

FALMOUTH HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

**MINUTES OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2003 AT 1000 HOURS**

Present:

Mr R J Toy – Chairman
Mr C Brown
Mr R L Jones
Mr J Bottomley
Mr P Morgan
Mr J Langan
Capt M J Sansom

1. Apologies for absence

Mr P Fox

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Consultative Committee Meeting held on 10 December 2002 were approved.

3. Matters arising

a) Waterfront Development

The Draft Report is still awaited and the Committee asked that the Commissioners write to Carrick District Council to ask that that Draft be hurried along.

b) Maerl Dredging

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners have re-issued Licences to two Dredging Companies for 12 months though English Nature have advised that they consider that dredging should be stopped until the survey is complete. They have raised concerns that Diving Tourism is being damaged and that the Flushing foreshore is being eroded away. Studies are being carried out. Mr Jones asked if English Nature would be paying for the Survey – Capt Sansom stated that this would not be the case.

c) Falmouth Harbour Revision Order

The Order has been finalised and is ready to be advertised. There have been no further objections and nothing further to report.

d) Falmouth Harbour Bye Laws

Work seems to have stopped and there has been no response from the Department for some time. The Department is in favour of Bye-Laws coming to an end and being replaced by powers of general Directions. Capt Sansom explained that FHC would like the Bye-Laws to stay as they can be enforced more easily.

e) Zoning Proposals

PERSONAL WATER CRAFT

PWC's are becoming more popular and Carrick District Council now have a policy to allow the launching of these craft at Mylor and Loe Beach provided they have complied with a registration scheme. Capt Sansom recommended that FHC continue to ban PWC'S launching from the Boat Park as they will get in the way of other small craft particularly at the height of the season. The Supervisor will be advised to suggest other sites where they may launch, however, they will be allowed in the harbour as long as they stay at 8 knots within the speed limited area. Following an in depth discussion the Committee were not in favour of PWC's but concur that they are becoming popular and a vote favoured introducing a registration scheme – aligning ourselves with Carrick District Council.

WATER SKIING AND TOWED INFLATABLES

At the moment these are banned from coming near to the bathing areas. It is being recommended that water skiing should be permitted in Falmouth Bay at a distance of more than 100m from the bathing areas with yellow marks being put in place in May of each year. The Committee were in agreement with this.

SAILING RACES

Mr Brown is very concerned about the suggested starting and turning points of the Sailing Races. The Flushing Race starts at the Club House on Tuesday and Saturday. If the points were changed he is of the opinion that the Saturday race would be killed off. The viewing public would be deprived of a spectacle. Capt Sansom said that the Clubs could liaise with him as to whether they would be able to use their existing points before the Race started. It was suggested that a harbour patrol should collect data on sailing days to monitor the situation. Capt Sansom explained that there was an incident in the Harbour last year involving a working boat and the St Mawes Ferry that had caused the rules to be revised. Mr Bottomley said that there was always an element of danger and trepidation when working boats were racing and we were in danger of regulating the fun out of racing in Falmouth. Capt Sansom expressed his concerns on the congestion on Saturdays and a policy be put into force. Mr Brown suggested a turning mark by Pendennis Shipyard West. The Committee were in favour of the start line changing on the Saturday but prohibiting a fleet of more than 15 vessels. Mr Toy put this to the vote and the

Committee were all in agreement. The exclusion zone for racing vessels around commercial vessels was then discussed and Mr Brown raised concerns about the recommendations of 50m abeam and 100m ahead but after a short discussion it was agreed to support this.

Mr Morgan asked if racers regard fishing vessels as “commercial” and Mr Brown said that they do. However they all agreed that the word “commercial” be defined.

DIVING

Mr Brown said that divers should show a sensible size “A” flag at least 1m high to emphasize their mark.

LAYING OF FISHING GEAR

The Committee would like to see a draft Code of Practice for the laying of fishing gear. Fishermen have been laying pots in the middle of the channel without advising anyone of the position. Mr Bottomley asked if there was an insistence that a sinking line be used by fishermen and if not should there be a Bye-Law. Capt Sansom said Bye-Laws were not available to us and he thought that the fishermen would abide by a Code of Practice. The Committee were in favour of the consultation.

f) Services offered by Falmouth Harbour Commissioners

The Commissioners are to consider what services we are to provide for the summer season. As far as the Yacht Haven is concerned the fueller should arrive in May but Capt Sansom said no water would be available from the fueller but would be available elsewhere on the Pontoons. The Committee suggested that water be made available from the fueller if they are taking fuel but not if **only** water is required.

Mr Langan thought FHC should upgrade facilities to provide power and water at the Grove Place Boat Park and charge accordingly. Capt Sansom explained that it is a Boat storage area not a Boatyard. Mr Bottomley suggested a plunge tap which the Committee generally agreed with. It was finally agreed that a questionnaire be sent out sometime in the summer, to see what Winter Boat Park users are prepared to pay for.

4. Resignation of Mr D Watkinson

Capt Sansom has already sent a letter to Mr Watkinson, but the Committee asked if he would send one from the Consultative Committee. Mr Langan proposed that the Observing Commissioner be given a voting right to fill the vacancy but it was agreed that the post be advertised with skills and qualities to be stated. Mr Langan thought that the commercial side was not well represented and Mr Toy thought that the fishing interests should be

represented. The Committee eventually agreed to leave the position open to all.

5. Minutes of the Harbour Board Meetings

Mr Brown asked what “OSRL” stood for in the November Harbour Board Minutes - Oil Spill Response Limited.

He also asked why Mr Paul Bickford did not have to re-apply for the Commissioners position when Mr A Bell had to re-apply. It was explained by Capt Sansom that Mr Bell had come to the end of his term on the Board and had to re-apply for a second term. However Mr Bickford was no longer a member of the Carrick District Council and had resigned from the Board of Commissioners when his term of appointment was still current. He was co-opted back on to the Committee as Chairman.

Boat Park Charges (February Minutes) Capt Sansom explained that the Boat Park was not making a significant profit especially for the amount of effort put in, there was a lot of maintenance to the slipway and piling to be renewed, therefore an annual increase of 15% was felt necessary for the next three years. He also explained that the Harbour Commissioners owned the land where the boats are stored, not the Falmouth Water Sports Association.

Mr Jones asked if we had acquired the software as mentioned in the January Harbour Board Minutes, Capt Sansom confirmed we had.

The Port Handbook should be ready in approximately 6 weeks and will be available free of charge.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 24 June at 1000hrs.

The meeting closed at 12.07