

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Southwold Harbour Management Committee** held in the Stella Peskett Millennium Hall, on **Thursday, 09 March 2023 at 4:00 PM**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Maurice Cook, Mr Richard Musgrove, Mr Mike Pickles, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Letitia Smith

Officers present:

Andy Jarvis (Strategic Director), Alastair MacFarlane (General Manager, Southwold Harbour), Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer) and Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Services Manager)

Others present:

Ian Bradbury (Stakeholder Advisory Group), Simon Flunder (Stakeholder Advisory Group), Marcus Gladwell (Stakeholder Advisory Group) and Vicky Gladwell (Stakeholder Advisory Group)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr David Gledhill, Mr John Ogden, Councillor Craig Rivett and Councillor Mary Rudd.

2 Declarations of Interest

Mr Mike Pickles declared a pecuniary interest in item 6 of the agenda. The Chairman noted that he had received dispensation from the Monitoring Officer and would be allowed take part in discussion and vote on the matter.

3 Term of Office of Co-opted Member David Gledhill

The Committee received report **ES/1491**. The Chairman introduced the report and stated he was pleased that Mr Gledhill had agreed to stand for a further three year term.

There being no questions on the proposal of Mike Pickles, seconded by Councillor Smith and by a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That it be recommended to the Leader of the Council that David Gledhill be Co-opted for a further 3 year Term of Office onto the Southwold Harbour Management Committee, starting on the 1 August 2023.

4 Term of Office of Co-opted Member Richard Musgrove

The Committee received report **ES/1492**. The Chairman introduced the report and stated he was pleased that Mr Musgrove would continue to be a part of the Committee.

There being no questions, on the proposal of Councillor Cook, seconded by Councillor Smith and by a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That it be recommended to the Leader of the Council that Richard Musgrove be Co-opted for a further 3 year Term of Office onto the Southwold Harbour Management Committee, starting on the 1 August 2023.

5 Feedback on the Southwold Harbour Study

The Chairman invited feedback on the Harbour Study which had been presented to the Committee at its meeting on 23 February 2023.

Councillor Cook summarised feedback from the Working Harbour working group. The group recommended that the South Pier be replaced with a rock armour breakwater as recommended by Royal Haskoning. The group had also discussed the use of the North Wall and the possibility of dredging, and asked that research be done to determine what business could be accommodated at the North Wall. With regards to dredging, the group asked that the material on the river bed be sampled should dredging be needed in the future, but that dredging should not go ahead at this point.

The Chairman gave feedback on behalf of the Southwold Harbour Investment Programme working group who also recommended that works begin on the South Pier as soon as possible, and that a business case be prepared for the North Wall.

Mr Musgrove agreed with the comments from the Committee's working groups and added that it would be prudent to sample sediment on the riverbed when works on the South Pier were taking place as this would lower costs.

Mr Pickles commented that the material in the river bed might be possible to use for the building of the south pier, and whether using some of this material but not

dredging the whole bed could be considered. Mr Musgrove stated that any removal of sediment would require a dredging license.

Mr Flunder, Chairperson of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, commented that the group had expressed concern about there not being culverts in the replacement South Pier structure. There was anecdotal evidence that a solid South Pier had negatively affected the channel, and there was feeling that if culverts were not installed this would happen again.

The Chairman commented that the original structure was solid, and asked if a rock breakwater would have the same effect on the channel as a solid structure. Mr Musgrove and Mr Pickles commented that whilst a rock breakwater was a solid structure, it was not a solid structure with a flat surface and so it would effectively dissipate wave action in the channel. More detailed modelling could be done at the design stage to ensure that the rocks that made up the structure would be placed to produce the right conditions in the Harbour.

Councillor Cook commented that at this stage costs should not be prohibitive but the focus should be on the right structure to create the right conditions in the harbour.

Mr Gladwell, a member of the Advisory Group, stated that the windows in the current structure also created a Venturi effect and as a result siltation in the channel was greatly reduced, it was not clear if a more solid structure would have this impact. Mr Gladwell also expressed concern that none of the models were based on a north-westerly wind, as it was during these conditions when issues occurred.

The Chairman agreed that final designs should include detailed modelling, especially with regards to siltation and the impact of north-westerly winds, taking into account local knowledge from the advisory group members.

Mr Flunder commented that the advisory group were also keen to see works happen further upstream to help prevent flooding. The Chairman commented that the Harbour was restricted in what it could do upstream as this area was not included in Harbour lands. The Chairman referred to the success of works in the Alde where improvements had been made with the involvement of landowners and other public bodies, and stated that this model should be copied in the Blyth estuary. The Harbour could be involved in these works but could not lead on them, as ultimately it was prohibited in spending money in this area. With regards to work in the Harbour, care would be taken to ensure that works did not exacerbate issues upstream.

The Committee were in agreement that works on the South Pier to replace the current structure with a breakwater should go ahead, and asked that a report be received at the July meeting to confirm options for the replacement of the structure. The Committee also asked that final options should include detailed modelling taking into account local knowledge.

The Committee received report **ES/1493** which presented standard operating procedures and an oil spill plan for the Harbour.

The General Manager summarised the report and advised that a number of standard operating procedures had been produced as part of works to ensure the Harbour was compliant with relevant legislation and the Council's own policies. An oil spill plan had also been produced, although this was not required it was felt appropriate due to the sensitive location of the harbour.

A workshop had been held to introduce the operating procedures to users and to ensure users understood what was being done and what was being asked of them. Once the Committee had considered the procedures they would be published and distributed to users.

Councillor Cook asked who signed off the final procedures. The General Manager confirmed that as harbour operating procedures, it was the responsibility of officers to ensure that they were in place.

Mr Pickles welcomed the procedures and felt that these procedures should have been in place for a long time.

The General Manager commented that one procedure was still to be written on Harbour Works Consent as this required the input of ABPMer and the Council's legal team to ensure that the right protections were in place and that the right authorities were being informed of works, including any permissions from the Marine Management Organisation.

There being no further questions, on the proposal of Mr Musgrove, seconded by Councillor Cook it was by a unanimous vote

RESOLVED

That having commented on the draft Standard Operating Procedures and draft Oil Pollution Contingency Plan, the Harbour Management Committee note their contents.

7 Update from the Committee's Working Groups

Councillor Cook updated the Committee on the work of the Working Harbour working group. The working group had commented on the lack of progress on bringing in extra visitors and trade to the Harbour. The group had particularly commented on the need to improve the website to advertise the area and the Harbour more accurately.

The working group also proposed entering into agreement with the Sailing Club on the possibility of sharing shower/toilet facilities on the ground floor of the Sailing Club. This would need discussing to ensure that the club did not become a public facility. The General Manager confirmed that he would approach the Sailing Club about the possibility of sharing facilities.

Councillor Smith updated the Committee on the work of the Caravan and Campsite working group. The working group had asked that a newsletter be produced to keep users up to date on works on the caravan site. A company had been engaged to produce drawings of the site to form the basis of the consultation on the site redesign. Refurbishment was also underway on some of the amenity blocks and power points had also been installed.

Mr Flunder commented that he had been approached about insurance issues on the site. Councillor Smith agreed that the Council would engage with insurers on this issue, but caravan owners did need to be aware of the risk of having a caravan on the site. The Council did not have a clear answer on this and would try to help where it could, but the issue was ultimately the responsibility of owners. This was an issue around the country and was not particular to the caravan site in Southwold.

Mr Musgrove updated the Committee on the work of the Compliance working group. The group raised three questions concerning BPA membership, the budget for works in the fuel compound and road safety. The General Manager confirmed that further surveys needed to be done in the fuel compound before any works could take place. Regarding the road it was a restricted byway, but this had never been enforced. The Council could not enforce this as it was the responsibility of the police, and there were concerns about safety of staff if they tried to enforce this.

8 Update from the Stakeholder Advisory Group

The Chairperson of the Advisory Group thanked Councillor Ritchie for his work in setting up the Harbour Management Committee. There was now a structure in place for everyone to work with and it was becoming clear how issues should be raised, and policies agreed.

Mr Flunder added that the group agreed that the websites for the area did need updating, and the Town Council was also working on improving theirs.

9 Work Programme

The Chairman invited the General Manager to provide an update on works in the Harbour.

The General Manager confirmed that a side-scan survey of the harbour would be taking place at the end of the month. include the vertical surface and toe of the North Wall and the riverbed under the staging to help inform the condition of North Quay piling and evidence of washout and to understand depths and profile beneath the staging. Further surveys would be needed on these areas before works could take place to replace the fuelling system and separator and install anodes on the wall.

Drawings of possible replacement pontoons were also being produced, it was believed that heavy duty pontoons would need to be used but this would be clearer when scans had been done.

The speed limit had been reduced through the harbour to help make the road safer, cones had also been put out along the harbour to help discourage people from parking in certain areas.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as 13 July 2023.

The meeting concluded at 5.42pm.

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Chairman