

Watchet Harbour Advisory Committee, (WHAC)

Wednesday 21 February 2018, 17:00pm – Meeting Minutes

Attendees	Sally de Renzy Martin, (SdRM), (Watchet Traders); Martin Stevens, (MS), Watchet Boat Owners Assoc); Cllr Peter Murphy, (PM), Watchet Town Council; Chris Hall, (CH), West Somerset Council; James Burnell, (JB), (RYA); Iain Lambert, (IL), (Watchet Marina); Steve Yandel, (SY), (Charter Boatmen); Cllr Rosemary Woods, (RW), West Somerset Council; Special Guests: Dr Robert Nunny, (RN); Bryan Mitchell, (RM);
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Item	Discussion Points	Action by
1.	Apologies; David Mainwaring, (DM), (Watchet Sea Scouts); Keith Richards, (KR), West Somerset Council; Craig Butler, (CB), West Somerset Council; Cllr David Westcott, (DW), (West Somerset Council; Kelvin Rufus, (KRS);	
2.	Minutes from previous meeting; Noted and approved	
3.	Introductions; Around table; SdRM introduces Dr Robert Nunny, (Oceanographer, hydrographer and sedimentologist,) and Bryan Mitchell from the S & M Group, Watchet.	
4.	<p>Presentation from S & M Group, (Bryan Mitchell); Group constituted 6 January 2018 to promote solutions to mud problem to relevant authorities. There are 59 members and 20 supporters. Believe methods available to the marina at present have failed. New dredging method believed to be capable of solving the mud problem - air lift dredging (ALD) Mr Kevin Wheeler, (KW) is the engineer. Used in the off shore industry. Uses an air compressor to send compressed air down a tube to the mud then sends mud up the tube for an hour on both tides. May need multiple tubes and compressors. BM: Believes by working both daily tides for three weeks in the outer harbour he can clear the outer harbour. Wants to set up a test rig to provide proof of concept. Obvious benefits to the council and town if this works. Asks WHAC to support three week test rig to West Somerset Council in selected areas of the outer harbour. Video shown which used a diver deploying the tube on the bottom of the sea.</p> <p>Following on from the presentation a number of questions were asked: Who bears the risk and what about compacted mud? How will this mud be disposed of? Answer the mud will be taken out in suspension by the ebb tide. RN: What would be seen at low tide? BM: Tubes would be visible tied to the quay side or tied to a catamaran? RN: Concerns that the mud would flow in suspension. BM: Each tube would draw mud towards it so its effect will cover a wider area. RN: How would the success of the system be measured? Would you just be spreading the mud around the rest of the outer harbour? What would the long term costs of the system be? BM: It would be cheaper than current equipment and the equipment is of low cost, but there is an ongoing labour cost. Development could lead to an automated system for ongoing maintenance. RN: Would this replace a capital dredge or provide a maintenance system? Presently 2.5 metres of mud in the harbour of which about half is compacted, (RN estimate). There is a concern that to be effective would require very many tubes which would obstruct the harbour and or marina fairways. CH: Recommendation that S & M formally approach West Somerset Council to seek permission to run a pilot along agreed lines. I would then consult with WHAC regarding</p>	WHAC

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	<p>their submission of risk assessment and method statement. Bryan Mitchell was thanks for his presentation and left the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters arising not covered by agenda; Car park signage and enforcement of slipway trailer park: After a brief discussion, with update provided by KR, CH undertook to get an update on the Council's progress. Harbour Master's uniform: Craig has been provided with PPE and other items, CH will chase-up to see if now Craig is kitted out. Crack in retaining wall is being investigated by West Somerset Council: MS: West pier upper blocks may have been damaged in recent storms. Suggests that further investigation may be needed to establish if this is serious damage requiring remedial action. JB: There was a report completed by Atkins in 2014 which surveyed all the walls around the harbour and some work was done following this. Fees: Fees for boat mooring were questioned by WBOA, (Watchet Boat Owners association). Rather than a daily charge there should be a charge per tide which would better reflect the reality of boats visiting. It was agreed to take forward to Harbour Board for discussion. ACTION POINT! Harbour Board: How are the opinions of WHAC to be fed into West Somerset Harbour Board? Suggestion that WHAC representative delivers advice points at HB in standing agenda item at HB. WBOA fees and charges. Fishing stakes on the harbour approaches. MS to communicate list to KR for listing on agenda.</p>	CH
6.	<p>Lighting on the Esplanade; SdRM: Friday 13 April work due to start on replacement lamps on the Esplanade. Suggestion that LEDs will be used to illuminate just the walkway section of the Esplanade. CH: Is aware of a long standing issue with the lights. All columns to be replaced and LEDs will be fitted to the new lanterns. Roy Porter from the Property Team dealing with this. West Somerset Council were thanked for addressing this long standing issue. PM: As WTC representative urged that Town Council were informed about the whole scope of the scheme so that the electrical work that both councils are about to undertake do not conflict and that councillors have opportunity to comment on what columns look like. In this way, adverse reactions from public when work starts unannounced would avoid reputational damage to both councils. SY: Need to check that the scheme will not impact on navigation lights. MS: Pointed out that some navigation lights are still incandescent lights which often require replacement whereas LED bulbs would last longer.</p>	CH
7.	<p>Harbour matters; SY: Raised concerns about various safety fears in the outer harbour and the integrity of the west pier. Issues around mud depth and accessibility and effectiveness of the refuge. CH: Agreed to pick up the concerns raised. To arrange jet washing of slipway and to follow up on ladders.</p>	CH

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	ACTION POINT! Consideration to be given to a walk around on a lighter evening to conduct a safety walk of the whole area together with West Somerset Council Property team.	
8.	Marina matters; IL: Apologised for the dredger still not being operational due to various technical and labour issues.	IL
9.	Any other Business; None.	
10.	Time, Date and Location of next meeting; Agreed to move next meeting, (Wednesday 11 April 2018 at 17:00pm) closer to next Harbour Board (11 June 2018). Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 30 May at 5pm at the Visitor Centre. in the Watchet Visitor Centre	
11.	End of meeting.	