



## THA Board Meeting

Time: 8.00pm

Date: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Location: Online Zoom Meeting

### Apologies

Rory Forrester, John MacDonald, Joe Golledge,  
Grace Lambert

### Minutes

Mary Macgregor

Jenny Hampson (technical for Zoom)

### Present

Brian Swinbanks, *Chair*

*Helen MacDonald, Anne Fraser, Jan Dunlop, Rob Macdonald, Allan MacLean,*

*Vic Linneman, Steve Littlewood*

Description	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apologies</li><li>• Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting, Duty holder training circulated by AF to Board minutes approved BS seconded A MacL</li></ul>	<p><i>Carry forward actions from 11<sup>th</sup> March meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>R West Aros Park Gardens</i></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harbour Report<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Safety Review: Accidents, Incidents, near misses. None to report</li></ul></li></ul> <p>For further see Staff reports appendix 1</p>	

- Finance Report For further see Staff reports appendix The funding which THA was fortunate to get and puts THA in a much better position than many businesses. Cashflows show this seeing THA through to next Spring and the loan package backed by the Government is a good deal and should be available to fund the start of the 2021 season and it will probably be needed.
- Staff Reports any questions arising from report circulated. Appendix 1
- Risk assessments and relaxation of lockdown. AF is concerned that there is no merging of the views of the community who are split in between those who want tourists to come and those who want to stay locked down on the Island.
- AF mentioned that Sail Scotland are working hard to make sure that Marine Tourism are included in debate at the Scottish Government
- AF requested views of the Board on the opening up to business
- Sail Scotland, Shop to Ship is a new initiative which could be business who are willing to join up and promote delivery of food direct to the boats on pontoon. This is a new document in and still to be followed up.
- BS was surprised that the local ferry committee survey seems to indicate that many wish to go to 1m rule.
- H MacD said that THA should issue a brief summary of what visitors might expect to find when they come to the Island. RMacD will be doing this once further guidelines come out.
- AF said that we have been keeping a close eye on the situation and trying to strike a balance.
- R MacD agreed with AF that if the rest of the country was opening up then we need to be opened even if it is in a limited capacity. Keeping the vibes positive but trying to strike the balance.
- VL asked what capacity we might offer. How will THA limit numbers if people come in vast numbers?
- R MacD said that VM x 5 additional = 10 in total. Pontoon limited to 1 x boat per finger. That is about 50% of normal.
- BS said that risk assessments needed to centre on the safety of the staff and radiate out to community and local users

- Visitors to be encouraged to communicate with Marine Staff before they come in to have availability and precautions laid out. Suggested a sign on one of the new fairway buoys saying contact on VHF 68.
- Harbour Assist should make it easier to take payments without face to face contact.
- AF was on the Community Covid 19 meeting. Spoke to Environmental Health and asked for copy of guidance when it is issued.
- R MacD is going to speak to Oban and also await guidelines
- A MacL thought it would best to stay closed but that people will come so precautions must be strictly adhered to.
- SL said that he feels that visitors can't expect normal full facilities from day one
- Feeling is that showers are high risk for visitors and cleaning staff and that visitors might just have to do without
- Brian concern re toilet cleaning regime and making products available to users
- H MacD suggested if the turnstile was not taking money the donation box could be put out
- AF asked H MacD (in her role with Marketing Mull & Iona) what the survey of their members showed. Survey currently being analyzed and report to come out.
- Project: Aros Park. JH asked for the Boards opinion on the Jacobs Engineers offering that was sent round. The report does not seem to stack up to the job that has been commissioned. SL asked to have a sub group meeting and move it on. Architects on the other hand have nearly completed their side.
- SL expressed concern that the Aros Project will ultimately cost a lot of money and he is concerned that the funding will be impacted by the current situation an also Brexit. The feeling is that THA needs to keep the momentum going whilst there is some funding about.
- The water connection at Aros needs to be considered and maybe the Forest and Land Scotland could collaborate re the Public Loos in the park.

Once the newest guidelines come out R MacD will send out the comments and plans to the Board.

JH to contact Joe at MICT to see what the result was.

*JH to proceed to chase up Jacobs. SL and RF to support.*

*JH to liaise with JD and contact Forestry*

- Project: Solum per report
- Project: Phase 6.2  
Some quotes circulated round some of the Board looking at how things could be laid out. Some local contractor quotations requested. Once those are in the application can proceed.
- Project: Shoreside Development per report
- Matters requiring Board Approval
- Any “conflict of interest” changes to report  
none

- Any other business

AF flagged up the Covid 19 response fund may pay for some of the equipment like sanitisers which are needed for facilities to open up. Town Centre Restart Fund is available to help and Tobermory could benefit from that. AF asked if THA should be getting involved. There is concern that the funding is not applied for but there are a lot of different initiatives but not sure how they are moving forward. AF asked if they Board want AF to look into it.

Feeling is that it would be a shame if it went unclaimed but that AF has enough on her plate without adding further work. H MacD thought that the tourism group were looking for funding for a post and that if that comes about maybe they could access that fund.

*Check if H MacD has info on the funded position and if they will apply for the Town Centre Fund*

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.33pm

## Appendix 1 Staff Combined reports

### – **Anne's General Manager report:**

**Staffing:** asked staff to start taking some holidays before opening of pontoons to visitors. Jenny will train up to offer cover in marine team. Asked Jan to check in with Staff and check on welfare.

**Crown Estate Scotland** - spoke with Bidwell's, no discount offered on annual mooring tag fee but payment holiday offered until September if required. We are only declaring the local and 7 visitor moorings in place at the moment. Asked for clarity over charging for ground rental as not received an invoice from them for the pontoons or north arm.

**Solum** – Bidwell's have completed their side and sent onto solicitors, should now progress

**Duty holder training** - documents resent to board.

**Marine business units/Shoreside development**– application submitted, mainly positive feedback, revisions made and resubmitted on Monday to council in time for the Scot Gov deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> June.

**WHAM** – spoke with Wham to see if they have been lobbying on our behalf, knocking on doors with no answer it seems.

**Sail Scotland** – positive dialogue with Sail Scotland continues, I spoke with Alan on Friday at length and he is using this info to help form the marine tourism guidance which is due to be published this week. He advised that other island members have similar concerns of balancing tourism with community.

### – **Mary's Finance report:**

Finance is currently in control to cover essential costs and reduced staffing for the coming months. No unexpected costs have arisen since last month's report.

Financial accounts are away to R A Clement Associates and first draft accounts should be with us before the next meeting.

I have e:mailed a VAT consultant referred by R A Clement as their outsourced VAT advisers as there is still a question mark over the VAT situation re the costs of the Aros project. Some funding is available in the Aros Project for this advice.

Telephone meeting arranged with Peter MacDonald of HIE to get training/advice on recording of funding and projects for myself and Jenny.

— **Rob's Harbour report:**

*We have had no near misses or incidents to report. we have asked users of the pontoon to ensure that they wear life jackets and leave a passage plan with a designated person of their choice. The RNLI are working hard to promote sea safety and wear life jackets, we can't enforce this all we can do is lead by example.*

Since our last meeting, we have opened up the Bay and the pontoons for local use. We have also offered a discounted rate on the pontoons allowing mooring holders who have not been able to get their moorings checked, to use their vessels and keep them alongside. This has proven very popular and we have already had six people who have taken up the offer and lot more have shown interest.

With COVID-19 still affecting the day to day running of the Harbour, our focus has been on reducing risk for our customers and staff. I have completed risk assessments and operating procedures to help minimise risk and hopefully increase confidence for staff. The safety of our employees, local mooring holders and pontoon users is top priority and to help with this we have spent over £1000 on PPE, sanitisers and new equipment.

I am now focusing on risk assessments for the potential opening up of the Harbour on around the 15th of July. I highlighted in the report last month some of the steps that we were going to be taking, so we're just building on those now and are waiting on advice from Sail Scotland and the RYA. Once this advice is received, we will send around the risk assessments and guidance to the directors for their approval. This is a very uncertain time, we are having to put provisions in place, make plans and decide on expenditure when we are very uncertain as to how busy we are going to be. North West Marine will be here within the next two to three weeks, they will be putting in the fairway markers, checking the local mooring blocks, and reinstating around about 5 visitor moorings. The five visitor moorings plus the five we already have up means that we have provision for visitors without the expenditure of putting all the moorings up. This has been a very difficult decision to make, again we have no idea how many customers we are going to expect, and whether they will prefer to be alongside or on a mooring.

Also since our last meeting we have made great progress with Harbour Assist, we are now up and running with our online payment portal, we have created the paperwork for bulk invoicing and communication with the mooring holders as well as just getting to grips with the day to day running of the software.

Getting used to Harbour Assist has been challenging, however, we are already seeing the benefit, there is still a long way to go designing paperwork for all the different aspects of the business but we are slowly getting there. One example of the capabilities of Harbour Assist: we sent out the local mooring invoices on Friday the 5th of June, by the Sunday (7<sup>th</sup> June) six people had paid their bills, using the online payment portal without any staff intervention. When I looked at the map on

Sunday it was a delight to see that some of the markers had turned green. There is a little bit of work on the accounts side of the payment portal to do which we are hoping to get ironed out, but still the reduction in work is already apparent. It took less than 15 minutes to send out over 54 invoices, although we did have a slight issue on about five of the invoices; this has now been rectified. Overall, I'm very pleased with how Harbour Assist is functioning.

– **Jenny's report:**

AROS

- Awarded £7,758 from The National Lottery Community Fund. This is to be spent on my salary, community events, storage for the WHYC and clearing of the buildings.
- Work with Bari at Organic Architects is now completed. He will send over the finalised drawings by the end of this week. He is amending the plans to include connection to mains water rather than a large feeder tank system.
- Jacobs (engineers for the pier restoration) are still behind schedule. They sent over an estimated memo with costings. The memo lacked the detail that is needed for us to make a decision on what the second design option should be. I am working with Steve to escalate this to Jacobs management and communicate that I am unhappy with the delivery of the work and to make them prioritise getting the work done. Please review the document from Jacobs attached to the email.
- Application to Historic Environment Scotland has been extended to December, so will aim to apply for the money to repair the pier in September.
- Awaiting response from Local Energy Scotland about the potential for a hydro scheme on Aros Burn. After discussion, it is unlikely to be viable due to the scale and cost of the set up cost, with little grant funding available and little return on investment.

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– ADMIN

- A big thank you to Douglas Swinbanks who took some drone footage of the harbour for us to use in promotions and on the website.
- I have begun writing a procurement policy and strategy to be used for future projects. This will be circulated for comments by the end of the week.