

Community & Marine Liaison Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6th February 2012
Conference Room, EastPort UK House

- Chair: Eliza O'Toole, Great Yarmouth Port Company (EOT)
- Present: David Broad, Cruising Association (DB)
Martin Broom, Royal Yachting Association (MB)
Richard Card, Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association (RC)
David Beckett, Great Yarmouth Port Users Association (DBe)
Tony Wright, Gardline (TW)
Adrian Vernon, Broads Authority (AV)
Pat McNamara, GYPC (PMcN)
- Secretary to the Committee: Jill Hardy, GYPC (JH)
- Apologies: Eddie Freeman, CEO GYPC
Androulla Smith, Peterson SBS
Richard Packham, GYBC
Russell Leggett, GY Chamber of Commerce
Sgt Andy Sadler, Security & Crime Abatement

The meeting commenced at 1800 hours with the Chair welcoming returning attendees and those new to the meeting.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

The Chair confirmed the draft minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and agreed prior to being displayed on GYPC's website.

There were no matters arising other than those already itemised on the Agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair and Secretary.

2. Update on Port Activities

In GYPC's CEO's absence, the Chair presented the CEO's report.

2011 trading finished above expectations despite a relatively poor performance from the traditional river sector.

Highlights:

- Strong performance from outer harbour.
- EastPort UK Cargo Handling – positive offering of services to clients.
- Outer harbour utilised on two major offshore wind farms serving:-
 - Centrica }
 - Statoil }
 - A2Sea } Major Players
 - MT Hojgaard }
 - Siemens }
- Outer harbour attracting new international shipping services.

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Update on Port Activities contd/...

2012 will be no less challenging and we remain hopeful that SNS activity in the river will soon recover to normal levels.

The Chair expanded on the above.

In response to a question as to whether there had been any discussions with offshore wind manufacturers, the Chair confirmed yes however there was insufficient land available in the South Denes peninsula for their needs as identified to GYPC. The focus of offshore wind operators and developers was for the Outer Harbour to support pre-assembly, construction and O&M activities which in combination will have a 30+ year lifespan.

A question was raised as to whether the floating hotel now supporting the Sheringham Shoal OWF Had considered Great Yarmouth. The Chair noted the question for later response.

A question was asked as to whether MT Hojgaard (supporting Lincs OWF) had left the port and was now operating from the Continent. The Chair confirmed that this contractor had left the port and that the Outer Harbour continued to support offshore activities for the Lincs OWF.

A question was asked as to whether the rates within the port are competitive in the previously reported difficult trading times (see CEO report). The Chair advised that the CEO, as is common in commercial enterprises, has a remit to operate on a sensible commercial basis and will conclude transactions appropriately reflecting the nature of the enterprise.

A question was asked whether offshore business opportunities were being lost to other ports on the East Coast such as Harwich or Humberside. The Chair advised there was enough offshore wind activity for all ports and she was confident that offshore operators would choose whichever port most suited their overall needs. GYPC would continue its successful positioning in this sector as demonstrated by the increased activity in the outer harbour.

The Chair referenced South Denes peninsula's USP of being within an EZ with the potential for a LDO streamlining planning control for inward investors and encouraged port users to respond to the Borough Council's consultation on the draft LDO to ensure it had as best as possible capability to attract inward investment into the town and Region.

ACTIONS

1. The Chair to update the next meeting in respect of the floating hotel vessel.
3. Update on Navigational Safety including Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC)

The Chair invited the Harbour Master to provide his update.

3.1 Navigation and the Port Marine Safety Code

Since the last meeting the Port has had a number of meetings with stakeholder groups during which the Code risk assessments and procedures were analysed and in many cases amended both to reflect changes in the port and to update practices.

Following the consultations and amendments, the risk assessments were also streamlined and reduced in number. In addition to this, the issues raised by the external audit have been addressed. This included the two high priority issues of appointing an independent Designated Person and inclusion of towage guidelines within our pilotage procedures.

The Chair and all of those representing recreational boat users' organisations expressed thanks to the Harbour Master for an excellent process, and advised that the meetings had been a very valuable exercise.

3.2 Port Security and Ship Reporting

As part of the European SafeSeaNet system the UK has been implementing by regulation new reporting procedures as part of the Consolidated European Reporting System (CERS), which is a central system that records data on vessel movements, dangerous cargoes, vessel safety, waste disposal and security information. Great Yarmouth along with a number of UK ports submits data to this system direct from internal databases.

All Ports (regardless of the method used) have had to update their systems to comply with new reporting procedures. GY is now ready to implement the new reporting procedures but have to wait until the MCA are ready to test our system, which they are doing on a port by port basis.

Once the latest update is completed, it is hoped that no further changes will be made for some years but there is already a move to include the requirements of the FAL directive into the CERS system. This is a directive meant to harmonise the reporting process for ships using EU ports. It is likely that the UK Government will piggy back other reporting processes into this system, again imposing on UK Ports the requirement to gather data that is shipping related and not port related.

A question was asked whether dangerous goods affected were on port land as well as on vessels. The HM advised currently this was on vessels but there is a move to include quay usage in the future.

A question was asked as to whether the future plans for the Coastguard were viewed unfavourably by GYPC. The HM advised in terms of commercial port operations that there would be little effect at the port.

ACTION: None

4. Matters raised by CAMLC Members

a) NSBA – Vauxhall Bridge

The HM confirmed a meeting had been scheduled and GYPC would await the determination of the relevant parties of the dates they wanted restrictions to apply in order to carry out their works.

b) GYPUA – Letter of 17th October 2011 to GYPC

GYPUA requested confirmation of GYPC's response to above referenced letter:-

Items 1 to 2: The port is maintained appropriately as part of normal day to day business. Where commercial justification exists for additional investment over and above day to day maintenance, then the CEO welcomes discussion in respect of investment customers may wish to make or which the port may make as part of overall commercial terms agreed with prospective customers.

Item 3: Tenants are usually responsible for maintenance of their demises under the terms of their leases. The port common areas are maintained appropriately as part of normal day to day business.

Item 4: GYPC is not a public car park operator. The Council is responsible for the provision of public car parks. GYPC has offered to lease part of the South Pier to a third party that wishes to provide public car parking.

Item 5: All questions regarding West Quay should be referred to the Borough Council which owns and manages it.

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Matters raised by CAMLC Members contd/...

- Item 6: The statutory responsibility for maintenance of the Haven Road Bridge as a public highway falls to Norfolk County Council as a Highway Authority. This is understood to have been the case prior to GYPC's advent in 2007. The transfer of the structure of the bridge from the Port Authority to NCC does not vary that position. No savings arise to GYPC as a result of the transfer noting the bridge was never in the ownership of GYPC.

In response to further questions, the Chair requested GYPUA to refer to the Minutes of GYPUA dated 18th March 2011 to which GYPC had responded in the context of GYPUA misunderstanding whether or not that body was recognised as such by GYPC. A marked up copy was handed to representatives of GYPUA for their ease of reference which clearly demonstrated that GYPUA was recognised as a port user group.

ACTIONS:

1. These Minutes to be forwarded to GYPUA in formal response to their questions.
2. The Chair to re-circulate to GYPUA correspondence previously sent to GYPUA and copied to MMO.

5. Any Other Business

The meeting was advised that the Broads Authority representative had attended an inquest into the lady who drowned on the Lower Bure which delivered the result of accidental drowning aggravated by own actions. There were no specific recommendations from the inquest however a locker system for lifejackets with one responsible person taking charge of a key will be trialled at the yacht station following consultation with various parties including venue owners in the town.

A question was raised re the issue of the provision of pontoons at Town Hall Quay. The Chair confirmed that this was a GYBC responsibility and they continue to follow up on this matter. However, the responsible officer had retired and GYBC are currently struggling with resource issues and are having to prioritise matters.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair thanked all for attending and confirmed the date of the next meeting as Monday 28th May 2012 at 1800-2000 hours.

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

The meeting closed at 1925 hours.

Signed
Chair

Signed.....
The Secretary