

Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

Notes of the ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING of the Commissioners held at the Blackwater Sailing Club, Heybridge Basin, on Thursday, 18 May 2017 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Jim Dines	Chairman, Commissioners
Ian Hiner	Vice-Chairman, Commissioners
Gerry Courtney	Commissioners
John Dines	Commissioners
Jon Howorth	Commissioners
Daniel Leggett	Commissioners
David Patient	Commissioners
Hazel Green	Maldon Yacht Club
John Green	Maldon Yacht Club
Douglas Scurry	
Andrea Raiker	STBT
Nigel Willsher (Sec)	Blackwater Sailing club
Geoff Wass	Blackwater Sailing Club
Henry Bexley	National Trust

APOLOGIES: M Gibson (Treasurer, Commissioners), A Fluker (Commissioners), N Cardy (Commissioners), N Harrisson (Commissioners), Matt Wilson Maldon District Council, Ray Ball Marconi Sailing Club, Grant Everiss Lock Keeper

IN THE CHAIR: Jim Dines, Chairman, Commissioners

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked the Blackwater Sailing Club for the use of their premises, both for this meeting and for the Joint River Safety Meeting.

The members of the meeting introduced themselves.

2. OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSIONERS

The Chairman reviewed the status and role of Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners (MHIC), being a statutory body with meetings at least 6 times a year. Commissioners worked on a voluntary basis.

3. LIAISON WITH MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Commissioners took Jackie Longman, Urban Design Officer, and Ian Butt, Strategic Planning Policy Manager, for a walking tour along the river. The Chairman commented that the representatives of MDC were interested in what they were shown and the tour had increased their knowledge of how much industry there was. It showed that Maldon was not just a dormitory town.

4. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY – GRANARIES WALL

The Chairman stated that sheet piling had commenced. MHIC had been pushing for this work to be undertaken for four years and piling could be continued along the adjacent section of the sea wall, but there were insufficient funds for this to be done and the property developer was not interested in paying towards it.

5. PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE

The Port Marine Safety Code was up to date and published on the website www.mhic.org.uk.

6. PORT GUIDE

The Port Guide leaflet had been emailed out the MHIC contacts list and paper copies were available. It is also published on the website www.mhic.org.uk.

7. SURVEY – RIVER BED UP TO MALDON

Roger Gaspar had offered to survey the river bed from Buoy No 8 up to Sadds Wharf. This will be sent to UKHO to be reviewed for new charts when published. MHIC will send the pre UKHO copy out to the yacht clubs. Roger Gaspar's website is www.crossingthethamesestuary.com which reviews routes and provides a range of information including Notices to Mariners and chart corrections links.

8. VISITORS' PONTOON

MHIC had forwarded suggestions to MDC to modify and expand the Visitors' Pontoon. The Chairman reviewed the current design proposals which came at a cost of about £40,000. MDC is considering the proposal. Sources of funding are being researched, possibly from the Coastal Community Team. MHIC is working with MDC to encourage this to take place.

9. HARBOUR DUES

The Chairman stated that most Harbour Dues came from the charter barges, with occasional cargo vessels. The Harbour Dues had not been increased for 2017. The Dues just about covered costs.

10. BUOY MAINTENANCE

Commissioner Ian Hiner reviewed the programme of buoy maintenance. Two new buoys had been deployed: Buoy 19 in October 2016 and Buoy 13 in April 2017. These were of the new foam-filled type. Buoy 11 had been overhauled in June 2016 but had suffered impact damage and would need changing. Buoy 14 had a new signal light fitted in August 2016. It was proposed to fit retro-reflective tape to assist with picking out the buoys in poor conditions.

Routine river-bed inspections were carried out. The latest afloat check and cleaning was on 9 May 2017. Trinity House carried out their annual inspection of Local Aids to Navigation on 17 May 2017. (Post meeting note: The Trinity House inspection found that MHIC Local Aids to Navigation were in good and efficient order.)

Currently two starboard buoys were in for repair. In stock there were two port buoys and a yellow Isolated Danger buoy was ready for deployment, should the need arise.

Commissioner Hiner stated that unreported damage had occurred and that this was an offence. He asked that Harbour Users assist by informing the Clerk of any issues with buoys (Clerk contact: clerk@mhic.org.uk).

11. CHANNELS OUTSIDE THE BLACKWATER SAILING CLUB

The Chairman commented that there had been some changes to channels by the No 8 Buoy. There was discussion confirming this.

12. JOINT RIVER SAFETY MEETING - REPORT

Commissioner Gerry Courtney reported that the Essex Police are returning to a stronger Maritime unit. They are recruiting and the Marine presence will be up to a strength of five. There will be a designated contact number (yet to be established) for daytime and an automatic referral for out of hours.

There had been discussion of the Coastal Path and those with property adjacent needed to be clear about the extent of "spreading room".

(At the Annual Public Meeting) Representatives of Maldon Yacht Club and Blackwater Sailing Club stated that they had checked this matter and were happy that there were no adverse implications for their clubs.

13. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE

There had been none.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions. The meeting was closed at 8.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN