

Watchet Boat Owners Association

Meeting Monday 13th March 2017
The Esplanade Club, The Esplanade, Watchet.

Minutes

Present: 17 members were present.

Apologies: Bob Hitchin, Ian Lambert, Cathy Yuill, Ray Ventura, Bruce Scott.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

Agreed as correct.

2. **Matters arising**

No matters arising.

3. **Officer's Reports**

i. **Chair**

As BH sent his apologies, Chris Danby took the chair for the meeting.
No further comments from the Chair.

ii. **Secretary**

As RV is away, there was no report for this meeting from the secretary.

iii. **Treasurer/Membership Secretary**

Martin Stevens (MS) reported that membership renewals are now due and he requests that people renew their membership of the WBOA first. Yard fees will be collected at a later date.

iv. **Other Officers**

MS read out an email from IL (Marina Manager), who was unable to attend due to a prior engagement:

- Dredging continues apace and will continue throughout the summer, using a pipe-less system on the ebbing tides. This should carry the mud out of the harbor.
- Renewals and general interest in the marina is very positive, with five new berth-holders already this year. IL has carried out eight talks to different organisations over the winter period about Watchet and the marina; these have proved a productive way of spreading the word about Watchet and the business of the Marina. No further talks are planned, but IL will give more talks if requested.
- Rich, the dredger-man is no longer employed by the marina, and so there is a vacancy for a part-time dredger support, yard-hand and berthing master. **Action: If anyone has any thoughts about suitable candidates, please contact IL.**

4. **Any other business**

i. Mud Committee Meeting

MS raised that was a Mud Meeting on the next Wednesday (15/03/17) at the Onion Collective Office on the Quay. It was proposed to discuss marina dredging progress targets, the cost of a capital dredge and a long-term collaborative dredging strategy for both the marina and outer harbour as well as possible funding options. Chris Hall, a senior manager from Taunton Dean Council has been invited to the meeting. MS said

that Watchet Boat Owners are 'pushing hard' for a plan to deal with the build up of mud in the outer harbour.

ii. Dredging Plan

Dr Rob Nunney, who is currently working on the river Parrat, is advising on the work for no payment. He has already placed instruments at the entrance to the harbour, to check the effectiveness of the new dredging plan. Essentially, a capital dredge is required in the inner harbour, in order to return to the bedrock. In the interim, however, IL is trying a new scheme of dredging the fairways, allowing the mud at the edge of the harbour to slump into fairways, which can then be cleared by the dredger.

Watchet Harbour and Marina Health & Safety.

Concern was expressed by WBOA members present at the meeting that West Somerset Council as the owners of Watchet Harbour, are neglecting their responsibilities in terms of Health and Safety legislation and their duty of care that they have for members of WBOA as well as members of the public using Watchet Harbour. Members expressed the wish to have sight of any Health and Safety policy that the Council has in place, in relation to the Harbour and its environs. Finally, some concerns were also expressed as to the qualifications of staff employed by Watchet Harbour Marina and alleged unsafe working practices within Watchet Marina.

As a result of the concerns raised by members, MS agreed to table the various concerns re safe working practices and risks to people associated with mud at the upcoming Harbour Advisory and Harbour Board meetings and further to that, as a responsible body we would issue a safety bulletin to members with regard to keeping themselves safe from mud risks.

5. Time meeting closed: 20:30 hours