

Minutes of the Harbour Committee

9 September 2024

-: Present :-

Councillor Strang (Chairman)

Councillors Carter, Fox, Penny, Twelves (Vice-Chair) and Fellows

External Advisors: Mr Day

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from External Advisor, Mr Barry Young.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Harbour Committee held on 18 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

4. Brixham Harbour Inner Mooring Chain Replacement

Members considered a report which sought approval for the expenditure of reserves for the replacement of Brixham Harbours inner mooring chains.

The Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services informed Members that a recent formal inspection indicated that the Brixham Harbour inner mooring chains were at the 'end of life' and failure of these chains and associated moorings was at increased risk. Members were reminded that they had committed funds in the region of £50,000 from reserves, however the cost of these chains was expected to be significantly higher.

Members sought reassurance from the Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services that the additional allocation from reserves would be sufficient to replace the chains and the affect such an allocation would have on future budgets. Members were advised of the loss of income as a result of 15 vacant moorings and sought clarity as to when the replacements chains could be delivered.

Resolved:

That the commitment from Harbour reserves for the Brixham Harbour inner mooring chain replacement be increased from £50,000 to £100,000, be approved resulting in the total commitment from reserves for earmarked funding increasing from £366,000 to £416,000.

5. Tor Bay Harbour Authority quarterly Budget Monitoring Report

Members noted a report that set out the overall budgetary position for Tor Bay Harbour Authority as at end July 2024 compared against the budget approved on 4th December 2023. The Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services informed Members that it was anticipated the expenditure on critical repairs and maintenance would exceed the allocated budget, with user charges expected to be below target, partly due to the cost of living with the number of visits being lower. Fish tolls were generally as expected. As a result, the Harbour Revenue account was projected to be in a deficit position at year end. Members were advised that the Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services was challenging expenditure that he believed should be paid by the corporate centre such as the IFCA Precept and was seeking to significantly reduce the contribution to the General Fund.

Members of the Harbour Committee expressed considerable concern over the depleting Harbour reserve fund and requested the Chairman and Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director of Maritime and Coastal Services to meet with the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth to highlight these concerns for consideration in advance of the budget setting process.

Resolved:

That the Harbour Committee noted:

- i. the amended revenue outturn projections and adjustments to the Reserve as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report;
- ii. the change in projected level of the harbour reserves by end 2024/25;
- iii. the Head of Torbay Harbour Authority's use of delegated powers to make decisions in relation to the harbour budget; and
- iv. the Head of Torbay Harbour Authority's use of delegated powers to waive certain harbour charges (not exercised in the year to date).

6. Staffing Update

Members were advised by the Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director of Maritime and Coastal Services that he would be leaving the post in October 2024 to take up a position in Teignmouth. Members were advised that the Council was looking to appoint someone on an interim basis. Members thanked the Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services for his

contribution to Torbay and his support to the Harbour Committee at a time when a number of Members were newly elected.

The Tor Bay Harbour Master and Divisional Director for Maritime and Coastal Services proceeded to provide Members with an update on individual staffing matters.

(Note: During consideration of the item in Minute 6 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Chairman
