



## **RYDE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **NOTES OF THE HARBOUR WORKING PARTY HELD ON THURSDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019 IN MEETING ROOM 1, 10 LIND STREET, RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT, PO33 2NQ, COMMENCING AT 2PM.**

**Present:** Councillor Henry Adams, Councillor Julian Critchley, Councillor Phil Jordan, Councillor Michael Lilley.

**Also Present:** Saskia Blackmore (Town Clerk), Ady White (Town Clerk), Chris Turvey (Planning Clerk), Grace Morris (Planning Assistant and Notes).

**In Attendance** Councillor Diana Conyers, Councillor Malcolm Ross (Mayor) and Councillor Tim Wakeley.

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#### 01/19 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Phil Jordan was elected as Chairman of the Working Party.

#### 02/19 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

#### 03/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Henry Adams declared a non-pecuniary (personal) interest in agenda item 5 – Expression of Interest as his family has two businesses nearby.

Councillor Michael Lilley declared a non-pecuniary (personal) interest in agenda item 5 – Expression of Interest as he is an Isle of Wight Councillor.

#### 04/19 **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The following terms of reference for the Working Party as agreed at Full Council on 28 January 2019 were noted.

*The Town Council establishes a Ryde Harbour Working Party in accordance with Standing Order 34 with delegated authority to have oversight of the expression of interest process and any necessary discussions with the Isle of Wight Council. Key decision making will remain with the Full Council.*

05/19 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Working Party noted that an expression of interest in the sale of Ryde Harbour had been formally submitted by the Town Council to the Isle of Wight Council by email on 30 January 2019. This submission has been acknowledged.

06/19 NEXT STEPS

Councillor Lilley asked the Working Party if there were any concerns that they wished him raise during the Call-In of the Ryde Harbour decision, which is due to be discussed by the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 12th February 2019. Councillor Lilley indicated that he was particularly concerned that IWC officers had already undertaken negotiations with commercial companies prior to any decision making process taking place. The Clerk informed the Working Party that the property information pack, which should provide all the necessary information with regards to the sale of Ryde Harbour, would be available from the IWC in late spring. Councillor Critchley indicated that he felt that there were no immediate concerns to be raised by Councillor Lilley at the Scrutiny Committee meeting, however he suggested that a Freedom of Information request could be submitted to the IWC try and gain some information on the negotiations which may have taken place prior to the delegated decision being taken. It was agreed not to proceed with an FOI request at this stage. Councillor Lilley noted that not only had negotiations taken place with commercial companies, but TUPE interviews had also begun with Isle of Wight Council members of staff.

The Clerk explained that Ryde Harbour is not a statutory harbour but is a leisure marina and as such is not subject to much of the statutory legislation that is in place for harbours. Chris Turvey informed the Working Party that the Town Council would need to consult with the Maritime Management Organisation with regard to any future proposals to dredge the harbour. It was noted that any covenants that appear on the registered title for the harbour would need to be discussed with Councillor Hutchinson, and the view was generally expressed that the future of the harbour needs to be considered as part of the future regeneration of both the esplanade and the town as a whole. Mention was also made of the recent IWC led regeneration consultation and the Working Party felt that it would be helpful to have sight of the report arising from this consultation.

The Chairman asked the Working Party to identify any matters that would need to be raised with the IWC during any negotiations. The Clerk suggested that the Working Party needed to request the 'Red Line Plan' from the IWC, which will show the proposed land to be sold with the Harbour. The Clerk then showed the Working Party a copy of the title plan for the area of the seafront that includes the harbour. This had been obtained from HM Land Registry. Whilst examining the title plan Members highlighted the issue that access and rights of way for the berth holders to the harbour would be required should the harbour be sold.

Members then discussed the range options that might be available for the future development of the area of the area around the harbour itself, such as relocating the Harbour Master's office, and ways to develop the wider area that

could attract more visitors. The Clerk reminded the Working Party that the Town Council owns part of the building that contains the Eastern Gardens public toilets. The other half of the building contains the harbour facilities, which have been retained by the IWC. Councillor Jordan emphasised that the Town Council would need to consider costs and whether a business case needed to be developed should the Town Council buy the harbour. The Working Party agreed, following advice from the Clerk, that the Town Council should research the costs of a feasibility study and any other relevant surveys, as well as ask the Isle of Wight Council for evidence of any surveys they may have undertaken. The Planning Clerk highlighted that upgrading the harbour facilities would be required to attract more visitors and to encourage a boost in the economy.

The Working Party looked briefly at the Ryde harbour revenue accounts, which had provided by the Isle of Wight Council in December 2018 and felt that they were unrealistic. It was noted by the Clerk that should the Town Council take on the Harbour as an asset, there would be immediate and long-term costs associated with managing an asset for which a facilities management plan would be put in place, as with other assets and buildings that the Town Council owns. Historically these sorts of costs had not been allowed for by the IWC.

Councillor Adams left the meeting

It was suggested that Island 2000 could be used for a survey, however it was agreed that expert advice of leisure marinas would be required, and that it would be inappropriate to use any company that had undertaken work on the harbour on behalf of the IWC.

Councillor Adams re-entered the meeting.

Councillor Jordan suggested that a Community Interest Company (CIC) could be set up to run the harbour. Councillor Lilley suggested that the feasibility study should be undertaken before any formal decisions on the running of the harbour are made to protect the best interests of the community and that a number of ownership options should be explored. It was also highlighted that the impact of the Environment Agency flood alleviation works at Monktonmead Brook should be investigated to establish whether these had had any adverse impact on the harbour. The Clerk confirmed that advice would be sought from the Environment Agency on this issue. It was also suggested by the Clerk that the Working Party could seek advice from bodies such as the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and that more research could be undertaken to see if any other local council has taken on a leisure marina, albeit it none had been identified to date. It was unanimously agreed that stakeholders in the harbour, such as the berth holders, should be consulted going forward. The following actions were then agreed:

- **To request a copy of the Ryde Regeneration Consultation report**
- **To request a copy of the 'Red Line Plan'**
- **That the Clerks will research the costs of a feasibility study and other relevant surveys and report back at the next meeting.**
- **To make an enquiry to the Environment Agency about any impact of the Monktonmead Brook flood alleviation works on the harbour**

07/19

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be identified in due course.