

	REPORT TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD TO BE HELD ON 25 APRIL 2018	
	Topic	Scarborough Harbour
Corporate All Aims	Task Group (if applicable)	Ditto
	Cabinet Portfolio Holders	Councillors M Cockerill, A Jenkinson and H Mallory

REVIEW OF FISHING SECTOR AT SCARBOROUGH HARBOUR

Report of the O&S Task Group (reference 18/87)

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REASON REPORT REQUESTED: This review was commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Board following a presentation to the Board by the Economic Development Project Manager, Alex Richards in September 2017.

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To present the Overview and Scrutiny Board with the findings and recommendations of this review.

STATUS OF REPORT: This report is the work of the Member Task Group, on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, and where opinions are expressed it should be pointed out that they are not necessarily those of Scarborough Borough Council. While we have sought to draw on this review to make recommendations and suggestions that are helpful to the Council and its partners, our work has been designed solely for the purpose of discharging our terms of reference. Accordingly, our work cannot be relied upon to identify every area of strength, weakness or opportunity for improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The Task Group wishes to thank all those who participated in the series of meetings – public enquiry day, site visits, and informal stakeholder meetings – used to gather evidence for this review.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS: By not accurately assessing the current and future requirements of the fishing industry at Scarborough Harbour, there are risks that

these requirements may not be fully taken into account in the delivery of the Strategic Business Plan to the potential detriment of the fishing sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Task Group responsible for this review comprises Councillors Mark Vesey (Chair), David Chance, Paul Cross, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson and Steve Siddons with officer support from Alex Richards (Regeneration Services), St John Harris, (Democratic Services), Capt. Ian Vasey and Capt. Chris Burrows (Harbour Services).

Objective of the review

- To determine the requirements of the fishing sector located within Scarborough Harbour so as to help inform investment, management and support activity by the Council for the fishing sector in Scarborough until 2030
- To devise an outline action plan to address current and future Harbour requirements for the industry

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In July 2017 the views of the O&S Board were sought on a draft Strategic Business Plan for Scarborough Harbour. The plan had been written to provide the strategic framework for the delivery of future activity within Scarborough Harbour over the coming period up to 2030 and contained a number of key objectives and activities aimed at ensuring the Harbour's continued and sustainable operation as a mixed use port. The Board recommended the Strategic Business Plan for the Cabinet's approval (which it was in September 2017) and agreed to assist with the implementation and delivery of the Business Plan as necessary, providing regular oversight, and employing Task Group/s to look into specific areas in more detail.

2.2 Accordingly, on 13 September 2017, the O&S Board commissioned a review in respect of the fishing sector at Scarborough Harbour so as to obtain a clear understanding of the current activity and resources of the fishing industry and of its future requirements for the duration of the Business Plan, and of the harbour resources needed to support these requirements.

2.3 In commissioning the review, the O&S Board identified five principal areas for investigation by the Task Group:

1. The current levels of activity within the fishing sector within Scarborough Harbour, including but not limited to:
 - Types of industry activity (processing and catching)
 - Number and types of vessels
 - Number and types of products caught and processed
 - Number of premises utilised

- Direct employment
 - Indirect employment
 - Direct and indirect income generated from activity for the local economy
 - Direct and indirect income generated from industry activity for the harbour
2. The current resources utilised by the fishing sector within Scarborough Harbour including:
 - Premises and land used
 - Equipment and facilities
 - Staff resources (i.e. harbour staff)
 3. The role the fishing industry plays within the wider community
 4. The future levels of activity of the fishing sector within Scarborough Harbour during the period until 2030
 5. The future resources required to support the fishing sector within Scarborough Harbour over this period
- 2.4 Based on these findings, the Task Group was tasked with developing an outline action plan to address these current and future requirements in accordance with the overarching aspirations of the Strategic Business Plan, in particular the regeneration of the West Pier and the improvement of port user facilities.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 In addition to a survey of background literature, the Task Group has engaged in the following evidence gathering sessions:

28 Nov 2017 Site visit to Scarborough Harbour and interview held with Harbour Master Captain Ian Vasey and harbour staff.

7 Feb 2018 Public enquiry day on the future of the fishing sector in Scarborough with evidence from Tim Smith, Senior Environmental and Scientific Officer, North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority; Andrew Newlands, Principal Marine Officer, Marine Management Organisation; Andrew Oliver, Partner, Andrew Jackson Solicitors (Marine Industry Lawyer); and Professor Mike Elliott, Research Professor, Institute of Estuarine and Coastal Studies, University of Hull

9 Feb 2018 Informal private meeting with representatives from the fishing industry: white fish, shellfish and processing sectors.

12 Feb 2018 Informal private meeting with representatives from hospitality sector, South Bay traders, other local businesses and the Civic Society

14 Mar 2018 Site visit to Bridlington Harbour and discussion with Bridlington Harbour Commissioners and harbour staff.

- 3.2 At each of the meetings information specifically relevant to the witnesses was gathered as well as general opinion on Scarborough Harbour and its current and future activity and performance.

4. FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 A summary of the findings of the site visits and consultative meetings cross-referenced to five principal areas of investigation can be found at Appendix 1 in addition to bullet point notes of individual meetings in the ensuing appendices. The final Appendix 5 details notes of a meeting with Bridlington Harbour Commissioners which was undertaken to provide a comparison of another significant shellfish port's current and planned provision for the catching and processing sectors with that of Scarborough Harbour.

- 4.2 In summary the key findings are as follows:

1. CURRENT LEVELS OF ACTIVITY WITHIN THE FISHING SECTOR WITHIN SCARBOROUGH HARBOUR

Scarborough Harbour is host to 35 resident vessels and 23 visiting vessels, four shellfish processors and one white fish processor.

The industry provides direct employment for an estimated 150 people and indirect employment for another 150 in the wider economy.

The predominant activity within the harbour is shellfish catching, holding and processing with an ever decreasing amount of white fish landings which now make up only 3% of product landed at the port by volume.

It is estimated that Scarborough is the second largest shellfish port in the country in terms of product landed. Value of fishing activity to the harbour is approximately £190k per annum (net) for the catching and processing sectors levies through fees, charges and rents.

The monetary value to the wider economy is unknown and is very difficult to determine with any accuracy, however it is estimated that the employment of 150 people in the wider economy equates to approximately £3m per annum in salaries alone.

2. CURRENT RESOURCES UTILISED BY THE FISHING SECTOR WITHIN SCARBOROUGH HARBOUR

The fishing industry utilise a number of premises and facilities throughout the port but most activity is centred around West Pier where bait sheds, lofts offices, processing and holding facilities, storage and handling areas are provided. Vessels predominantly berth at West Pier and the North Wharf.

3. WHAT ROLE DOES THE FISHING INDUSTRY PLAY WITHIN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Fishing activity is synonymous with Scarborough by many in the community. In terms of cultural identity and tourism appeal Scarborough's fishing industry is considered invaluable by the majority of consultees.

Furthermore fishing infrastructure such as West Pier and North Wharf provide great alternative sites for cultural activity and events such as Seafest and Armed Forces Day etc.

The industry provides jobs both directly and indirectly within the local economy which are relatively well paid and not seasonal.

4. WHAT FUTURE LEVELS OF ACTIVITY OF THE FISHING SECTOR WITHIN SCARBOROUGH HARBOUR WILL THERE BE DURING THE PERIOD UNTIL 2030?

It is predicted that Brexit will have minimal impact on fishing activity in Scarborough due to its predominant reliance on shellfish catching.

The whitefish catching sector will not increase over the period. Quota will likely remain in place and predominant species / fishing grounds will continue to move north away from Scarborough.

Shellfish catching is reaching its sustainable peak and restrictions on fishing effort are likely to be introduced in coming months. i.e. limiting numbers of pots etc.

New species and opportunities are likely to become available in the coming years including new target species such as squid, marina aquaculture, and renewables and gas decommissioning activity.

The shellfish processing and holding sectors will continue to flourish. There is the opportunity for growth in these areas with more of the existing product being held and processed locally.

5. WHAT FUTURE RESOURCES WILL BE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE FISHING SECTOR WITHIN SCARBOROUGH HARBOUR OVER THIS PERIOD?

Existing facilities are comparable in type and quality to other similar ports i.e. Bridlington etc.

Continued investment in existing infrastructure and facilities is required with the provision of an additional davit and some upgrade of wharves and buildings suggested in the medium term.

Anecdotally the holding and processing sectors suggest they could utilise as much space as could be made available within the port and are currently restricted within by physical constraints of the West Pier buildings. This issue could be addressed in part by exploring the reconfiguration of buildings on the West Pier in order to make better use of space on the Pier for both the benefit of the holding and processing sectors and in pursuance of the Strategic Business Plan and the West Pier's regeneration.

Improved facilities for boat maintenance have been suggested including a hard standing area in the harbour to service boat hulls etc. at low tide. HGV access must be maintained and if possible improved as this is critical for the sale and transhipment of product.

With likely restrictions on catching effort being introduced, the cooperation and pooling of resources between catching and processing sectors to drive value out of a local shellfish brand is considered the biggest opportunity for business growth in this sector. Other ways of securing the recent gains and successes of the local shellfish industry should also be revisited such as the development of a lobster hatchery. This idea was researched and rejected as unfeasible some ten years ago.

ASSESSMENT

- 4.3 On the basis of the information gathered it has been assessed that the fishing industry remains an important contributor to Scarborough Harbour and the wider economy of the region.
- 4.4 Although there is limited potential for growth within the catching sector it currently provides, and will continue to provide, valuable and sustainable jobs for the foreseeable future, and will continue make a significant contribution to the ongoing operation of the Port.
- 4.5 Importantly fishing activity in Scarborough has wider economic value in terms of its cultural and tourism offering, something which all stakeholders wish to see maintained.
- 4.6 In terms of facilities and infrastructure it can be summarised that the current levels of facility are adequate in type but are in some instances in need of

modernisation and improvement in terms of quality / maintenance, and the provision of an additional davit.

- 4.7 The evidence collected also leads us to surmise that the current scale and mix of facilities will be adequate for the period in question up to 2030. However there remains the opportunity to grow the holding and processing sectors should space be made available through a reconfiguration of buildings. The potential to develop a lobster hatchery should also be revisited some ten years after the first feasibility study.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Board is asked to recommend the following elements in an outline Action Plan for adoption by the Cabinet to support the fishing industry at Scarborough Harbour within the framework of the Strategic Business Plan:

(i) In general, to ensure that any development at Scarborough Harbour maintains current levels of fishing activity, and seeks to continue investment in and maintenance of such facilities.

(ii) In particular, to consider

- Providing an additional davit to improve the harbour's efficiency*
- Maintaining and if possible improving HGV access to the piers*
- Improving facilities for boat maintenance such as a hardstanding area to service boat hulls etc at low tide*
- A reconfiguration of buildings on the West Pier to achieve better use of space for the benefit of the holding and processing sectors and to contribute to the regeneration of the West Pier*
- Other means of securing the recent gains and successes of the local shellfish industry, namely the cooperation and pooling of resources between catching and processing sectors to drive value out of a local shellfish brand and the development of a lobster hatchery.*

6 IMPLICATIONS

Policy

- 6.1 None.

Legal

- 6.2 None.

Financial Implications

6.3 None

Environmental and sustainability implications

6.4 None

Equalities and Diversity, Staffing Implications, Planning Implications, Crime and Disorder Implications

6.5 None.

Councillor Mark Vesey
Chair of the Scrutiny Task Group

Background papers:
None

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT, PLEASE CONTACT
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