

AT A MEETING of the River Hamble Harbour Board of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL held at St Pauls Church Hall, Barnes Lane, Sarisbury Green, SO31
7BG on Friday 10 January 2025

Chairman:

* Councillor Michael Ford

* Councillor Peter Latham

* Councillor Keith House

*Present

Co-opted members

* Nikki Hiorns,

* David Jobson

* Jason Scott

* Nicola Walsh

143. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

144. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

145. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2024

The minutes from the previous meeting, held on 4 October 2024, were approved.

146. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

147. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made no announcements.

148. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RIVER HAMBLE HARBOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2024**

The Board received and noted the draft minutes of the River Hamble Harbour Management Committee held on 20 September 2024.

149. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RIVER HAMBLE HARBOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2024**

The Board received and noted the draft minutes of the River Hamble Harbour Management Committee held on 20 December 2024.

150. **MARINE DIRECTOR AND HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT AND CURRENT ISSUES**

The River Hamble Harbour Board received a report from the Director of Universal Services that formally recorded RHHA patrol operations and informed the River Hamble Harbour Board of significant events and trends having a bearing on the Marine Safety Management System (item 8 on the agenda).

The Marine Director expressed gratitude to the Members for their input on the Three-yearly Review of the Strategic Vision and Plan. The Board was informed that the updated plan was published online on 9 January 2025.

RESOLVED

The River Hamble Harbour Board supported the contents of this report.

151. **ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE**

The Board reviewed a report from the Director of Universal Services on the River Hamble Harbour Authority's environmental management activities for the Hamble Estuary, covering the period from September and mid-November 2024 (item 9 on the agenda).

Members discussed the Bait Digging and Shore Gathering Byelaw and were informed that the River Hamble Harbour Authority, Bird Aware, Natural England, and other stakeholders had raised concerns about displacement.

The Board was also advised that the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study found that, while an intertidal habitat creation scheme was technically feasible, significant challenges could impact the financial viability of such a scheme at Hook Lake.

RESOLVED

The River Hamble Harbour Board noted and supported the contents of this report.

152. **REVIEW OF ASSET REPLACEMENT RESERVE POLICY**

The Board received a report from the Director of Universal Services presenting recommendations resulting from a routine and general review of Asset Replacement Reserve policy (item 10 on the agenda).

The Marine Director informed the Board that the policy has been carefully refined over time. Initially, £35,000 was added annually to the reserve. This amount was increased to £42,000 three years ago, and it will rise to £46,000 in 2026 and £50,000 in 2030.

Members were advised that there was a review of potential disruptive challenges, including acts of God, which could impact the reserves. It was noted that a likely force majeure event could cost around £22,000, an amount well within the reserve balance. While there is no immediate concern, it is important to acknowledge this potential cost.

The Board was reassured that the reserves are in good shape and emphasised the need to maintain this status.

The Marine Director thanked David Jobson, the Recreational Sailing Representative, for his contribution to the report.

RESOLVED

The River Hamble Harbour Board:

- a) Agreed that the minimum holding level of the Reserve, currently forecast to fall in 2035, is reviewed annually and formally each April, taking into account a best assessment of likely inflationary pressures, to ensure that the principal of an adequate reserve level is sustained. This statement acknowledges that the current £100,000 figure is broadly correct, when adjusted for inflation;
- b) Noted the general impact of compound inflation on the Reserve in a marine sector which may be higher than normative RPI figures;
- c) Agreed that reasonable planning assumptions are adopted for scale and concurrency of 'force majeure' disruptive challenges and that these should sit at a minimum of £22,000 (2024 rates), that figure being catered for within the existing minimum holding policy.

153. **REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES**

The Board received a report from Director of Universal Services summarising a review of fees and charges applicable to the River Hamble, excluding Harbour Dues (item 11 on the agenda).

Members learned that local jet ski fees are typically around £20. Given that the current fee was £10, it was deemed unfair to double it in one go. Therefore, it was decided to increase the fee by 50% this year to £15, with a potential increase to £20 next year.

RESOLVED

The River Hamble Harbour Board approved the fees and charges set out below and agreed for them to be advertised on the River Hamble Harbour Authority's website.

154. **RIVER HAMBLE 2024/25 FORECAST OUTTURN AND 2025/26 FORWARD BUDGET**

The Board received a report from The Director of Corporate Operations and Director of Universal Services presenting the 2024/25 outturn forecast as at the end of September 2024 and the proposed 2025/26 forward budget to the River Hamble Harbour Board for approval (item 12 on the agenda).

The forecast for 2024/25 is slightly worse than initially anticipated, but the year-end outlook is expected to improve. For 2025/26, there is a plan to draw £24,000 from the reserve.

After accounting for updated NIC contributions of £12,000, reserves are projected to be £34,000 at year-end, reducing to £10,000. There is no minimum reserve policy, so no breach is anticipated, and the asset reserve can be used to balance if necessary.

Members were informed that the River Hamble Harbour Authority has transitioned from adding to reserves to drawing from them, with a suggestion that an increase in dues may be necessary in the autumn. The Marine Director reported that payment is expected on an outstanding invoice, which should reduce the draw amount, and the outcome will be reported at the next meeting.

It was noted that staff salaries constitute over two-thirds of gross expenditure, with 12 full-time staff members. The Authority is currently in a transition period, with one office staff member having retired and a new team member being trained. Members acknowledged that the River Hamble Harbour Authority is a net contributor to Hampshire County Council.

RESOLVED

- The projected outturn for the 2024/25 financial year was noted.
- The proposed forward budget was approved.
- The requirement to use the Revenue Reserve (RR) to ensure the full annual transfer to the Asset Replacement Reserve (ARR) can be made in both the current and forward year were noted.
- The balances held within the reserves and the position on the reserve balances were noted.

155. **FORWARD PLAN FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The River Hamble Harbour Board reviewed a report on Forward Plan for Future Meetings (item 13 on the agenda).

The officer summarised the report, and the Members had no questions. The Recreational Sailing Representative informed the Board about the upcoming Cemex planning application appeal, noting that the start date is set for 1 April 2025.

RESOLVED

The River Hamble Harbour Board noted the report.

Chairman,