

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **530/2005**

Title: **Dry Dock Facilities in Brixham**

To: Harbour Committee on 5th December 2005

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Following direct enquiries/correspondence to Members and related press articles, to update the Committee as to proposals for a floating dry dock facility in Brixham harbour.

2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Council wishes to support local businesses and job creation.

3. Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 That the content of the report be noted.

4. Reason for Recommendation(s)

- 4.1 To update and advise the Committee on the matter of a proposed floating dry dock for Brixham harbour.

5. Alternative Options (if any)

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. Previous Decisions

- 6.1 The Council was approached in late 1999 regarding a proposal for a floating dry dock. On 26th January 2000 the Harbours Sub-Committee considered Report Strat/4/00 on a proposal to berth a floating dry dock in Brixham Harbour as a ship repair facility. Under Minute 925 of the Harbours Sub-Committee the following was resolved: -
- (i) **that the principle that a dry dock, floating dry dock, slipway and boat hoist operation in some form or other is required in Brixham Harbour to meet the needs of both the fishing and leisure industries be accepted;**
 - (ii) **that officers be authorised to continue negotiations in respect of the current proposal for a floating dry dock in Brixham Harbour; and**
 - (iii) **that the subject of the provision of suitable repair facilities at Brixham be included as part of the brief for the current Brixham Harbour Regeneration Study.**

- 6.2 On the 19th October 2000 the Sub-Committee considered Report Strat/63/00 on the proposed installation and management of a floating dry dock in Brixham harbour. The Report identified the issues associated with the proposal and provided feedback on the current negotiations. Under Minute 638 the following was resolved: -
- (i) **that officers defer any further negotiations with the Brixham Docking Company Limited to await more details and development relating to repair facility proposals associated with the Brixham Harbour Regeneration Scheme.**
- 6.3 At the end of the year, on 12th December 2000, the Strategic Services Committee also considered Report Strat/63/00, which had previously been presented to the Harbours Sub-Committee. The Report updated members on the matters relating to the installation and management of a floating dry dock in Brixham Harbour. Negotiations with the company proposing to install the facility had been deferred pending more detailed proposals arising out of the Brixham Harbour Regeneration Study. Under Minute 686 the following was resolved: -
- (i) **that the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Harbours Sub-Committee for further consideration and that concerns relating to visual impact and noise and environmental and operational considerations should be addressed prior to that meeting.**
- 6.4 The proposal received further consideration in 2001 when report Strat/3/01 was submitted to both the Harbours Sub-Committee (24th January) and the Policy Committee (14th February). This report provided an update on the concerns relating to the visual impact and noise associated with the proposal to site a floating dry dock in Brixham Harbour together with the environmental and operational considerations. The Report identified specific issues highlighted by a special Environmental Report (attached as Appendix 1) commissioned by the Brixham Docking Company Ltd. Under Minute 909 of the Harbours Sub-Committee it was resolved: -
- (i) **that the application by the Brixham Docking Company Limited be supported; and**
 - (ii) **that, in light of the specific environmental issues relating to the proposed floating dry-dock and the possible impact of these on the wider community, the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Policy Committee.**
- 6.5 Under Minute 942 of the Policy Committee it was resolved: -
- (i) **that the application by the Brixham Docking Company Limited be supported; and**
 - (ii) **that, subject to the approval of the Head of Environmental Health and Consumer Protection, the Head of Marine Services and the Estates Services Manager be authorised to continue negotiations with the Company with regard to the detailed terms of the lease for the siting of a floating dry dock in Brixham Harbour.**
- 6.6 In January 2001 a number of environmental issues were highlighted for further investigation. In particular, noise, water/waste and landscape/visual issues were identified as areas of potential concern. The Environmental Report attached as Appendix 1 addresses these environmental concerns in more detail. However, the Environmental Report was carried out prior to the current aspirations for Oxen Cove and Freshwater Quarry. If the floating dry dock were to be reconsidered then these environmental issues would need to be reviewed.

- 6.7 Some 32 months later, against the background of redevelopment proposals for Brixham and the outcome of Local Authority Elections, it was considered prudent to submit a further report (Strat/25/03) to the Council's Executive on 14th October 2003. The Record of Decision following this meeting was as follows :-

that the proposal to site a floating dry dock in Brixham be not pursued at this stage but that consideration be given to the provision of such a facility once the Brixham regeneration proposals have been developed.

7. Further Background Information

- 7.1 Since October 2003 the Brixham Docking Company, with whom discussions and negotiations had been taking place for a dry dock facility, consider that the Council is committed to dealing only with them. The decision of the Executive on 14th October 2003 was supplied to the Brixham Docking Company.
- 7.2 A meeting took place with the interested operator on the 18th July 2003 during which various issues were discussed including: -
- Officers needed a revised specification due to the subsequent departure of the MOD mooring barge 'Longbow'.
 - Officers needed to take the matter back to Members due to a change in administration following local elections - as directed for all uncompleted matters.
 - No legal agreements had been signed so there was no existing commitment on either side.
 - At that time there was an obvious need to consult with Brixham 21.
 - The intended operator claimed he had been given a right of first refusal and had received a letter to that effect.
- 7.3 The ensuing report to Members (Strat/25/03) included legal advice and also asked Members whether, in the light of regeneration plans for Brixham, which could include a scheme for a repair and maintenance facility, a proposal for a floating dry dock as proposed was sufficiently attractive and subject to support being forthcoming, authority be given to grant a lease.
- 7.4 In early 2004 a meeting took place in the Brixham 21 office with the proposed operator. At this meeting representatives from Brixham 21 and Council officers both expressed concern about the affect of the proposal on the Brixham regeneration plans.

Prior to the above meeting officers had sought additional information from the interested operator, which has never been supplied. This information related to wave attenuation following the departure of the 'Longbow', it was particularly relevant as consideration was being given to the need for retaining the pier against which the 'Longbow' had rested. This old fuel jetty which is in poor condition may be demolished in the future and if it is removed then the whole question of wave attenuation becomes even more relevant.

8. Current Position

- 8.1 Although a dedicated boat repair facility may be desirable the current position is that consideration be given to the provision of such a facility once the Brixham regeneration proposals have been developed. It is obvious that such consideration should include proposals relating to a northern arm and such proposals have not yet been fully developed.
- 8.2 The sea bed at the intended location for the facility is owned by the Crown Estate. Under current arrangements the Council would only be able to offer a lease of 7 years to the operator which may not be renewable. At the end of the lease the operator may be required

to cut off and remove the supporting piles of the dock. In order for the Council to consider a longer lease term, it would need to extend its own lease from the Crown Estate which would result in costs to the Council.

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Wards

Berry Head with Furzeham

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Proposed Floating Dry Dock at Brixham –Environmental Report - January 2001

Documents available in Members' Room

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

- Report Strat/4/00 to Harbours Sub-Committee
- Report Strat/63/00 to Harbours Sub-Committee and Strategic Services Committee
- Report Strat/3/01 to Harbours Sub-Committee and Policy Committee
- Report Strat/25/03 to the Council's Executive
- Proposed Floating Dry Dock at Brixham –Environmental Report - January 2001