

GREAT YARMOUTH PORT COMPANY LIMITED

Community & Marine Liaison Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 1st February 2016
Conference Room, Vanguard House, Great Yarmouth

- Chair: Richard Goffin, Port Director, Peel Ports Great Yarmouth (PD)
- Present: Steve Gallimore, Group Harbour Master, Peel Ports Group (GHM)
Warren Marshall, Group Planning Director, Peel Ports Group (GPD)
Richard Musgrove, Harbour Master, Peel Ports Great Yarmouth (HM)
Tony Wright, Gardline
Mike Gouldby, Great Yarmouth Port Users' Association (GYPUA)
Paul Smith, Petersons
Adrian Vernon, Broads Authority (BA)
Ben Falat, Royal Yachting Association (RYA)
David Broad, Cruising Association (CA)
Martin Andrews, Perenco
Roger Arundale, Great Yarmouth Port Authority (GYPA)
Leslie Mugford, Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA)
- Secretary to the Committee: Cheryl Hughes, Peel Ports Great Yarmouth
- Apologies: Jonathon Childs, Norfolk County Council
Nick Dodson, Trinity House

Following the recent acquisition of Great Yarmouth Port Company by the Peel Ports Group, Richard Goffin had been appointed as Port Director of Peel Ports Great Yarmouth and in this capacity, took the Chair.

The PD advised the meeting that on the 15th December, Peel Ports Group had acquired the shares in Great Yarmouth Port Company from International Port Holdings and that the only changes in the way the business was structured, would be in the ownership. The Company is currently going through the process of changing its trading name to Peel Ports Great Yarmouth to be consistent with other ports across the Peel Ports Group and this also followed comments made by staff that the EastPort trading name was not favoured, as it did not reflect its location.

Warren Marshall and Steve Gallimore were introduced to the meeting as representatives of the Peel Ports Group and were attending as observers and to support the Peel Ports Great Yarmouth team in their stakeholder engagement.

Bruce Coupland had retired from the business on the 8th January and RG had been appointed in an equivalent position but with the title of Port Director.

1. Minutes and Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

Review of Facilities in the Port for Leisure Craft – Following a speculative enquiry as to the possibility of providing facilities for leisure craft close to the Haven Bridge to overcome the safety issues currently encountered by visiting yachts when using the ladders to embark and disembark from their vessels, the Harbour Master had carried out a Marine Risk Assessment for Leisure Pontoons at Berth 21g & h adjacent to the Haven Bridge to establish whether this was a viable proposition. Having considered the restrictions in that area and the problems which had arisen previously, it was felt that the most feasible area for pontoons would be between the outfall and the Lydia Eva's permanent mooring, close to Port Mark 11.

It was felt that if such a proposal would also be beneficial to the local economy and if it is to be promoted with a possibility of lottery funding, then this would have to be via the Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) and the yachting fraternity.

The CA said that once the Risk Assessment had been looked at and further discussions had taken place with the Borough Council and other individuals, if a firm Plan was to be put forward, the Port would be consulted to ensure that it met the safety criteria and as the GYBC owns the land, they would have to be leader in the financing for the project for which assurances have been made that European Funding is available.

RG said that a Licence would be required for a pontoon in the river and depending on the method of fixing, the GYBC may also have to be involved in this. Further consideration would also have to be given to responsibility and liability for the facility and a guarantee that the pontoons would be safely removed and disposed of at the end of their life or if their use was considered to present an unacceptable risk.

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It was suggested that the way forward would be for the CA to make contact with David Marsh at the GYBC to seek funding for a feasibility study in the first instance to look at the merits of such a proposal.

2. Update on Port Activities

The Port Director updated Members on Port Activities as follows.

Vessel Numbers – 2015 had been a very challenging year as there had been a 23% reduction in cargo imports and exports driven by a reduction in fertiliser and fuel oil used by offshore vessels and a reduction in petroleum products for gas oil due to the mild weather. Vessel tonnages were down by 20% on the previous year driven by the offshore energy sector and that is seen by a 21% reduction in platform supply vessels coming into the port of Great Yarmouth. There has also been a 26.5% reduction in Pilotage Acts.

Cargo Figures - Cargo volumes are likely to be comparable to 2015 and it is expected that there will be a 10% reduction on 2015 numbers of vessels operating in the Southern North Sea gas fields. 2016 will be a challenging year, but other opportunities will be taken within other sectors, eg wind farm support vessels, the support base for Dudgeon O & M coming on stream in two weeks' time and the Outer Harbour supporting the construction site for the Race Bank, Dudgeon and Galloper Projects which will be proceeding within the next twelve to eighteen months and which GYPC hope to be supporting.

Bridge Lifts – The Bridge Lift Report was presented to the meeting and this indicated that there had been a small number of bridge lifts.

Breydon & Haven Bridges – There has been further maintenance work on Breydon Bridge and this is now back up and running. The additional works required at Haven Bridge have also been completed but there will be a marine closure for Haven Bridge during the period 8th-14th February.

Decommissioning – The Port was supporting Petersons in the tendering process for de-commissioning in the Outer Harbour but it was understood that these projects are often given wholesale to a contractor as a turnkey project and other countries have the facilities and capabilities to offer this which makes them slightly more attractive.

Petersons referred to the need for collaboration around the port as there are heavy lift contractors, engineering and survey companies in the town that can carry out the work, but the business has to be attracted to Great Yarmouth. The PD informed the meeting that GYBC is hoping to put together a decommissioning portfolio for businesses in the area in the same way as they have for offshore wind.

3. Update on Navigational Safety

The Harbour Master updated Members on navigational issues.

CERS & FAL Directive – CERs is progressing and in February 2016, the MCA will engage with stakeholders to refine the system and the way in which the information is submitted. Once implemented, Ports will have to input all hazardous goods, waste and security information into the system. FAL will be implemented through the Single Window system which will involve vessels' agents supplying the required information on the standard forms. This requires more work and consultation with Ports on how to deliver it.

Dredging and Hydrography – The river depth close to the Lifeboat Station had become shallower but the recent rain and increased water flows had scoured it out. It had not been possible to secure suitable plant for the planned dredging but the Port is working with the Peel Ports Group to source a suitable vessel and hopefully this will move forward before the existing Licence expires at the end of March. Surveys of the Outer Harbour and River were carried out in December and are available in PDF on the Website on the Pilotage Information page.

Flood Wall Works – Work is currently ongoing and that at Petersons will be completed this week. The re-building of Berth 30 south of the Alicat site is still in progress and is due to be completed by the end of February. In March/April further works will commence on Alicat Berth and the Seatrax site will be undergoing full re-piling and capping works. The Environment Agency is also undertaking minor works to repair ship damage to the flood walls on berth 21. Further information can be found on the current Notices to Mariners which can be found on the Port's Website.

Safety – It was suggested that river users should look at Marine Guidance Note 538 which relates to training and standards for people who are operating pleasure craft and this can be found on the MCA website.

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Bridges – It was noted that Notices to Mariners relating to Breydon Bridge are no longer within the jurisdiction of the Port and the Broads Authority suggested that a meeting should be held between the Broads Authority and Peel Ports Great Yarmouth.

Port Marine Safety Code – The HM reported that there had been enhancements to promote Safety which included, the updating of the Port's radar which enabled the port to record voice transmissions; the installation of high quality cameras to provide CCTV cover to over 90% of the river and 100% of the Outer Harbour; the installation of a VHF aerial at Berth 9 to provide greater cover; a review on incident rates for piloted vessels had been carried out and it was found that the overall incident rate for 2015 was 0.67 incidents per 1,000 pilotage acts which is a very low level for a complex pilotage environment; the Port's Safety Management System will be aligned with the Peel Ports Group's structure and this will be ongoing over the next few months; a new requirement has been introduced for vessel masters to report that their Pilot ladders are correctly rigged; and the wearing of crotch straps on life jackets will be mandatory for all staff.

National School Sailing Regatta – There are plans for a sailing regatta off Gorleston Beach in July which will consist of 400 teams in dinghies. The port will be supporting this by providing moorings for safety craft.

4. Matters Raised by Members – There were no matters raised in advance of the meeting. The PD suggested that if any Member wished to raise an issue, this could be done via Richard Musgrove for navigational issues or via himself for other items. Gardline suggested that there could be an item on the agenda for any urgent matters. The PD said that he believes that the reason CAMLC was set up was to allow Groups to pull the relevant resources to the meeting and any specific items could be raised with the Port before or after the meeting

Attendees – It had been noted that the GYBC had not been represented for over a year and it was suggested that their attendance should be encouraged as the Committee had been set up for stakeholders of the Port to attend the three scheduled meetings per year. The PD said that he would be looking at the format of the meeting generally in terms of raising agenda items, timings of meetings etc as it may be more attractive if the meetings were held at a different time or location etc. He would be speaking with the Borough and County Councils in an attempt to increase the stakeholder involvement. This would be a new approach and would be an ideal opportunity to review the Terms of Reference.

GYPUA – The representatives said that they were looking forward to working with the Peel Ports Group as the membership of the GYPUA consists of the major companies in Great Yarmouth and the success of those businesses would also assist the Port. They wish to start a good working relationship which they had not had in recent years and hopefully resolve the issues which had been ongoing. Following an invitation to attend the GYPUA meetings, the PD said he would be happy to attend when possible, and would welcome the receipt of a formal invitation to do so.

Peel Ports Group – The GPD said that the Peel Ports Group had acquired the Company to secure an East Coast presence and to diversify into the oil and gas industry and to grow the port. His communication with the Great Yarmouth Borough and Norfolk County Councils had also been positive and with Brandon Lewis the local MP being the Planning Minister for Government, every opportunity would be taken to work with all parties to grow the business.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 6th June 2016.

Should any member wish to raise any item prior to the next meeting or request items for inclusion on the next Agenda, please do so through the Committee Secretary.

The meeting closed at 1845 hours.

Signed
Chair

Signed.....
Secretary