

FALMOUTH HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 7TH MARCH 2006

Present:

Mr C Brown - Chairman
Mr W Amos
Mr D Bickle
Lt Commander I Munday
Mr T Light
Captain Mark Sansom - Harbour Master
Mr P Morgan – Falmouth Harbour Commissioner Observer

Miss Jennifer Popperwell - Secretary

1 Apologies for absence:

No apologies were received.

2 Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the Consultative Committee meeting of 5th December 2005 were approved.

3 Matters Arising:

(a) Waterfront Development

Captain Sansom informed the meeting that FHC had seen the draft action area plan which doesn't include any changes for FHC sites. There were no inclusions for any large infill schemes to take place and only small changes to existing sites. The FHC cannot comment on the town planning part of the document. The Chairman stated that the terms of reference need to be seen and expressed concern that once the plan is approved it will exist for 15 years.

Tim Light told of some initiatives being looked at for the Prince of Wales pier regarding having a purpose built building for booking offices rather than the wood huts used at present. He was also trying to progress a disabled access point which could also be used for prams/pushchairs etc to board boats.

(b) Falmouth Harbour Bye-Laws

The meeting was told that some progress had been made and a letter received from the department but due to the long period of time in receiving a reply things have moved on. Captain Sansom is to provide an updated draft for both the next Consultative meeting.

(c) Mooring Holders Questionnaire

All members of the committee had been issued with a summary of the Questionnaire findings.

Discussion on the findings took place it was agreed that the most practical way of meeting some of the aspirations would be to investigate combining water taxi and rubbish collection services.

It was felt that the best way forward with speeding and wash was to put it to the next Marine Safety Committee meeting.

Ways of making a water taxi viable were discussed one of which was to approach various sailing clubs to see whether a subsidised service could be instigated.

Mr Amos raised the point of conflict between the trot lines – his boat had been damaged by a stern projection on the boat adjacent to his which was above the water line and a discussion on ways of making such projectiles safe for boats around them followed. Captain Sansom is to talk to Lloyd Pond regarding Mr Amos's mooring. Captain Sansom told the meeting that over the years great progress had been made with regard to incidents on moorings.

Lt Commander Munday stated that last year there seemed to be an increase in diesel sheens in the harbour and asked if any statistics were kept on such incidents. A discussion on how such spills get into the harbour followed and points such as sump oil dumped in main drains which is then flushed into the harbour with heavy downpours of rain were made. Lt Commander Munday stated that commercial outlets such as the Yacht Haven fueller use all the appropriate measures to ensure no spillages take place and could some form of poster be made to make leisure boat owners more aware of the situation.

The Committee felt that the introduction of the new type of rubbish bins had helped to cut down the amount of rubbish getting into the harbour.

Captain Sansom stated that if a boat could be found for collection of harbour rubbish then he would look at manning by FHC seasonal staff.

(d) Car Parking on North Quay

FHC have appointed Millers Estate Agents to approach various parties to see whether they would consider operating a Chandlery business on North quay.

This would have to be in temporary premises. FHC were also looking at enlarging the Amenity block at some point in the future and it was felt that perhaps a Chandlery could be incorporated into this if a trial showed it to be viable.

(e) Proposed Dredging Scheme

Captain Sansom reported that the dredging scheme now looks much more promising as recent meeting with the RDA and Cornwall County Council had proved to be constructive and funding now looks possible.

FHC hopes that CCC will lead the project which has countywide benefits for tourism.

The next meeting with the RDA will be on 22nd March 2006.

(f) FHC Award

Although a lot of good publicity had been gained by 2005's presentation the award had not captured peoples' imagination.

Following a discussion the committee felt that to move forward three elements for selecting a person or group/organisation from should be: Safety Environment and promotion of port. It was agreed that it would be better if the Consultative Committee were to make proposals rather than members of the public. It was proposed that nominees should be put to the next committee meeting in June for discussion.

Mr Peter Morgan informed the meeting of an idea the Commissioners have for sponsoring a Bursary for a student undertaking a marine/harbour dissertation. at the Cornwall University. A general discussion on how this would work followed and in the first instance contact with the University should be made to ascertain what is entailed before progressing further.

(g) Ship to Ship Transfers

Captain Sansom told the meeting that consultations are still ongoing. The OPRC plan had gone before two Cornwall County Council committees and the Executive committee. DEFRA are still to reply.

Captain Sansom stated that a meeting with all interested statutory consultees i.e English Nature, Environment Agency, DEFRA would be programmed to agree the required alterations prior to sign off.

A meeting between Julia Goldsworthy , Mathew Taylor, Captain Sansom and the Chairman of FHC Mr Andrew Bell is to take place shortly in London.

Lt Commander Munday asked if statistics of incidents that occur in open seas regarding ship to ship transfers was available and Captain Sansom stated that there was not.

Most ship to ship transfers for Europe are, at present, taking place in the Denmark Straights.

The Committee felt that it is preferable to have such transfers take place in a controlled environment with all safety measures in place than be put into the position of having to cope with any spill that comes to Falmouth via open sea transfers.

(h) Harbour Regulation Issues

The MAIB report on the accident at St Mawes and its recommendation to local harbour authorities to propose measures to avoid a recurrence was discussed.

Possible approaches to the problems were discussed. It was agreed that the Marine Safety Committee was the right forum to produce a co-ordinated policy.

Tim Light told the meeting of a small poster being passed out by St Mawes Harbour Authority stating speed limits etc.

4 International Shrimper Festival

The festival is to be held between 17th and 24th June 2006 with approximately 90 to 95 boats taking part – 30 of these will be local boats.

The Chairman told the meeting that he had received a letter from the Shrimper Association regarding discount offered for one night's use of the Yacht Haven and asking for his help in getting an increase.

Captain Sansom confirmed that the same letter had been put before the FHC Board at their last meeting when a discount of 10% was offered – this being the standard amount offered to all organisations. He also pointed out that the restricted space available to FHC for such events must be looked at in context with other visiting yachts using the facilities.

The Committee felt that any discounts offered should be consistent to all organisations and it would be a condition that collections of fees would be undertaken by a member of the organisation.

Mr Amos felt that a discount of 20% for twenty or more boats should be made. Mr Bickle agreed with this.

There was consensus on this point and the chairman asked that it be put on the FHC agenda for discussion.

5 Pre-Paid Harbour Dues Scheme

A paper on a Harbour Due scheme at Fowey was distributed to the meeting with a view as to whether a similar scheme would be desirable in Falmouth. As members had not had sufficient time to digest the information it has been deferred for discussion until the next meeting.

6 Minutes of Harbour Board Meetings 16th September & 14th October

FHC website – a meeting is to be held this Friday to discuss the spilt of commercial and leisure on the site to make for easier use.

The Chairman asked for an explanation of the Port Environment Certificate Scheme.

The position of the Commissioners on the SAC management forum was explained.

7 Any Other Business

Mr Amos informed the meeting of the Celtic Watersport Festival to be held in Cornwall during July 2006. Unfortunately, the yacht racing to be held at Falmouth has been cancelled although various other watersports will be held at venues around the county. The allocation of funding has been an issue and the main cause for the yacht racing being cancelled.

Lt Commander Munday offered to produce a letter to be sent out for publication to newspapers etc on cleanliness in the harbour – Captain Sansom is to look into providing a budget for such promotions.

8 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 7th June 2006.