

North Yorkshire Council

Scarborough and Whitby Area Committee

29 November 2024

Harbours Update

Report of the Corporate Director – Environment

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Area Committee on general matters ongoing within the Harbours.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 North Yorkshire Council has responsibility for the harbours at Scarborough, Whitby, and Filey Cobble Landing.
- 2.2 Scarborough Harbour is primarily used for commercial fishing, leisure craft, and tourism-related activities. The surrounding area is heavily tourism-dependent, with a vibrant seafront that attracts visitors year-round. Whitby Harbour is a historic fishing and maritime port, closely associated with tourism, boat trips, and heritage-related activities. The local economy thrives on a mixture of fishing, tourism, and small-scale marine industries. Filey Cobble Landing is a small-scale coastal slipway, traditionally used for coble fishing boats and beach landings. The area is scenic but underdeveloped for modern tourism and recreational use.
- 2.3 There are a number of challenges in managing the harbours, with some of the main issues being set out below for the committee to consider.

3.0 HARBOUR STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PLAN

- 3.1 There is currently no strategy or investment plan for the harbours and it is proposed to develop this strategy over the next year.
- 3.2 The North Yorkshire Harbour Strategy will set out the future direction of management for the harbours at Scarborough, Whitby and Filey Cobble Landing, and how each of these unique assets will be developed over the period of the strategy. It will set out a mission statement and a set of strategic goals and actions to help achieve the vision.
- 3.3 The proposed outline of the contents of the strategy for comment by the committee is included in Appendix A.
- 3.4 It is proposed to prepare a draft of the strategy and this will be presented to the Area Constituency Committee for comment and approval as a draft for consultation. It is important for the service to know stakeholders views on the services we provide and to have their assistance in making improvements. We want to make sure that users have the opportunity to have their say and to be more actively involved if they want to. Therefore, once approved as a draft for consultation it is proposed to consult on the strategy with key stakeholders and harbour users. The document will also be available for public comments on the council website.

3.5 Comments on the draft strategy can be reported to the Area Constituency Committee with a final draft to be reported to Executive for adoption.

4.0 HARBOURS INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1 The harbours are historic structures, some of which are in poor condition and are subject to an aggressive wave climate which requires a proactive approach to maintenance and management

4.2 Common problems associated with the harbour infrastructure include:

- Accelerated low water corrosion
- Thinning of sheet pile thickness
- Holes in sheet steel piles
- Loss of fill materials
- Areas fenced off or load restrictions in place
- Risk of collapse
- Negative public image and perception



4.3 Scarborough Borough Council previously undertook a number of major capital refurbishment schemes, and also regular revenue maintenance works. Despite this investment several areas of both harbours continue to need further attention.

4.4 Discussions are ongoing and the future investment requirements at the harbours are being developed, with the requirements for Council funding and opportunities to access and utilise external grant funding being explored. Members will be brought a further update report at the appropriate time.

5.0 DREDGING

5.1 Since 2020 the dredging of the harbours was outsourced under Ship Management Agreement.

5.2 The current dredging situations in both Scarborough and Whitby harbours are being closely monitored as both harbours have not been dredged for some time and risk becoming silted up. Notwithstanding this, both harbours remain operational.

5.3 There are a number of commercial and contractual reasons as to why this has happened, and the Council has therefore changed its approach to dredging which will now be brought back in house following the termination of the external Ship Management Agreement in September 2024.

5.4 As the Council's dredging licences for both Scarborough and Whitby have now both expired, new licences are in the process of being applied for. The new applications process has been quite drawn out compared to previous years applications and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), who manage the licencing process seem to be taking a more rigorous approach in respect of the technical information being required.

5.5 This is considered to be in response to the recent shellfish die-off.

5.6 The Council has submitted all of the information requested by the MMO and is hopeful that the licences will be issued shortly. We have also undertaken a number of repairs and checks to made sure that the dredger is seaworthy and in good operational order ready to dredge once the licences are received.

5.7 The Dredger Master (captain) was previously employed by the outsourced ship management company with the Council providing two crew. A decision has been taken to bring this post in house, with the position currently being advertised. While the Council is going through the recruitment process, but if the licences are issued before a captain is employed then an Agency captain will be employed to operate the dredger.

6.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

6.1 Consultation is undertaken with harbour users at the regular harbour user group meetings and will continue.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this update report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this update report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equalities implications as a result of this update report.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no climate change implications as a result of this update report.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The report was provided at the request of the Area Constituency Committee.

11.2 To update the Area Constituency Committee on general matters ongoing within the Harbours.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 It is recommended that the report is received, and the contents noted.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Proposed Contents Harbours Strategy and Investment Plan

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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15 November 2024

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Presenter of Report – Chris Bourne, Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure

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