

MALDON HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

June 2022

MALDON HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS

LIST OF COMMISSIONERS AT 1 MAY 2022

Chairman – Jim Dines

Vice-Chairman – Ian Hiner

Treasurer – Michael Gibson

Nigel Cardy

Geraldine Courtney

John Dines

Patrick Ellum

Nancy Harrison

Kevin Lagan

David Patient

Allan Wiseman

LIST OF COMMISSIONERS AT 10 MAY 2022 (Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson following retirement of Commissioner Ian Hiner and Commissioner Jim Dines standing down as Chairman.)

Chairperson – Geraldine Courtney

Vice-Chairperson – David Patient

Treasurer – Michael Gibson

Nigel Cardy

John Dines

Jim Dines

Patrick Ellum

Nancy Harrison

Kevin Lagan

Allan Wiseman

Clerk to the Commissioners: Julie Stuchbery

Contact: clerk@mhic.org.uk

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 (Ports Good Governance Guidance, Department for Transport, March 2018).

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

There is some exemption, ie 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 2021 to May 2022, and in accordance with Department for Transport guidance, was presented to the Commissioners with the Annual Accounts for 2021/22 at their Annual Meeting on 28 June 2022.

1 2021/22

(i) Classification

In June 2021, following a classification assessment of minor trust ports in England and Wales, the Office of National Statistics confirmed that Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners' classification remains unchanged, viz Private Non-Financial Corporation.

(ii) Constitution

At the start of the year 2021/22 there was a complement of eleven Commissioners. At the end of the year 2021/22 there was a complement of ten Commissioners following the retirement of Commissioner Ian Hiner. A vacancy advertisement for a Commissioner(s) was placed.

(iii) Administration

Administration is carried out by the Clerk.

The Commissioners continue to meet at the Maldon Little Ship Club or online using Zoom. The Commissioners acknowledge the on-going support of the MLSC in this time of social distancing and need for disinfection etc.

Following the easing of the Government rules regarding coronavirus lockdown measures, the June 2021 Annual meeting was held as a conventional face to face meeting. With the exception of the January 2022 meeting which was held by Zoom, the rest of the Commissioners' meetings were held as face to face meetings at the Maldon Little Ship Club. The November 2021 meeting was cancelled due to lack of Agenda items and availability of Commissioners. The minimum of six meetings a year will be met despite this cancellation.

(iv) 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.

Until face to face meetings with Maldon District Council can resume, Commissioners make regular contact, inviting updates and/or questions for the MHIC meetings. Updates from Maldon District Council have included safety concerns and arrangements regarding Personal Water Craft and other leisure users of the Harbour, and schedule for filming on The Quay.

Regular contact is on-going and Commissioners also continue to liaise and maintain links with the River Bailiff and other Council staff on an ad hoc basis.

(v) Annual Public Meeting

It is a requirement for Trust Ports to hold annual meetings with stakeholders. Due to the pandemic, the Annual Public Meeting for 2021 was replaced by a newsletter published in October 2021. This newsletter also included information relevant to Safety in the Harbour to cover items which would previously have been included in the Joint River Safety meeting.

There is a continued commitment on the part of the Commissioners to ensure that communication with stakeholders is maintained.

(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 MHIC are taken into account.

The Commissioners participated in a number of consultation meetings including the Siltation Steering Group, and this is on-going. MHIC is a consultee for Marine Management Organisation licence applications, Natural England projects and MDC proposed planning developments and applications. It has ensured that it will receive the Department for Transport consultation document regarding legislation for the inclusion of safe conduct of Personal Water Craft into the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 as soon as it is published.

The Commissioners monitor planning applications adjacent to the Harbour for possible impact on Harbour use, safety, navigational and environmental issues. They are also involved in monitoring and actively liaising with Maldon District Council and local businesses over issues affecting the Harbour.

Throughout the year, as well as the standard bi-monthly meetings, Commissioners also review various plans and professional reports and attend liaison and consultation meetings with relevant regulatory bodies and Local Authorities. They use their expertise to advise on issues such as environmental regulation and law, monetary management

and marine law. Many hours of expensive consultation are saved through the volunteer efforts of the Commissioners.

(vii) Finance

The Annual Accounts for 2021/22 showed a Balance brought forward from 2020/21 of £14,252 and a Closing Balance at 31 March 2022 of £11,357.

There are Harbour Dues outstanding from one major operator.

Following the waiving of Harbour Dues due to Covid for the year January to December 2020, rates for Harbour Dues remained unchanged (from previous years) for 2022 including the 50% discount for vessels with charitable status and trips by other vessels predominantly for children under the age of 18 for the benefit of sail training or youth development and the 10% discount on Harbour Dues for 2022, subject to prompt submission of Passenger Returns and prompt payment of invoices.

Over the last 12 months, Commissioners have undertaken various unpaid duties on and off the river using their own time and including vessels and equipment to maintain navigation marks, remove sunken debris from the river bed and floating debris from the surface. This work exceeds 100 hours, and together with use of a workboat, this would represent approximately £4,500 if contracted out to a commercial operator.

It was not necessary to make further purchases of buoys following the previous year's investment in new plastic buoys. Buoy maintenance materials which include installation of lights, ID numbers etc were approximately £500 (March 2021 – March 2022).

The Commission's Combined Marine Liability Insurance which includes wreck removal, professional indemnity and legal expenses was renewed at £1,729 despite a slight increase in premium.

viii) Publication of Documents

Continuing the policy of 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 as required by the Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners' Standing Orders. The documents lodged included Agendas and Minutes, Annual Accounts, the Register of Public Interests, Port Marine Safety Code and various other documents as appropriate.

Website updates are posted regularly and are on-going. Documents include buoy condition reports, Notices to Mariners as they are published, Incident Reports, the Port Guide leaflet, news and forthcoming events. It continues to increase the transparency of the Commissioners' work.

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

Trinity House uses the PANAR system to continuously monitor the availability of port aids to navigation. The software for the PANAR 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 twelve buoys (lit and unlit) for which the Commissioners are responsible. The 'availability' details are recorded and reported as required 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 Commission currently exceeds this target with a three-year average approaching 100%.

Trinity House carries out annual on-site inspections of Local Aids to Navigation. The reports of Trinity House following its buoy inspection in May 2022 indicated that the buoys were found to be in good and efficient order.

(x) Buoys

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

A rolling programme of maintenance is in place and the tracking system is kept up to date. A yellow-painted danger-marker buoy is available.

MHIC is the local representative of Trinity House and should be notified when a Navigation Aid is hit and/or is damaged. Reporting damage to buoys is a legal requirement.

It should be reinforced to Harbour Users that incidents should be reported and that there are legal implications. Costs of buoy replacement must be borne in mind.

(xi) River Safety

MHIC maintain an interest in and monitor activities and developments within and adjacent to the Harbour ensuring that they are up to date and aware of issues that might arise which would impinge on operations within the Harbour. These included light pollution, position of moorings, foul discharge and provision of Visitor facilities. The Commission maintain the Port Marine Safety Code with regular internal and external reviews.

2 FUTURE ISSUES AND PLANS FOR 2022/23

In looking forward to 2022/23, Commissioners have identified the following issues as on-going and scheduled for completion during the year.

(i) Consultation with Stakeholders

The important work of consulting with local stakeholders and regulatory organisations is continuing. Commissioners will maintain contact respecting social distancing, including use of newsletters and Zoom meetings.

Commissioners launched a Consultation on Harbour Dues in May 2022. This was published to the MHIC Contacts List, on the website and by posters on public and club noticeboards. The aim of the consultation is to seek Harbour Users' opinions and suggestions regarding the funding of the Commissioners' work, completing the process of implementation in 2023.

(ii) 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). The Port Guide will continue to be distributed to local organisations and be available on the website.

(iii) Finance

The Commission will continue to review its financial situation. See item 2 (i) above.

(iv) Facilities within the Harbour

Commissioners will continue to liaise with the local authority.

MHIC will seek to identify and support projects that enhance the Harbour, including the promotion of safe navigation for all users eg vessels, PWCs and other leisure users.

Gerry Courtney
Chairperson, Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

Financial Statement for year ending 31/3/2022

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| <u>Income</u> | <u>£</u> |
| Harbour Dues | 1,305.03 |
| Bank interest | <u>1.18</u> |
| Total income | <u>1,306.21</u> |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | |
| Salary | 1,800.00 |
| Insurance | 1,729.29 |
| Accounts Examination | 120.00 |
| Buoy replacement/maintenance | 498.80 |
| CCTV equipment and installation | Nil |
| Meeting room | Nil |
| Web site | 14.39 |
| Expenses | <u>39.19</u> |
| Total Expenditure | <u>4,201.67</u> |
| <u>Deficit for Year</u> | <u>(2,895.46)</u> |
| <u>Balance</u> | |
| Opening balance as at 31/3/21 | 14,252.68 |
| Less Deficit for 2021/22 | <u>(2,895.46)</u> |
| <u>Closing balance as at 31/3/22</u> | <u>£11,357.22</u> |
| <u>Represented by</u> | |
| Bank current a/c | 325.27 |
| Business saver a/c | <u>11,031.95</u> |
| Total Assets | <u>£11,357.22</u> |

M A Gibson 6th May 2022