

**THE CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY**

**MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON**

**6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

**CHAIRMAN:** C Freeman

**PRESENT:** B Calver, T Dann, R Fancy, C Marfleet, N Parsons, I Radford, P Rawson N Skeens, K Wickham, P Woodford

**APOLOGIES:** C Bailey, P Cottis, Cllr J Fleming, S Harrison, J James, R Pitt, Z Shean

17 *Declaration of Business Interests*

Mr Wickham reported that he had asked for a declaration of business interests to be included on all the CHA Committee agendas, whereby members were asked to disclose any relevant business interest or benefit in connection with the Crouch Harbour Authority before the commencement of a meeting.

Mr Parsons declared an interest in his capacity as Mooring Agent to the Crouch Harbour Authority.

Mr Dann also declared an interest as a Relief Pilot for Baltic Wharf.

18 **MINUTES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

18.1 It was proposed by Mr Wickham and seconded by Mr Parsons to approve the Minutes as a correct record.

18.2 There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

19 Members had no additional items that they wished to raise outside of what was on the agenda.

20 **MINUTES OF AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023**

20.1 *Restructure of Advisory Committee*

Mr Parsons pointed out that once again the Authority Minutes reinforced the role of the Advisory Committee and where they stood resulting in him questioning what the purpose of the Advisory Committee was. The Chairman responded by saying that the Advisory Committee still played an important role with their views being fed back to the Trustees but ultimately it was down to the Trustees to run the Harbour Authority.

21 *2024 Schedule of Harbour Dues and Charges*

Members were invited to comment on the charges.

Mr Wickham confirmed that the charges had been passed by majority of the Trustees. A 4.5% increase had been agreed on leisure dues, which he said was a hefty drop compared with other harbours.

Mrs Radford pointed out that the British Canoeing Association had negotiated their standard licence for canoes, kayaks etc covering virtually all waterways across the UK with some exceptions and asked if it could be clarified whether the Crouch fees were included in that or not.

Mr Wickham said that as far as he was aware the British Canoe Association had not contacted the Authority in this regard. Mrs Radford said she did not want to speak out of turn as she was not representing the paddle sports but felt it an opportunity to ask what the possibility might be for such negotiation in the future.

Mr Wickham said if the Association contacted the Authority, it would be a matter for consideration.

Mr Marfleet said he would make recommendations to the British Canoe Association to ask them to contact the Authority, however members should bear in mind only a small percentage of people who use the Crouch were British Canoe members.

22 *For Information - CHA Statement to River Users*

Mr Wickham reported that he hoped the Statement which was due to be circulated to all harbour users with the annual Harbour Dues Invoice, gave people a better understanding of what the Authority's commitments were, how they were being dealt with and what the money was being spent on.

23 *2024 Dredging/Works Licence Fees*

There were no comments regarding the 2024 Dredging and Works Licence Fees which had been increased by 5%.

24 *Harbour Master's Update*

There were no items of significance to report in the Harbour Masters absence.

25 *Works & Dredging Licences Issued*

These were noted.

26 *Works & Dredging License Applications:*

The current Works and Dredging License applications were noted.

27 Any Other Business:

27.1 P C Rawson informed members that the Marine Police had signed a Contract for a new 13.2m RIB and were in the process of finalizing the design. Delivery is anticipated within the next six months and will be based in Burnham Yacht Harbour.

27.2 Mr Skeens referred to the reports that members were in receipt of concerning e coli levels in the river and asked if it was a cause for concern. The Chairman asked Mr Wickham in his capacity as Chairman of the Authority to clarify.

Mr Wickham confirmed that the information was supplied by the Port of London Health Authority, which were passed onto the Authority and Advisory Committee members for information purposes. He went on to say that the Authority had no jurisdiction over water quality and discharge. Having sat on various other Committees outside of the Authority, they are told that the Crouch is within the limits that are prescribed by law and because it is tidal waters falls into a different category.

Mr Parsons said he would circulate the information from the Port of London Health Authority to the Clubs via CAYF.

27.3 Mr Marfleet reported that the British Canoe Association had issued a figure from the RLNI concerning a huge increase in SUP Boards and kayak rescue this year. He said he had received no reports of kayakers being rescued on the Crouch and queried whether there had been many reports of any incidents on the Crouch.

He went on to say that more restrictions with kayakers and SUP Boards were awaited following on from the Haverford West tragedy three years ago involving SUP Boarders. This was due to come to Court any time.

Mr Wickham confirmed that the RNLI did not share information with the Authority, and it would be helpful to everyone if more information could be shared with the Authority. Mr Marfleet said he would see what further information he could find from the RLNI regarding any rescues and would forward to the Authority.

P C Rawson pointed out that from the Marine Police perspective, they were not routinely in charge of rescues, therefore there was no records kept of that type of issue, so they would not necessarily notify the Authority as it was not in their remit, however the Authority should receive reports on anti-social behaviour and receive the Marine Watch newsletters.

Mr Wickham said that the Authority worked closely with the Marine Police, having recently been involved in a training exercise during which the Harbour Master had been in attendance.

P C Rawson gave a brief report of an investigation that was still ongoing on the unfortunate finding of a body in the river.

27.4 Mr Marfleet reported that he had noticed that the old jetty near to Baltic Wharf where the ferry went in was now closed off and there was no access from the island onto the old public jetty and asked if anyone knew anything about it.

Mr Wickham said that he did not believe the jetty was listed as a public jetty and therefore as it was a private slipway anyone wishing to gain access would have to negotiate with the owner.

27.5 *2024 Meeting Dates:*

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December (Zoom meeting)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.13 p.m.