

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	River Hamble Harbour Board
Date:	12 July 2019
Title:	Proceedings of the Annual Forum
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to note the proceedings of the River Hamble Annual Forum held in the Victory Hall, Warsash on Tuesday 26 March 2019.

Recommendation

2. That the River Hamble Harbour Board notes the content of this report.

Contextual Information

3. The fourteenth River Hamble Annual Forum was held chaired by Councillor S D T Woodward. The meeting was much better attended than last year and those attending had clearly seen our advertisement. Members of the Harbour Board, Management Committee and Harbour Office staff attended. Details of the proceedings are at Appendix 1. The Harbour Master's Annual Report has been posted on the Harbour Authority website and is included at Appendix 2.
4. No formal deputations were made but there were a number of questions from the floor. These were answered as fully as possible at the time. A brief synopsis of the answers is provided at Appendix 1.

**River Hamble Annual Forum 2019 - Report of Proceedings
26 March 2019
Victory Hall Warsash**

The meeting opened at 1900.

Present:

Councillor Sean Woodward – Chairman
Councillor Keith Evans – Chairman of the River Hamble Harbour Board
Commander Jason Scott – Marine Director and Harbour Master
Mr David Shakespeare – Deputy Harbour Master
Mrs Alison Fowler – Environment and Development Officer
Mrs Donna Taylor – Administration Officer
Mr Peter Jennings – Patrol Officer

The Harbour Master opened by reading the Annual Report, at Appendix 2.

The Harbour Master then gave a pictorial presentation of the year on the River, explaining activities and points of safety.

Questions were then asked by members of the public on:

- Gas bottle types and risk in case of fire, based on last October's pleasure craft fire at Hamble.
 - The Marine Director described the course of events at the fire and gave an analysis of the event and the considerations that led to the fire being extinguished.
- A two-part question was asked about the presence of a seal in the River and whether that provided an indication of the health of the River and, secondly, what could be done with waste kelp/seaweed.
 - The Marine Director and Environment and Development Officer developed the theme of water quality and described the support being given to the Solent Oyster Restoration Project which would also give an indicator of water quality. The matter of seaweed collection was raised and the Marine Director set out the issues surrounding the disposal of salt-imbued seaweed which could not unfortunately be recycled but had to be disposed of via land-fill.
- A question was asked as to whether there would be any 'flare amnesties' this year.
 - The Marine Director explained the progress being made by the Department of Transport in putting together a long-term commercial solution to the disposal of Time Expired Pyrotechnics (TEPs) following the cancellation of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Marine General Notice 419 (Flare disposal instructions). The former DAEDALUS site would still continue to take flares but only after other avenues had been

explored (such as amnesties). The Marine Director explained that while Ramora Ltd (based in Fareham) no longer held the DFT disposal contract, their website would indicate the South Coast amnesty days they would support.

- Lands End Hard and drainage was discussed. The issue here was caused by drainage ashore, leading to erosion and increased run-off down the slipway and concomitant damage.
 - Since this issue was discussed, the road drainage issue has been resolved by Hampshire Highways although steps have yet to be taken to replace some of the slipway shingle lost. The member of the public who asked the question, the Chairman and the Marine Director are engaged in resolving the issue. The Marine Director would address the erosion aspect and keep the Chairman abreast of developments.
- A question was asked about the provision of tender storage for mid-stream moorers in the Upper River, following Premier Marinas' decision to remove that facility.
 - The Marine Director described the work of the informal Swanwick tender group in maintaining a storage space on public land adjacent to Swanwick car park. He went on to describe the appetite of Premier Marinas to contribute to improvements there. The Chairman then gave his views on the prospects for the site.

The draw for free tender applications then took place and, there being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 2035.

Marine Director's Annual Report 2019

Good evening everyone and thank you once again for attending this year's Annual Forum. Before I start, I would, as always, first like to register my thanks for the way in which we have received support over the past year. A number of developments on the River, in particular at Premier and Deacon's Marinas have generated some very helpful discussion and we have now seen those programmes of work commence.

The core Harbour Authority Team has, with one exception, remained unchanged and we look forward to seeing everyone on the water over the coming season. Brett Winslade has now retired and Steve Merrick, our resident artist, has joined full-time. Following a competitive recruitment programme, we are looking forward to welcoming our new Seasonal Patrol Officer, Roslyn Cameron.

I will begin with safety matters. Our Marine Safety Management System has undergone two routine inspections by our independent Designated Person. Each of our Risk Assessments has undergone review and, where necessary, the cascading Standard Operating Procedures have been adapted. The System has been certified as being compliant. We have also undergone two routine inspections as a Local Light House Authority by officers of Trinity House. One of these – the paper audit - was our first in a number of years and our Aids to Navigation were found to be in good order on paper and in practice. Individual River Events have been reported upon fully over the course of the past year in my regular papers to the Management Committee and Harbour Board. It is worth highlighting one matter above others, that of anti-social behaviour at and near Hamble Jetty. Not only did this create additional risks for River Users and RHHA staff, it also caused the Hamble community much disquiet. Violence, verbal assault and criminal damage took place over an extended period in the warm weather. The perpetrators were a group of younger people, some of whom displayed scant regard to the Law. A joint effort by the Police, the Parish Council, Eastleigh Borough Council and the Harbour Authority led to the enforcement of three consecutive Police Dispersal Orders covering the shore and afloat area between Hamble River Sailing Club and Hamble Yacht Services, enabling the Police to take targeted action. These were effective. Notices to River Users were issued warning mariners of the dangers when navigating in the vicinity of Hamble Jetty. This year, the Harbour Authority has attended a public meeting hosted by the Parish Council to shape action to bear down on any similar activity this year. Eastleigh Borough Council is, at the time of writing, consulting on the implementation of a Public Space Protection Order for Hamble foreshore. This will give the appropriate authorities additional powers of enforcement. Separately, petty theft continues and I would ask River Users to be vigilant. Our CCTV systems continue to be effective in providing the Police with material to identify thieves at Warsash but theft remains an unfortunate reality for River Users. The nature of my report requires me to focus on these matters but I would like to end on a positive note by reflecting that the sailing season saw some real enjoyment last year with some wonderful events and great spirit which I will cover in more detail later.

In Governance terms there have been no changes on the Harbour Board. Following the retirement of Captain Martin Phipps as Harbour Master at Southampton, Captain Phil Buckley will be joining the Management Committee. I would like to thank Martin publicly for the support he has given us over the years.

Our financial position last year saw the Harbour Board increase Harbour Dues by one and a half per cent, the first increase for four years. It is worth mentioning that Harbour Dues are set at a level that is 7% less than in 2009. While imaginative ways of bearing down on costs have been implemented, they have risen over that period. The fundamental need to deliver the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code means that the budget is under review. The Revenue position has meant that the Revenue Reserve has been used to make up our commitment to contribute to our Asset Replacement Reserve, necessary to ensure that essential operational facilities are sustained. That position is not sustainable and the Board will, as always, be looking closely at our Annual Accounts and Asset Review work this Summer to ensure that any adjustment that may be required meets the long-term needs of the Authority. As usual, River users can be reassured that Harbour Dues will continue to be set at a level that is both prudent and matches our ongoing duty to maintain safety.

Our report on our Forecast Outturn and 2019/20 Forward Budget is available on our website under the minutes of the Harbour Board meeting of 11th January.

I would just like to add that, as usual, Councillor Woodward will be drawing the names for our free tender berths at Warsash and Hamble at the end of this meeting.

A number of developments are taking place at the time of writing. The reconfiguration of Premier Marina at Swanwick is coming to the end of phase one in a major project that will see the number of piers increase from six to seven. The number of berths will reduce, reflecting the type of craft occupying the Marina. Next Autumn will see the second phase underway, at the Western side of the Marina. Deacon's Marina saw its reconfiguration begin on 25 March. Public and private prospective developers continue to take advantage of the Harbour Authority's service in providing advice and guidance with regard to the application of existing and new legislation. We would always advise anyone considering an application to contact the Harbour Office early.

This season, we have enjoyed a number of very well organised events. We are fortunate in that we have four extremely active sailing clubs with strong reputations whose programmes draw competitors from far and wide. It is always difficult to single out events but 2018 saw the fourth running of the River Hamble Games with the sailing component of that combined, unusually, with the Harbour Master's Charity Pursuit Race, once again in support of Parkinson's UK. The Bursledon Regatta theme this year was 'Australia' with cork hats in abundance. Both were as popular as ever and a huge draw for both competitors and spectators. This year, the Harbour Master's Pursuit Race will take place on 1st June and the Bursledon Regatta over the August Bank Holiday Weekend. Harbour Master Pursuit Race forms will be available on our Harbour website and in the Office as usual.

I would like to advertise a number of pieces of work that will be of benefit to River Users. First, the 2019 edition of the River Hamble Handbook, part-funded by the Harbour Authority, is now available from the Harbour Office and Marinas and Boatyards. A revised version of the River Hamble Visitors' Guide which provides enhanced safety information, as well as useful material on facilities has also been published. Copies of both are available here at the Annual Forum. The safety information contained in these important documents supplements that published on Chart 2022 and helps ensure that our risks are maintained at a level that is as low as reasonably practicable.

I have spoken about our focus on matching the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code with our income streams. That process also means bearing down on our expenditure. To that end, we have explored a number of different ways of achieving best value for money for River Users. The benefits are not only seen in the savings made but also in ownership of our assets. The team has this year saved a significant amount by implementing a more cost-efficient clearance of the slipway at Warsash. We have also, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, conducted minor engineering works on our structures and equipment ourselves, most notably on Warsash and Hamble Jetties. These steps have also ensured that our important Reserves are managed efficiently. Visitors to the Harbour Office will have noticed the refresh of the office reception area, thanks to our own work, the use of recycled materials and the artistic talents of our Patrol Officer Steve Merrick.

We continue to manage over six hundred mid-stream moorings and a strong waiting list under our management agreement with the Crown Estate. This year, the Crown Estate will be conducting a further phase of pile maintenance and replacement and we will ensure that those affected are informed in good time so that owners may have the chance to match essential works with their own preferences. We are mindful of the need to monitor the types of moorings available and the needs of those wishing to take up moorings in order to assist the Crown Estate in its decision-making regarding modification of the current mooring pattern. It is notable that the 12 metre category remains the most popular. Those applying for moorings for vessels under 9 metres and over 15 metres will, on balance, wait less time. As last year, a comparison of other Harbours' rates shows that the Hamble remains competitive.

With last Summer's events at Hamble Jetty in mind, the Harbour Authority has been engaged in a programme of school and other briefings to highlight both the pleasures of our River and its dangers. I have also given a number of presentations to interested groups in the local community, including groups representing the U3A, the Womens' Institute, Rotarians and Sailing Clubs. All have been thoroughly enjoyable and allowed those with a love for the Hamble to give feedback on their needs.

Inter-agency co-operation aimed at improving mutual awareness and capability has continued to be a relevant safety theme. The Harbour Authority has hosted a number of familiarisation visits from HM Coast Guard to enhance CG knowledge of our Standard Operating Procedures, in particular regarding the need to direct casualty vessels to

Warsash. We plan to conduct a reciprocal visit to the CG HQ over the coming months. Cooperation with Hampshire Marine Police Unit, as well as Hampshire Constabulary has been routine but enhanced through joint effort with Hamble Parish and Eastleigh Borough Councils to combat last Summer's anti-social behaviour at Hamble. Vulnerable as it is to illegal movement of goods and people, we have enjoyed notable successes in reporting unusual activity to both the Police and UK Border Force.

In August, our five-yearly review of our Oil Spill Response Plan was approved by the Regulator, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, as required by the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response Cooperation Convention) Regulations 1998. I, along with our Environment Officer and Deputy Harbour Master have attended our three-yearly oil spill response refresher course with our contractor, Adler and Allen.

Our long-term effort to work with Highways England to safeguard the drainage from the M27 Bridge has seen some movement. An amount of money has been ear-marked with the potential for the project to be included under the 'Smart Motorways' initiative. Confirmation that this will take place has yet to be received but I and our Environment Officer hosted a meeting with the relevant actors and took them by boat to view the current unsatisfactory drainage arrangements last week.

We continue to work with external partners on ways to improve the River's biodiversity and have supported the Solent Oyster Restoration project. This is a joint initiative between the Blue Marine Foundation and Portsmouth University. Covered by the BBC's Countryfile programme in May, the project has seen us lay juvenile oysters on the River bed in a number of locations. While checks on their mortality have yet to take place, a successful outcome is expected to lead to large-scale seeding of this important population with the Hamble at the forefront of the wider plan of re-introduction.

The Hamble Estuary Partnership (HEP), run by the Harbour Authority and newly chaired by Dr Simon Bray, has continued to add value as a network for a wide variety of organisations with an interest in the River. We have been active, too, in the Solent Forum. I have taken up the Chairmanship of the Solent European Marine Sites Management Group.

The Environment & Development Manager (EDM) is a member of the Technical Group on the BUDS project – Beneficial Reuse of Dredged Sediment. Following a successful funding bid, Phase 2 will now assess the feasibility of both realistic and aspirational options to use dredged material to project the saltmarsh and improve flood defences in the Western Solent. Opportunities for small scale saltmarsh protection options are still being considered and the EDM is promoting the Hamble for this element, utilising the work of the 2016 RHHA sediment and saltmarsh study.

I and our EDM were invited to join a cohort of over 40 environmental professionals from the Environment Agency and Natural England's local teams who selected the Hamble Estuary as the meeting place for their workshop 'Integrated Catchment Management in the Greater Solent'. The focus here was on sharing knowledge, ideas and a commitment to tackling some of the complex and challenging issues impacting the Solent, particularly

improving water quality by reducing nutrient inputs from source to sea and reducing saltmarsh loss. The day reinforced the links between the land-based activities such as use of fertilisers and the downstream impacts in the marine environment such as algal mats blocking slipways, and it highlighted how EA and NE can use evidence and information, good practice and innovation to direct and target resources to deliver improvements locally.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) published the long-awaited South Marine Plan in July 2018. It provides a legal framework that will shape and inform decisions over how the areas' waters are developed, protected and improved over the next 20 years. The Plan must be used for all planning decisions for the sea, coast, estuaries and tidal waters as well as developments that impact these areas, such as infrastructure. All public authorities are responsible for implementing the South Marine Plan through existing regulatory and decision-making processes. RHHA has fully engaged with the MMO for the roll out of the plan locally by attending workshops and organising briefings for the HEP, Management Committee and the region's Harbour Masters.

The Hampshire & IOW Wildlife Trust's project 'Secrets of the Solent' has now commenced. The project aims to "start to establish the unique existing Solent Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as recognised marine heritage sites which are understood, appreciated and cared for in much the same way as our National Parks". It hopes to capture the public's interest in the local marine environment in the way the BBC's Blue Planet has. RHHA, as a member of the Stakeholder Group, will help the project establish connections with key audiences, disseminate information and contribute advice on relevant project areas.

RHHA's online interactive map 'Riverview' has now been updated with aerial photography and layers previously held within RHHA's Learning Zone map. Altering the scale of the map will display a variety of information including designated nature conservation sites, slipways, car parks, HCC land ownership, riverbank photographs, details of certain wrecks and the local planning authorities' mooring restriction areas. The map can be accessed on our website.

I hope as always that River Users will have found this report useful and would welcome any questions that may arise either now or at any stage direct to the Harbour Office.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

An EIA is not required as no negative impacts are anticipated.