

MALDON HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS

ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

12 June 2014

INTRODUCTION

Trust Ports such as Maldon are required to produce accurate and pertinent reports for stakeholders and the public at large on certain aspects of their activities (Modernising Trust Ports – Second Edition – Department for Transport 2009).

Reports should be produced alongside the annual accounts and be provided to public bodies, the local library, the media and made available to the public.

There is some exemption, i.e. on the detailed aspects, for small Trust Ports like Maldon, whilst still ensuring that information on the Port's operations and future plans, progress against targets (if any), and their continuing compliance and improvement is included.

This Report covers the period June 2013 to May 2014, and in accordance with Department for Transport guidance, was presented to the Commissioners with the Annual Accounts for 2013/14 at their Annual Meeting on 12 June 2014.

1 2013/14

(i) Constitution

In March 2014, Commissioners appointed a new Commissioner to ensure the full complement of twelve Commissioners was in place. This followed the resignation of John Lodge in the latter part of 2013. John was instrumental in developing the MHIC website.

(ii) Administration

In March 2014, a new Clerk was appointed as a successor to John Hughes who left the post after five years. Julie Stuchbery replaced him on and continues the work previously carried out to ensure effective and efficient support to the Commissioners.

After many years, the Commissioners changed their meeting venue and now meet in the Maldon Little Ship Club. The Commissioners acknowledge help of the Club in this.

(iii) Liaison with Maldon District Council

Commissioners acknowledge the necessity to maintain close working arrangements with the local authority. A Member of Maldon District Council is nominated and is appointed as a Commissioner. In addition to regular liaison between the Clerk and the River Bailiff and other Council staff, a formal liaison meeting was held in February 2014. Issues such as the proposed disbandment of the Essex Police Marine Unit, the collapse of part of the wall at the Hythe Quay, proposals for the buildings at Hythe Quay, future funding of the Commissioners and a proposed river leaflet for visitors were raised and discussed.

(iv) 5th Joint River Safety Meeting

The fifth Joint River Safety Meeting, jointly organised in conjunction with the Maldon Barge Operators' Group, was held on 13 March 2014. The meeting was again hosted by the Blackwater Sailing Club and chaired by an Officer of Maldon District Council and was attended by 34 people representing a range of stakeholders including the local authority, the Counter Terrorist Division, Marine Coastguard Agency, and representatives of several local sailing clubs. Again, the meeting was very useful.

(v) 5th Annual Public Meeting

It is a requirement for Trust Ports to hold annual meetings with stakeholders. The fifth Annual Public Meeting was held on 10 April 2014 and was attended by 9 people, including 6 Commissioners.

The meeting was again hosted by the Blackwater Sailing Club and regarded as successful and covered a full range of river related issues such as the new Maldon Port Guide leaflet, Marine Watch, the Essex Marine Police Unit, light pollution issues and the condition of the river.

There is a continued commitment on the part of the Commissioners to ensure that future meetings are held as required.

(vi) Consultation Issues

Commissioners are consulted on a range of issues with riverside implications such as planning applications, licensing applications, and various other issues as they arise on which comments are sought by various bodies. Commissioners have established the criteria by which these issues are considered to ensure only riverside interests affecting the role of the Commissioners are taken into account.

No specific consultation issues were addressed by the Commissioners during the year although the Essex Coastal Conference organised by the Essex County Council was attended in September.

The Commissioners accepted an invitation from the Maldon District Council to join the Bradwell Power Station Legacy Partnership whose aim is to consider the regeneration, enterprise and employment issues of the area arising from the impact of the decommissioning of the Station.

The Commissioners will be participating in visioning workshops held by MDC contributing to the development of the Maldon and Heybridge Masterplan.

(vii) Finance

The Annual Accounts for 2013/14 showed a Balance brought forward from 2012/13 of approximately £14,928 and a Closing Balance at 31 March 2014 of approximately £13,875.

Commissioners discussed with the Council its financial situation and were asked to submit a Business Plan in support of a request for financial support. This was done but no financial support was forthcoming. In recognition of its proposals to take a view to address the deteriorating condition of the buoys, Commissioners decided to take a forward view on a programme of replacement.

Commissioner agreed that Harbour Dues should remain the same with the introduction of a 50% discount for vessels with charitable status and trips by other vessels predominantly for children under the age of 18 for the benefit of sailing training or youth development.

Commissioners again agreed a 10% discount on harbour dues for 2013/14, subject to prompt submission of Passenger Returns and prompt payment of invoices.

During the year, several of the Commissioners undertook various duties on river issues totalling 220 hours.

(viii) Publication of Documents

In order to continue to show more transparency of Commissioners' activities, a range of documents continued to be lodged on the website and in the Maldon Library and therefore available to the public. The documents lodged included Agendas and Minutes, Annual Accounts, the Register of Public Interests, and various other documents as they arose.

New arrangements were put in place to revitalise the website in early 2014 and has been populated with many more documents including a live buoy condition report, Notices to Mariners as they are published, news and forthcoming events. It continues to increase the transparency of the Commissioners' work.

(ix) Port Aids to Navigation Availability Reporting (PANAR)

The software for the above database, which relates to the recording and reporting (to Trinity House) of the local aids to navigation, was maintained during the year to show the availability of the eleven buoys (lit and unlit) the Commissioners maintain. The 'availability' details are recorded and reported as required on a quarterly basis to Trinity House.

Commissioners are set a target for Category 3 Aids to Navigation (into which category the aids fall) of 97% availability over a three year rolling period. The report of Trinity House following its buoy inspection in 2013 indicated that the buoys were found to be in good and efficient order. An exception report regarding the visual condition on one buoy was rectified.

The condition of the 11 buoys for which the Commissioners are responsible is assessed each year allowing Commissioners to plan ahead for financing replacement/repair/maintenance in a timely and cost effective manner.

In September 2013 Commissioners agreed to purchase a new port hand buoy (No.16) to be located off the Promenade to more clearly identify the navigable channel. The consent of both Trinity House and the Marine Management Organisation was obtained. The new buoy was put into place in early April 2014

(x) Determination of the Fairway

It was agreed that it was necessary to determine the extent of the fairway in order to ensure its position was properly and accurately surveyed and plotted for the benefit of all river users.

The work commenced by a small group of Commissioners undertaking the necessary survey work required to determine the fairway and to mark its extent was continued during the year.

(xi) Document Retention

During the year, the work of cataloguing the documents held was concluded with further documents, including previous Minutes from 1956 to 1991, being deposited with the Essex Record Office in December.

(xii) Publicity

Commissioners have previously considered the lack of material available to visitors to the town both in terms of navigating the river and the businesses, attractions etc. available in the town and riverside area. The work in preparing a leaflet has been concluded and an email publication was made on 26 May to UK yacht and sailing clubs on the east and south coasts, and also to clubs in Belgium, Holland and France

(xiii) General Issues

Commissioners took up light danger to navigation arising from a riverside industrial unit and purchased pennants for use by Commissioners while working on MHIC business.

2 FUTURE ISSUES AND PLANS IN 2014/15

In looking forward to 2014/15, Commissioners have identified the following issues as on-going and scheduled for completion during the year.

(i) Determination of the Fairway

The work of marking further lengths of the fairway will be continued.

(ii) Consultation with Stakeholders

The important work of consulting with local stakeholders will be continued. This will include holding the next Annual Public Meeting and the Joint River Safety Meeting, both in early 2015, and continued annual liaison and ad hoc meetings with the local authority.

(iii) Publication of Information

Work to expand the website will continue with further documentation being published as and when it becomes available (as well as being made available in the local Library).

(iv) Finance

The Commissioners will continue to review its financial situation and explore the possibility of raising further income from sources other than the Harbour Dues.

(v) Sponsorship of Buoys

Commissioners agreed in principle a scheme for sponsorship of its buoys and this will be progressed during the year.

NANCY HARRISSON

CHAIRMAN

MALDON HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS

Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

Financial Statement for year ending 31/3/2014

<u>Income</u>	£
Harbour Dues	4,749.71
Bank interest	<u>2.04</u>
Total income	<u>4,751.75</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>	
Salary	1,900.00
Insurance	1,270.00
Auditor	120.00
Buoy replacement/maintenance	1,981.54
Meeting room	147.00
Web site	96.18
Job Advertisement (for Clerk)	180.60
Expenses	<u>109.10</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>5,804.42</u>
<u>Deficit for Year</u>	<u>(1,052.67)</u>
<u>Balance</u>	
Balance b/f from 2012/13	14,928.19
Less Deficit for 2013/14	<u>(1,052.67)</u>
<u>Closing balance as at 31/3/14</u>	<u>£13,875.52</u>
<u>Represented by</u>	
Bank current a/c	9,817.62
Business saver a/c	<u>4,057.90</u>
Total Assets	<u>£13,875.52</u>

M A Gibson, Treasurer, MHIC 1st May 2014