North Sunderland Harbour Commissioners

Thursday 31st July 2025 – 2pm

General Meeting - Minutes

Present:	Apologies Received:
James Boulton (JB) Chair	Guy Renner-Thompson (GR-T)
Toby Douglas (TD)	Matthew Stephenson (MS)
Michael Evans (ME)	
Glen Annison (GA)	
Kerren Rodgers (KR)	
Fiona Kibby (FK) Harbour Master (HM)	
Notes: Items in bold denote an action, a result or a decision. NFA denotes No Further Action.	

1.	**Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest**	**Action**
1.1	Guy Renner Thompson and Matthew Stephenson sent apologies for absence. There were no changes re Declarations of Interest for this meeting. JB has been advised by NIFCA that there are no volunteer candidates from NIFCA to join the Board of Commissioners. Therefore, NIFCA will be advertising the positions more widely. A query was raised whether this was in line with the Harbour Act 1931. JB to check, if necessary, via Ashfords LLP, to ensure the correct procedure is followed.	**JB**
2.	**Approval of Minutes**	**Action**

2.1	The minutes of the meeting of 22nd May 2025 were proposed by KR and seconded by TD. Approved with no amends. The minutes will be added to the website by the Clerk.	**Clerk**
3	**Actions List/ Matters Arising**	**Action**
3.1	The HM went through the action list updates. Noted the difficulty in getting work completed at Harbour Cottage. GA to speak to Gary Annison to get work underway.	**Clerk/ GA**
4	**HRO update**	**Action**
4.1	No real progress with the HRO timeline. Ashfords LLP have advised that there is ongoing work to keep the HRO updated in line with the MMO developments on other HROs further along in the queue. This will be invoiced as needed. This work enables the HRO to progress smoothly when it is eventually laid before parliament. An estimate of Ashfords total fees to complete was tabled and approved.	
5	**Projects/ HM update**	**Action**
5.1	Pontoon is installed and in operation. Work to install new railings is nearly complete. A mechanical keypad lock has been installed to improve safety and security.	**FK**
5.2	Pontoon Lighting – awaiting proposal from Oswald Hughes.	
5.3	Concern regarding number of passengers on pontoon at a time – not being adequately supervised and on vessels putting pressure on pontoon when engine engaged. The installers - Inland and Coastal and Thorburn's – re extra flotation under gangway to be followed up. Dredging would relieve pressure on pontoon. FK has contacted a dredging specialist to understand about next steps (testing, licence etc.)	**FK/TD**
5.3	CCTV still to be completed at new freezers, waiting for power connect. JD Vision.	**FK**
5.4	Power Pedestals completed on quayside, outstanding work on long pier (wall side), waiting for Oswald Hughes.	**FK**
6	**Freezer Project Update**	**Action**
6.1	The electromechanical stabiliser for voltage control, fitted (20/05/25) for trial was successful and is now purchased. The diesel generator has been removed.	
7	**P&L, Finance**	**Action**
7.1	In general the finance reports were positive. No questions.	**KR**

7.2 7.3 7.4	There was a query on whether trip boat licence fees had increased with rate of inflation. FK confirmed trip boat licence fee had been increased for 2025/6. There was a discussion on fishing landing dues at 3% and whether all vessels had been properly declaring their catch. There was a query on the VAT on fuel. Advice had been sought from GW&A on the correct levels of VAT and Duty. FK to confirm for TD who feels he is not being charged correctly. Noted the passing of David Shiel (Senior) and there was a discussion on the handling of his account in the short term.	
7.5	The annual accounts ending 31st March 2025 were approved, signed and have been submitted.	
8	**Harbour Users Group**	**Action**
8.1	The scheduled meeting is on Tuesday 5th August 2025, GA attending.	
9	**Proposal for a Master Plan of harbour public spaces, including parking and booking offices.**	**Action**
9.1	JB and TD have proposed a review of the use of the space for booking offices and retail, as well as the access to the car park. It was agreed that TD would discuss ideas with an architect and present options to the Commissioners. The architects estimate for the work was accepted, noting that 3D views would be a further fee so commissioned when there was a preferred option.	**TD**
10	**Top 3 Risks – HM.**	
	a – Tripping Boat – Boarding and Landing b – Diving Incident – brought ashore c – Cargo lifting on dockside Top 3 risks remain as above.	
11	**Any Other Business - All**	**Action**
11.1	Query about the placing of cones on wall behind booking office. FK to investigate	**FK**
11.2	Ropes being left lying on quayside. FK and HA's to follow up.	**FK**
11.3	GTV, now operational and taking passengers. FK to ask Clerk to ensure passenger dues invoice is raised and paid for this vessel.	**FK**
12	**Dates of next meetings 2025**	

12.1	Friday 26th September – 14.00 Friday 21st November – 14.00	