Neal Boosey (NB) – Charter Boat Owner
Charles Buttle (CB) – Folkestone NCI

1) Apologies for Absence: -

No apologies

2) Minutes of last meeting for approval

Approved as a true record

3) Matters arising not covered elsewhere

b) Yellow Post in Inner Harbour

The Art piece has now been replaced and the yellow post removed

4) New Staffing Structure

TRM outlined the new staffing structure for the harbour advising that 8 harbour operatives were to be employed on a shift pattern that would involve a 4 on and 4 off basis, worked over a 24-hour period. The role would encompass, Security, Customer Service and Maintenance. LH would remain as Harbour Manager and Steve Godfrey has been employed as Works and Maintenance Manager.

5) Harbour Arm (New Season)

DD updated on the plans for the new season on the harbour arm. The aim for this year is for the HA to remain open for as long as possible with traders committing to open, weather permitting. The cinema will be operational again during the season and a payment structure will be in place to help support the running costs. There is a plan in place to animate the station with markets and the possibility of a Christmas market. The signal box on the station is being refurbished and a suitable trader is being sought. There are also plans for the west side of the HA for a beach bar and restaurant and 3 Pullman carriages are being refurbished but DD was unsure when and where these would go.

PG suggested a what's on board to be placed on site or distributing leaflets to advertise events on offer, as it was felt that more people would visit if they knew what was available as not everybody has computers. DD would investigate his suggestions.

6) Seaports Update

BP updated on the success of the seaports centre. He advised that since starting 3 years ago the growth of visitors has surpassed their expectation with 2,000 individuals between May and September 2018. 1,000 students from local schools are already booked in for this up-coming season with many more bookings expected.

BP advised that as the centre continues to grow new staff will need to be taken on to meet the demand. The seaports centre is an RYA accredited training centre and are also AALA licenced (*Adventure Activities Licensing Authority*). They have instructors for sailing, kayaking and paddle boarding and are looking to introduce raft building to their offering this year. BP advised that they are very appreciative of Folkestone Rescue's support as they can only offer public hire on the days that FR are on hand to supervise. However, they are looking to implement the additional use of lookouts using seaports resources to allow the centre to be open more in 2019.

PG asked if there have ever been lifeguards at the harbour? DP advised that they always had them on the Sunny Sands. DH advised that these were withdrawn 15 years ago and that was when Folkestone Rescue was formed which is covered the majority of the time by volunteers.

7) Fishing on the Harbour Arm

No major issues reported, LH will continue to meet with DSAA on an annual basis to review the situation going forward and manage this where necessary. It has been agreed that on quiet periods the fisherman can fish the lower landing, however, there is to be no fishing on the upper level forward of the Folkestone sign.

8) Build up of sand in the outer harbour

DP advised that the sand continues to be an issue and needs to be levelled out and could possibly be achieved with a bulldozer. DP felt that due to a lack of easterly winds this year the sand is entering the mouth of the harbour and remaining. CT pointed out that the sand has scoured out from the foundations of Rocksalt and this was the lowest anybody has seen for some time. NB also advised that the inner harbour is also affected with the build-up of sand and this limits the times being able to enter and leave the harbour. PB advised that the soft sand has been washed away and that the

yachts are sitting on hard ground which isn't ideal. TRM and TM advised they would review the situation once the bathymetric survey had been produced which is due in June/July.

9) Harbour Refurbishments

TRM updated on refurbishments: -

- a) Fountain
Due to a major water leak the fountain remains off. Investigations are taking place and it is hoped that it will be operational for Easter.
- b) New Car Park System
A new ANPR parking system is being sourced this should be installed by the end of the year. This should help with access at busy times.
- c) Maintenance
 - i) The encapsulation on the HA will be removed by Easter opening.
 - ii) Slipway – SG will do test patches to find a solution, the slipway will remain closed until fully repaired.
- d) Lift and step access to viaduct
HJ asked when the lift and steps will be open, TRM advised that it this project is well over schedule but hoped it will be open for Easter. NB asked if the lift will stay open, TRM advised this we will monitor, and harbour operatives will be responsible for opening and closing if it is found to be abused during night time hours.
- e) 100-year maintenance schedule
TRM advised on the 100-year maintenance schedule and how it would progress to ensure costs are kept to a minimum. SG will manage the works with harbour operatives where possible to keep costs down, however, larger jobs will be contracted out.

10) Development Update

TRM advised that no date had been confirmed to start building, however, discussions were taking place and could possibly be by the end of the year, however, due to uncertainty in the market at present Sir Roger De Haan would wait to make the final decision. If this were to go ahead, the development would start at the Leas Lift end of the harbour and would include 84 units consisting of flats and houses. The build time for these properties would be approximately 18 months. NB asked if the development would affect the running of the harbour. TRM reassured the meeting that nothing would change.

HJ asked if there was any news regarding the purchase of the rail line. TRM advised that network rail want to sell the land and he believed that the remembrance line was interested.

11) Health and Safety Matters

- a) HJ expressed concerns again about Beach Street which runs between the fountain and The George public house. She has seen numerous children nearly hit by cars. TRM advised that

whilst this is a concern this is a matter for Kent County Council Highways Department as this isn't our land.

- b) NB expressed concerns regarding cyclist entering the harbour site on the pavement area and asked if it was possible for them to have access via the car park or ask them to dismount. LH expressed her concerns that if the site was opened to accommodate this, during busy times it would encourage pedestrians onto the road. It would also be difficult to manage the dismount of cyclists. TRM reminded the meeting that the harbour is promoted as a shared space area and that all harbour users need to be respectful of each other.
- c) NB acknowledged that defibs were on site and TRM confirmed that we have 3 defibs in total distributed around the site. These were donated by The Rotary Clubs of Folkestone for the use of all harbour users.
- d) The dangers of tombstoning around the harbour site was discussed. This is very dangerous and harbour staff continue to deal with the matter in line with the Safety Management System (SMS) and our Risk Register (RR). TRM advised that we continue to monitor this, and signage is in place to advise of the dangers.

12) A.O.B

- a) TRM thanked Trevor Hart for his assistance in keeping the harbour clean and tidy. LH also thanked him for his assistance with various mooring issues, this is an asset to the harbour. Trevor works for FHC on a voluntary basis.
- b) PG advised that the slipway at Rocksalt is becoming increasingly harder to access due to Fisherman leaving pots, and general rubbish on there. LH advised that she has had numerous conversations regarding this and will address this issue.
- c) PG asked if signs could be erected asking people "not to feed the seagulls" as they are becoming increasingly more of a nuisance. LH will investigate this.

13) Date of Next Meeting

No further business the meeting closed at 10.45

Date of next meeting 18th September 2019, venue Quarterhouse, Tontine Street 9.15 for 9.30 start.