

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE SAUNDERSFOOT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS
MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26TH MARCH 2025

PRESENT:

Commissioner P Evans – Chair
Commissioner A Sangster – Vice Chair
Commissioner P Parker
Commissioner A Evans
Commissioner J Codd
Commissioner D McDermott

IN ATTENDANCE:

N Gandy - CEO
L Bremner – Finance & Admin Manager
J Cray – Harbour Manager
A Thomas - Accountant

APOLOGIES:

Commissioner W Goldsworthy

617. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that this would be his last at the Trust Port of Saundersfoot. He acknowledged that the world is constantly evolving, and external influences continue to have an impact. While the global stock market is recovering, the economic environment remains challenging. If this were only a leisure harbour or just a car park then there may be cause for concern, but it is fortunate that the Board decided to take a different route, creating a multi-faceted business. This approach instils confidence that the business will continue to grow and thrive.

He expressed his pride in handing over a well-established business with a superb team to Ted and conveyed his certainty that they would offer Ted the same support they had given him.

618. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were stated.

619. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

All present agreed that the minutes represent a true and accurate record of the meeting of 29th January 2025.

620. MATTERS ARISING

John Cray raised a matter regarding the reversion of leisure moorings to commercial, which had previously been recorded as temporary in the minutes. He clarified that the intention was for them to be permanent, as a temporary designation would make it difficult for anyone to commit financially.

The Harbour Master noted a correction on page 2, line 5, which should be amended to reflect the moorings as permanent.

The CEO reported that, under AOB on page 5, the disability discrimination claim for compensation was not submitted, and the case is now closed.

621. HARBOUR OPERATIONS

Nicola Gandy addressed the meeting.

Crane issue

No further update on the Offshore Marine matter since the last meeting. Welsh Government have been contacted for a meeting to discuss next steps but are yet to respond.

John Cray addressed the meeting.

Fishing Fleet

The fishing fleet is operating well, with no reported issues. One long-term commercial whelk boat mooring has been relinquished and subsequently offered to the waiting list. There has been strong interest in the additional moorings discussed previously..

Tripping Boat Operators

Following the advertising of the available tripping boat operator positions, the tripping fishing boat position has been allocated to an individual whose proposal aligned perfectly with the harbour's strategic goals. The vessel to be used is setup for mackerel fishing and shorter trips. The vessel will in due course be adapted professionally to include disabled access.

Harbour Ladder condition Report

In the interest of maintaining safety, Pembrokeshire Engineering was commissioned to conduct a condition survey of all ladders within the harbour basin. A comprehensive inspection was completed, and a survey report was prepared.

The findings indicated that approximately 34 of the 56 ladders required repairs due to defects and corrosion. Prices were sought from several companies to complete the repairs, with costs varying considerably. Pembrokeshire Engineering was identified as offering the most competitive pricing and best overall value

Leisure Mooring Allocations

So far this season, 30 leisure mooring offers have been issued, with approximately 20 accepted.

A social media post was published advertising moorings, which attracted considerable attention and generated significant interest. As a result, several people joined the waiting list and have since been offered moorings.

Feedback indicated that many had previously assumed mooring allocations were not readily available unless they had a connection to the local area, which is not the case.

Sand Relocation and Gabion Basket Installation

TRJ are due onsite week commencing 7th April 2025 to complete the sand relocation works within the harbour. New gabion baskets have been ordered, old gabion stone is to be reused along with some additional new stone. The baskets will be installed during the works along the edge of the channel in front of the fish wall to aid the sluicing operation, this should allow the sluice to work at its optimum.

Dry Boat Racking

Following a review of the operation, it has been decided not to offer this service for the 2025 season. Large machinery repair bills and the increased staffing cost make it unviable. Customers have been informed and have been offered alternative services for example a

ground racking service in the existing trailer park or a JCB assisted launching that will reduce the staffing requirement as the forklift, its operator and a banksman will no longer be required. This will be reviewed again for next season.

Car Park

There will shortly be a number of parking spaces at the top of the slipway that will be given a period of 30 minutes free parking. Signs will be placed at the end of each bay; usage will be monitored and enforcement carried out manually should it be needed.
8 bays with 30 minutes free of charge parking.

Low Water Landing Craft

The Chair noted that the strategy group had identified the need for a low water landing facility and emphasised that a solution should be pursued. Consequently, he has been in discussions with a company in Estonia that specialises in building landing craft and has been working to establish pricing for a low water landing craft.
If the Board is comfortable, the Chair expressed his desire to continue negotiations to complete the costing exercise, subject to Board approval.
The Board agreed that the outgoing Chair, Philip Evans should proceed with negotiations until the costings are finalised.

622. COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

Nicola Gandy addressed the commissioners.

Accommodation

MCOE & Ocean Square are performing well

Tenants

There has been an offer made for the restaurant, which is progressing.
Planning application for change of use has been submitted for the Schooner. The new Schooner tenant also intends buying the Tea Time business.
Persimmon are aiming to take occupation of the section of the ground floor in the Coal Building in July.
Rent review was recently completed for unit 11. All rent reviews are complete until April 2026.

CEO sought commissioner's approval to utilise the MCOE workshop for internal use when the current tenant vacates. The team currently work under the dry boat rack and at the back of the old fish market. There is definitely a need for additional storage and a workshop. Following the strategy group meeting a key suggestion was to bring back a fish market which could then be an option.
All commissioners approved the proposal.

623. EVENTS

CEO reported that ticket sales for the Oasis event on 2nd May were going well and that there is a second music event scheduled for 3rd May with the events deck being hired out. On 25th May Welsh National Opera are screening 2 operas on the side of the Schooner in the manner of a silent disco which is a free event.
Linked with Span Arts in Narberth that put on community events.
Tayler Swift tribute in August.
Weddings continue to be booking.

624. STRATEGY GROUP

Chair addressed the meeting.

Next Horizon document has been distributed to the commissioners.

The strategy group consisted of Will Bramble (Pembrokeshire County Council), David Lewis (Hean Castle), Stuart Denman (Commercial Boat Operator), Jan Tuttle (Fishing Fleet), Barry Walters (Pembrokeshire College), Philip Williams (Senior Advisor on Regeneration), Robbie Owen (Senior Lawyer with Pinsent Mason), David Plester (RYA representative) and Alec Cormack (County Councillor).

The Next Horizon document was then put together by the Chair, Vice-Chair, CEO and Harbour Master.

- The Chair asked all the commissioners to adopt the Next Horizon document.
- Andrew Evans commented that it is a very good document with several questions to be answered.
- All agreed to adopt the document.

Within the document and looking at how the Board goes forward especially with the Chair stepping down and following discussions with the bank the Chair proposed that a shadow board is put in place to support the existing board. Commissioners have received 2 CVs from Kath Wellard and David Plester and the Chair asked that both are recruited to the shadow board.

All board members agreed

- Commissioner Sangster explained that the shadow board will enable the board to have a ready group of people to be interviewed and recruited to the commissioner board at a future time when required.

625. FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

Ann addressed the commissioners.

Not a great deal to say. As per the notes the harbour is doing well. The team is managing the cash well and not spending unless essential to do so.

626. HRO

Commissioner Sangster addressed the commissioners.

No update since last report.

627. ADVISORY AND STAKEHOLDERS

CEO addressed the meeting.

The Next Horizon document was circulated to the Advisory Committee for information, and they did submit some comments which were shared with Commissioners earlier.

Attended British Tourism and Travel Show in Birmingham. It was a good opportunity to showcase Pembrokeshire. Feedback from the coach travel industry was that there are not enough large scale hotels. Need to partner with other accommodation providers to put together a package for coach travel.

Met with the Rotary Club in relation to their programme of events for the summer.

RYA visited the harbour and are discussing an event for 2026.

John Cray and Andrew Robertson-Williams went to a BPA event in Cardiff.

Recent meeting with the bank was positive.

Attending Welsh National Wedding Fayre at the United Counties Showground next weekend.

Saundersfoot Harbour took part in a street football festival, came 6th out of 8 teams.

628. HR

CEO addressed the meeting- Advertising for seasonal staff.

629. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair called for a resolution:

- **Proposal:** That Vice Chair Ted Sangster assume the role of Interim Chair of the Commissioners of Saundersfoot Harbour.
- **Outcome:** Approved by all commissioners.

The outgoing Chair, Philip Evans, sincerely thanked the commissioners for their 14 years of trust and support. He expressed his immense pride in all that had been achieved.

The Interim Chair acknowledged that Philip Evans would be an incredibly hard act to follow and, on behalf of the board, thanked him for his leadership in driving the accomplishments at Saundersfoot Harbour.

On behalf of the board, the Interim Chair offered Philip Evans the appointment of Honorary President, a non-executive ambassadorial position. Philip Evans accepted the offer.

630. DIARY CONFIRMATION

Next official Board meeting will be Wednesday April 30th.