

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Southwold Harbour Management Committee** held in the Stella Peskett Millenium Hall, on **Thursday, 24 November 2022 at 5:00 PM**

Members of the Sub-Committee present:

Councillor Maurice Cook, Mr David Gledhill, Mr Richard Musgrove, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Mary Rudd, Councillor Letitia Smith

Other Members present:

Councillor David Beavan

Officers present: Alastair McFarlane (General Manager, Southwold Harbour), Lorraine Rogers (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer), Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Maurice Cook, Mike Pickles and John Ogden.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 be agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

4 Projects Identified by the Compliance Working Group

The General Manager introduced report **ES/1353** which summarised projects which had been identified by the Committee's Compliance Working Group.

The General Manager summarised the risks which had been identified by the working group. Risks were mainly around the fisherman's compound, road and pathways, vehicles, boat movements in the harbour and lighting. Some of these issues would be

easier and quicker to address than others due to the need to involve the Environment Agency and restrictions around the road use.

Regarding lighting in the harbour, there was not a legal requirement to have any further lighting and the General Manager asked the committee if they would like to install any further lighting as the units were more expensive than expected. The Committee agreed that this money could be better spent on more urgent issues as lighting was a lower priority.

There was some discussion about the use of the riverbanks as a pathway which the Environment Agency stated were not safe for walking on. Richard Musgrove stated that as the riverbanks were included in the harbour lands the Environment Agency did not have the ability to close them.

Regarding boat movements, David Gledhill suggested restricting boat movements to certain times of day as other small harbours did. Southwold could adopt this strategy and restrict movements to a time period either side of the high tide. Whilst there was a need to preserve the feeling of the harbour, there was a need to ensure the harbour was a safe place for visitors and businesses.

There being no further questions, on the proposal of Richard Musgrove and seconded by Councillor Smith it was

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Management Committee approve ongoing work relating to the projects.

5 Southwold Harbour Management Committee – Schedule of Charges 2023/24

The Chairman introduced report ES/1354 which set out the schedule of charges and dues for the Harbour and the fees and charges for the Campsite and Caravan Site for 2023/24.

Councillor Ritchie stated that the Council took a commercial approach to setting fees and charges as well as taking into account its own key principles. This included benchmarking and an expectation that fees would increase by at least 5% to ensure some level of cost recovery, when inflation was currently running at 11.1%.

Councillor Ritchie advised that income generation from the Harbour and the Caravan and Camping site was ringfenced for the Harbour account. Following discussion at today's meeting, fees and charges will be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting in January, with the new fees to take effect from 1 April 2023.

The General Manager added that rates for fisherman had been kept lower than the rate of inflation, as had static caravans, but costs for visitors had increased along with the rate of inflation.

David Gledhill asked if any comparison was made with similar facilities in the area. The General Manager stated that some comparison had been done although caravan fees had been decided much earlier on due to people wanting to book ahead. Southwold did not have facilities which compared to other areas and so benchmarking was difficult. Ultimately the decision was taken to ensure harbour could be sustainable.

Councillor Beavan asked what the average increase was, and whether this was in line with RPI. The General Manager stated that all fees had generally gone up by RPI or less, apart from odd smaller charges such as window cleaning which did not often apply. Electricity charges in the caravan site had been changed to a lower standing charge and then a unit price on top of that for actual useage to make charges more equitable and in line with Ofgem guidance.

There being no further questions, on the proposal of Councillor Smith and seconded by David Gledhill it was

RESOLVED

1. That having commented upon the proposed annual schedule of charges and dues for the Harbour for 2023/24 attached as Appendix A, these be recommended to Cabinet for approval.
2. That having commented upon the proposed fees and charges for the Campsite and Caravan Site for 2023/24 attached as Appendix B, these be recommended to Cabinet for approval.

6 Update from the Committee's Working Groups

The working groups had provided an update at the Annual Meeting of the Harbour Management Committee and there was nothing further to add.

7 Update from the Stakeholder Advisory Group

Councillor Beavan gave an update on behalf of the Advisory Group.

The group felt they were working well with the General Manager and Committee, although there were still concerns about the Harbour Revision Order and land ownership in the Caravan and Campsite which needed to be resolved.

8 Work Programme

The Committee noted the forward work programme. It was noted that the June meeting might change due to elections and clashes with other meetings.

9 Dates of Next Meeting

The dates of the next meetings were noted as 12 January 2023 and 9 March 2023.

10 Exempt/Confidential Items

On the proposition of Councillor Ritchie, seconded by Councillor Rivett it was

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11 Proposed Capital Expenditure and Budget Allocation 2023/24

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting concluded at 5.47pm.

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Chairman