

THE CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ZOOM MEETING

HELD ON

7th APRIL 2021

CHAIRMAN: **K Wickham**

PRESENT: **C Bailey, B Calver, P Channer, T Dann R Fancy, C Freeman, V Gouldsmith, R Hawkins, S Hollington, N Parsons, P Pope, A Shearring, P Woodford**

APOLOGIES: **J James, R Pitt**

IN ATTENDANCE: **Susan Harrison Harbour Master**

5 MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2ND DECEMBER 2020.

5.1 It was proposed by Mr Calver and seconded by Mr Woodford that the Minutes of the Advisory Committee be signed as a true record. AGREED.

5.2 *Request from Paul Woodford*

Mr Woodford had expressed concern about the high tides and the effect to the seawalls. Following on from that a NtM was issued notifying everyone of high tides and possible breaches.

5.3 *Essex Marina Applications*

No further information has been received.

5.4 *Proposed Jetty at Creeksea Ferry Inn*

This is still in the pipeline. The original proposal was not suitable due to the commercial traffic at Baltic Wharf and the applicant is looking at other options.

5.5 *Little Hayes Railway Embankment Stabilisation*

Mr Hollington reported that this was still ongoing, and work had not yet started as the necessary permissions were still awaited.

5.6 *Barge at Spittys Reach*

The initial enquiries to bring a barge into the River have been shelved. Nothing further to report at this stage.

6 There were no matters arising.

7 Any Other Business:

The Chairman asked if there were any items members wished to raise that were not on the Agenda.

7.1 *Changes to the CHA*

Mr Parsons said he would like to raise the issue of changes on the Harbour Board which had not been made public. There was no record in the December Minutes of the change of Chairman/Vice Chairman and the question mark about the future of the Treasurer. Mr Parsons had been asked to raise this at the meeting to see if there was any information forthcoming and would like it passed through to the CHA Chairman and members.

7.2 *Coastal Path*

Mr Woodford said he had raised the question about the Coastal Path proposals by Natural England and was wondering what the CHA's views were and if they had been informed. He said that the implications were that Natural England would have complete control of all lands that the CHA owned, which would also affect a lot of private owners as well.

The Harbour Master said that at this stage there was nothing to report on. The Authority were currently engaging with its Estates Department and Essex Legal Services to see what the implications were.

Mrs Bailey also expressed concern at the way the consultation had been handled. Concern was also raised by Mr Pope and Mr Parsons that this would mean that the public would now have access to the Clubs slipway at Woodham, which may also result in safety issues, not only to their slipway but other slips along the Crouch.

The Chairman thanked Mr Woodford for raising the issue and said that all the comments had been taken on board.

There were no further items under Any Other Business.

8 MINUTES OF THE CROUCH HARBOUR AUTHORITY ZOOM MEETING HELD ON THE 13TH January 2021

8.1 Mr Shearring referred to Minute 6.2 - *No Motorised Craft in Clement Green Creek*. He said the first paragraph did not make sense and what he had asked for had been misquoted.

He went on to clarify that there was not a problem with the Water Ski Club carrying out their activities up to the 8-knot limit but what was happening was that people were going past the obscured 8 knot limit and bumping against the saltmarsh causing damage and disturbing the waders. What he had asked for was if the CHA could try to stop in some way people going past the 8 knot notices.

The Chairman said he had taken on board the comments and he would report back to the Chairman of the Authority saying that the report was incorrect and therefore Mr Shearring would like a correction made.

Mr Shearring then went on to say that on a general basis there was a weakness how the Committee was set up. There was a breakdown of communication between the Advisory Committee and the CHA with no dialogue between the Advisory Committee and the Authority and asked if this was felt by other members.

Mr Pope said it was disappointing that as a member of the Advisory Committee and as a member of the WFWSC that someone had not spoken to him about the proposals. As it would appear from the way the Minutes had been written that the entire length of Clements Green Creek was being considered as a none motorised area, resulting in the Club not being able to use that stretch of water. The Club have no problem with the area past the 8 knot marker to be designated for none motorised craft but the area to the east had been a water ski area for the last 40 years and had been an advantage to the CHA in the control over water skiing and as a matter of courtesy the proposals should have been discussed with the Club.

The Chairman said he would take the comments and complaints forward from the Advisory Committee.

9 *Policing of the Launching at Hullbridge*

The Chairman reported briefly on the activities that had taken place at Hullbridge over the Easter period whilst he had been in attendance.

The Harbour Master went on to say that the Public slipway at Hullbridge was a site of interest to the Authority and discussions were taking place with the Chairman of the Authority to consider the possibility of having a seasonal presence on the slipway to stop illegal launching of people who were not licensed to launch. She was trying to progress this as quickly and speedily as possible in readiness for the summer particularly on the Hullbridge side where the jet skis favour launching from on a more regular basis and the increased activities in the area including swimmers, paddleboards, canoes and the clubs traditional sailing.

She expressed her gratitude to the CHA volunteers who had taken part on both the Hullbridge and South Woodham Ferrers side over the weekend and who had also offered to cover the Bank Holidays and weekends.

The Chairman reported that he had also been involved in these discussions and was in dialogue with the Coastal Community Team, a meeting is scheduled on Monday with the Parish Clerk of Hullbridge to try and get a consensus with all the Parish Councils and the District Councils that borders onto the river to make them aware it is a shared responsibility.

The Chairman has also been seeking planning permission to have some safety noticeboards put up at Hullbridge.

10 *To Designate Clements Green Creek as a Non-Powered Craft Area*

Mr Hollington declared an interest as a landowner.

Mr Hollington said he was not at the meeting in December but supported Mr Shearring's comments that the Minutes needed to be reworded and reported accurately.

He pointed out that there was a lot of pressure coming from elsewhere to keep the area quiet and was all to do with the development in South Woodham Ferrers and there was significant move from all of the environmentalists to protect the birds in that area.

There has been significant abuse in Clements Green Creek from cowboy skiers and people launching at Hullbridge and it was important that the 8 knot marker signs were refurbished, which he understood were in hand.

Mr Pope said it would be preferable to buoy off the area after the 8 knot markers and the Club would be willing to do that and pay for it. If the Authority wished to take that up the Club would be happy to design some ground tackle and buoy it off to try and alleviate the issue.

The Chairman said he would take this forward to the CHA as a recommendation.

11 *Wash on a High Tide*

This has been raised following concern from Mr Woodford and what could be done about it.

The Harbour Master said that the information promulgated was put out as a request as she did not have the authority to make that directive without it becoming a consulted upon issue. If Mr Woodford would like to see the whole area with a speed limit on it, the Harbour Master suggested that he write in formally to the CHA for them to include the request as an item for discussion with PUG to take forward as a Harbour Direction.

Mr Hollington backed up Mr Woodfords's concerns and acknowledged the fact that the CHA were trying to go through the education process and whilst the adjacent landowners did not have a lot of faith in this it was a step forward and requested that the issue remained on the Agenda for discussion.

12 *Advisory Committee Membership due for Renewal 1st June 2021*

The Advisory Committee membership is due for renewal 1st June 2021, this is a 4-yearly requirement under the Act. The organisations who the members represent have been written to setting out the criteria for the nominations.

13 Any Other Business:

13.1 Mr Parsons raised the fact that following on from a request from the Trustees of the SWFYC &SWFWSC to install a gate and fencing to their slipway at South Woodham Ferrers which had been voted on at the Advisory Committee meeting on 30th September 2020 there had been no further record in the CHA Minutes of any discussions taking place. He asked what needed to be done to make the CHA have the courtesy to respond to the Advisory Committee in a meaningful manner

He also went on to explain the issues that were taking place on their slipway at South Woodham Ferrers which was of serious concern to the Trustees. He acknowledged the fact that these issues were not for the Advisory Committee to become involved and was between the Club and the CHA. He said he had raised them to make the point that communication between the Advisory Committee and the CHA was not transparent.

The Harbour Master pointed out that if the Advisory Committee felt that their comments were not being considered and dealt with appropriately by the Authority, she would urge members to take this up with the Authority not the Advisory Committee.

She stressed that personal issues could not be discussed at the meeting, and any issues discussed had to be brought up by the people whose bodies they represent. Whilst the issues regarding the slipway were significant, the SWFYC were not represented individually on the Advisory Committee, or any other Club and would have to go directly to the main Authority not via the Advisory

Mr Parsons also raised the fact that it was impossible to consult with a large number of people in such a short timescale concerning items that required a response by the CHA and should be looked at.

The Chairman said he would ensure that these items were passed to the Authority for them to address the concerns raised by the Advisory Committee.

13.2 *Next Meeting Date*

Wednesday 7th July 2021.

Any reports from the Authority members will be sent to the Advisory Committee, either for information or comment. The Chairman asked if members could respond with their comments asap and these would be passed onto the CHA members in the form of a report and copies of the report would be sent to the Advisory members.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.02 p.m.