

FALMOUTH HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27th JUNE 2006

Present:

Mr C Brown	Chairman
Mr W Amos	
Mr J Langan	
Lt Commander I Munday	
Captain Mark Sansom	Harbour Master
Mr J P Bottomley	Falmouth Harbour Commissioner
Mr P Morgan	Falmouth Harbour Commissioner Observer

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Mr D Bickle and Mr T Light.

2. Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the Consultative Committee meeting of 7th March 2006 were approved.

Mr. Langan requested a copy of the Mooring Holders Questionnaire results.

3. Matters Arising:

(a) Waterfront Development

Captain Sansom reported that he had attended a meeting involving the big Lottery Bid, which is being co-ordinated by Carrick District Council and Cornwall Enterprise. The meeting had taken the form of questions and answers in respect of the proposals for funding presented. Lottery assessors will filter applications by some 50%. With reference to Custom House Quay it is proposed that the car parking facilities be re-located to another venue in order to improve the overall ambiance of the area. It is also suggested that a building be considered for North Quay, which would help provide additional visitor facilities including a tourist information office. The outcome for both these proposals is awaited.

It was noted a new site for the Falmouth Marine School is being explored as part of this process.

Mr. Bottomley reported that nothing further had been received on the Master plan for the development of the waterfront. He understood that Carrick Council will not be releasing the document received from Terence O'Rourke for consultation on their findings. Instead the Area Action Plan will be released in due course.

(b) Falmouth Harbour Bye-Laws

Captain Sansom explained the current situation with regard to the licensing of boats and alterations necessary to bring the bye-laws up to date. The situation had become something of an impasse with the Department commenting about defects in certain extant bye-laws.

The Harbour Board will discuss this at their meeting on Friday next and a possible new re-draft of the amended bye-laws to be circulated to members of the Consultative Committee in due course.

(c) Mooring Holders Questionnaire

Captain Sansom asked if the Committee wished to consider sending out another questionnaire following the success of last year's issue.

The Committee suggested that perhaps an appropriate survey could be carried out for Visitors in 2007 and Residents in 2008. Content for the questionnaire to be considered well in advance of issue.

Mr. Brown felt that speed and wash was still very much an issue in the harbour.

Captain Sansom advised that the regulation of the harbour needs to be addressed in order that the offenders can be identified. It is planned to introduce an anonymous reporting facility on the FHC web-site whereby concerns can be recorded by any stakeholders without identifying themselves. This facility to be advertised through the FHC newsletter.

Lt Commander Munday suggested that a Harbour Watch Scheme might be considered in the future –

The work being done by the Marine Safety Committee was highlighted by Captain Sansom and in particular the recording of offending craft on the water by the three harbour authorities with a view to reducing some speed and wash issues.

Mr Langan asked if there was any further progress with regard a water taxis which can also double as a vessel to deal with rubbish in the harbour. He felt that perhaps this role could be contracted out and therefore would not involve FHC with any cost. Advised that there is little call for additional water taxis.

Noted that the new seagull proof rubbish bins located on Custom House Quay had helped improve the cleanliness of the harbour.

(d) Car Parking on North Quay

Reported that Millers Commercial had advised the Commissioners that the proposal to site a seasonal chandlery on North Quay was not commercially viable.

(e) Proposed Dredging Scheme

Captain Sansom reported that he had attended a meeting with the RDA last week to discuss the proposed dredging scheme for the harbour. The meeting had proved to be very positive and it was hoped that it would lead to further progress.

(f) FHC Award

It was agreed that this award had not captured the imagination of the public and a different format may be required in the future.

It was suggested that the Consultative Committee propose three candidates from individuals or organisations and the Board should make a final choice.

The item should be put on the agenda for next meeting with a view to agreeing the format and proposing nominees.

(g) Ship to Ship Transfers

Captain Sansom reported that the signing off of the OPRC Plan had presented some difficulties as certain bodies, such as Cornwall County Council, found it difficult to sign up to the Plan if it referred to STS transfer activities.

Following a meeting with the Department of Transport and the MCA it was recommended that a separate environmental statement should be prepared to inform the Board's decision as to whether to proceed with STS.

The OPRC is therefore being amended without STS transfers included, and it is hoped the Plan can be signed off in the near future.

(h) Harbour Regulation Issues

Previously discussed under item 3(c).

4. Pre-paid Harbour Dues Scheme

Lt Commander Munday reported on a pre-paid harbour dues scheme operated by Fowey Harbour Commissioners whereby a book of ten vouchers can be purchased in advance and in return a discount is given each time a voucher is used for a mooring facility.

Carrick have a similar scheme in relation to their pontoons in the River Fal.

FHC to look at the possibilities and benefits for introducing a similar scheme.

Noted that the Shrimpers rally entrants appreciated the discounts received when using FHC facilities.

5. Charges to Residents taking water on FHC Pontoons

Lt Commander Munday reported that he had called at the Yacht Haven for water recently and had been told that he would have to pay the short stay charge for this facility. He felt that £5 for the amount of water to be taken was rather expensive. Captain Sansom explained that the pontoons are primarily for visitors use only – although residents vessels can fill with water when taking fuel from the fuel barge or pay for a short stay. Residents can also use the pontoons for an overnight stay providing they remain on board and pay the visitors rates.

The mooring conditions state that allocation and payment for the mooring does not entitle the mooring holder to use other FHC facilities. The Committee felt that the mooring conditions need to be clarified to avoid the wrong interpretation.

Captain Sansom advised that the regulations for providing water are being reviewed and this will have an effect on FHC and the provision of water on the pontoons.

6. FHC Draft Strategy Document

A further draft of the Strategy Document had been circulated to members for information.

Mr Bottomley reported that the changes requested by the Consultative Committee had been addressed.

The Committee had no further comments or amendments to make.

Captain Sansom advised that the Document would shortly be circulated to stakeholders and principal organisations for comments. Following final approval by the Board in September the Document will be printed and made available to the public

The Consultative Committee congratulated the Strategy Sub-Committee for all their hard work in preparing the Document and they also felt that the joint meeting to discuss the document had been worthwhile.

7. Discounts for Falmouth Week 2007

A suggestion from Roger Hollingsworth of POFSA that all inclusive charges might be considered for entrants coming to the port to take part in the races for Falmouth Week and that this could encourage more entrants to visit.

Various ideas and schemes were discussed by the Committee who recommended that the subject be referred back to Mr. Hollingsworth for any ideas he might have for a workable scheme.

8. Minutes of Harbour Board Meetings – 3rd & 24th February, 31st March & 5 May 2006:

The Committee noted the addition of Dr Karen Sumser-Lupson to the Board – Karen has wide experience with Government Departments and funding but is not specifically the environmental representative on the Board.

The Committee welcomed the suggestion of a joint meeting with the Board once or twice a year.

9. Any Other Business:

The Chairman asked if the date for the naming of the new Pilot Boat ARROW had been arranged. Captain Sansom advised that the vessel is expected in port late August/early September and the naming will probably take place in early October.

The Chairman welcomed the Commissioners financial contribution towards the firework display during Falmouth Week.

Captain Sansom advised that there would be a reception on the tall ship MIR on Friday evening in the Docks.

The Chairman reported that the Rotary Club of Falmouth are hoping to have volunteers available to welcome visitors from the cruise ships when they call in at Falmouth.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 12th September 2006