

# Watchet Harbour Advisory Committee, (WHAC)

Wednesday 30 May 2018, 17:00pm – Meeting Minutes

<b>Attendees</b>	Sally de Renzy Martin, (SdRM), (Watchet Traders); Martin Stevens, (MS), Watchet Boat Owners Assoc); David Mainwaring, (DW), (Watchet Sea Scouts); Cllr Peter Murphy, (PM), Watchet Town Council; Chris Hall, (CH), West Somerset Council; Cllr David Westcott, (DW), (West Somerset Council); Kelvin Rufus, (KRS); James Bunnell, (JB), (RYA); Iain Lambert, (IL), (Watchet Marina); Steve Yandel, (SY), (Charter Boatmen);
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Item	Discussion Points	Action by
1.	<b>Apologies;</b> Keith Richards, (KR), West Somerset Council; Craig Butler, (CB), West Somerset Council; Tim Taylor, (TT), (Watchet Marina);	
2.	<b>Minutes from previous meeting;</b> Approved as a true record.	
3.	<b>Introductions;</b> Introductions around the table.	
4.	<p><b>Matters arising not on the agenda;</b>  <b>PM:</b> Asked about the crack in the retaining wall, (splash point).  <b>CH:</b> Reported that previous surveys by Pick Everade were being consulted from 2013/14 to establish the condition of the walls. <b>MS &amp; KRS</b> said that routine repointing on an annual basis had been the practise at one time but this had been discontinued.  <b>Action Point: WHAC recommended that serious consideration be given to re-establishing an annual pointing programme to avoid the sudden appearance of serious voids.</b></p> <p><b>PM:</b> Drew attention to the installation of new Esplanade lighting. <b>SY</b>, praised the improvement and enhancement to the Esplanade. There had been no adverse navigational impact. Was there going to be provision say for the hanging baskets? <b>PM</b>, reported that Roy Porter was sourcing suitable provision.            It was remarked by a number of members that the west pier bulkhead lighting needed to be monitored on an ongoing basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was noted that the new LED lighting in the lighthouse was giving improved performance.</li> <li>• It was noted that the door in the lighthouse was rotting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Point: WHAC recommendation that the door was repaired to prevent a failure which permitted unauthorised access into the lighthouse.</b>  <b>CH:</b> Reported that repairs to the ladders were underway.  <b>DM:</b> Reported that slipway washing was still awaited.</p>	KR
5.	<p><b>Report from WHAC Mud Group - Watchet Harbour Maintenance Dredging: Strategy Development;</b>  <b>IL:</b> Reported that a constructive meeting of the group had taken place immediately prior to this meeting. The awaited report from Rob Nunny had been received. This gave an evidence base for a strategy for a sustainable maintenance strategy following a capital dredge. This required a Water Injection Dredger (WID) based at Watchet with a charter back up in the event of failure. <b>IL</b>, was actively seeking costings against a suitable specification. The cost of a capital dredge could be £150K - £250K depending on the method used. The most cost effective being bucket dredge using lorries to carry the mud to the low water, (LW) mark. <b>CH</b>, reported that he was in contact with MMO with a view to establish the licensing requirements and associated costs.  <b>IL</b>, expressed the hope that the marina could use its current dredger and the new WID to make an impact on the marina mud before the capital dredge could commence.            The group had discussed the construction of a funding package and further work and discussion was needed.</p>	ALL

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	<p><b>SY:</b> Asked about the sedimentation mitigation measures omitted from the construction of the marina. <b>MS</b>, reported that <b>RN</b>, had said today that their design was misguided and that if they had been constructed they would not have worked due to the nature of the mud accumulation in the marina.</p> <p><b>CH:</b> Reported that risk assessments and a method statement had been received from the Silt &amp; Mud (S&amp;M) group. He still needed to know where they intended to install the tubes so that harbour and marina users could be advised. He also needed to know how they intended to measure the success of their activity. He needed to establish any licence requirement from the MMO. Best opinion was that no licence was needed for a trial but he needed to be sure. It was expected that the trial would take place within the next two months subject to satisfactory information received.</p> <p><b>CH</b>, read a public statement for release which was agreed by the WHAC. The Group proposed to make available the <b>RN</b> report through the Council and marina website.</p> <p><i><b>“Following a successful meeting of the Watchet Harbour Advisory’s Mud Group on 30th May we now have evidence of the solution needed for Watchet Marina and the outer harbour. The team made up of a number of interested parties are now working on a funding solution. We haven’t given up looking for the most economical method of achieving the outcome though, and we hope to approve a pilot of air lift dredging in the coming weeks. The technical report will be published on the West Somerset Council website.”</b></i></p> <p><b>SY:</b> Gave the background to the formation of Watchet Harbour Lights. He had experienced extreme difficulties in getting his commercial fishing boat out of the marina and the outer harbour. The situation was so bad that the viability of his business was on the line. WHL sought to bring the various parties together to find a solution to a sustainable navigable marina and harbour. A possible means was to have a workshop of experts to pool ideas.</p> <p><b>CH</b>, Reported he had had a positive meeting with group members, <b>SY</b> thanked him for his time commitment. It was noted that WHL had written to West Somerset Council CEO and received a reply. Also to the Dept. of Transport, (DEFRA) and had been advised that they would carry out a Health Check of the arrangements in 2019 by means of a monitoring visit.</p> <p><b>SY:</b> Challenged that following the establishment of the West Somerset Council Harbour Board, (WSCHB) the influence of WHAC had been downgraded. Both <b>MS</b>, <b>PM</b> who sit on the Harbour Board and <b>CH</b> disagreed with this view. <b>CH</b>, further defended the Council’s response to its statutory duties as being proportional to the scale of operation of the harbours and the available resources.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Marina matters;</b></p> <p><b>IL:</b> Berths occupied and visiting boat numbers were well down on what would be called normal. <b>IL</b>, empathised with the earlier remarks of <b>SY</b>.</p>	IL
7.	<p><b>Harbour matters;</b></p> <p>In the absence of <b>CB</b>, there was no report.</p> <p><b>DM:</b> Reported that he had been contacted by a West Somerset Council Officer seeking the 1948 document between the Sea Scouts and Watchet Urban District Council.</p> <p><b>CH:</b> Stated that it was accepted that the document existed since it had been referenced but an officer of the Council, (Bruce Lang), it was proving very expensive to try and find it. It was suggested that <b>PM</b> take back to Town Council, (WTC) the suggestion of asking West Somerset Council not to proceed with its intention of charging slipway fees to Watchet Sea Scouts and other community groups.</p>	CB

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	<p><b>Action Point: WHAC recommendation to West Somerset Council that it does not proceed with its intention of charging slipway fees to Watchet Sea Scouts and other community groups.</b></p>	
9.	<p><b>Any other Business;</b>          It was agreed to invite the new Environment Portfolio Holder, <b>Cllr Brenda Maitland Walker</b> to join the shortly to be arranged bi-annual walk about inspection of the harbour and marina. <b>SdRM</b>, to seek to arrange next week or whenever possible at a suitable time and date given the state of the tides.  <b>SY:</b> Raised concerns, (circulated photos) regarding the west pier and refuge. Some health &amp; safety issues were identified by <b>CH</b>, for immediate action.  <b>DM:</b> Raised the permission given by the Council's Health and Safety Manager to the rider of a motorised surf board to use the outer harbour. The device was capable of 35mph and the speed limit in the area was advised as being 3 - 5mph. WHAC recommendation to Harbour Board that this situation was reconsidered.  <b>CH:</b> Reported that the parliamentary order setting up the new council had been passed. Also that under the transformation underway about how the new council would operate, it was not clear where the harbour responsibilities he currently had would sit. He would no longer (from September) have responsibility for 'mud matters' however, he would progress the agreed actions and the mud strategy fully until then. He would ensure whoever took over was fully briefed. <b>CH</b>, was thanked by all for his diligence and commitment to the WHAC and the harbour/marina operations to date and wished him well in whatever role he subsequently found himself. He was also given personal good wishes for his forthcoming marriage.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Time, Date and Location of next meeting;</b>          Wednesday 29 August, 5pm, Watchet Visitor Centre.</p>	
11.	<p><b>End of meeting;</b>          18:55pm</p>	