



DRAFT -Harbour Liaison Forum Constitution

Introduction

The Harbour Committee has agreed to support the Harbour Liaison Forums in Torbay to increase the involvement of user groups, local businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations in the way in which the Tor Bay Harbour is operated, managed and governed.

The Harbour Liaison Forums are voluntary groups based on the harbour estate boundaries and harbour limits within Tor Bay Harbour. One Liaison Forum exists at Brixham and a combined Liaison Forum exists for Torquay and Paignton.

Harbour Liaison Forums provide an opportunity for those who use, work, manage or regulate the harbour and its facilities, to discuss issues of common concern. They provide an opportunity for people to understand and influence the way in which services are provided in their area of the harbour. It is anticipated that the Harbour Liaison Forums will discuss and help resolve day to day operational issues. However, the Harbour Committee also hope that the Harbour Liaison Forums will involve local people in helping to shape some of their major plans and strategies.

Aim

The Harbour Liaison Forum's aim is to act as a multi-sector advisory body to harbour management team, working together to add value and achieve a better service and improved facilities for their harbour area.

Objectives

1. To provide a mechanism for the views of user groups, local businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations to be fed into the harbour management team and the Harbour Committee.
3. To improve the representation of harbour stakeholders, across all sectors, for the benefit of their whole harbour area.

4. To increase democratic participation in Tor Bay Harbour by local user groups, businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations.
5. To encourage openness and transparency.
6. To help develop harbour plans in line with the Tor Bay Harbour & Maritime Strategy.

Membership

Membership of each Harbour Liaison Forum will be open to all user groups, local businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations operating, within the boundary of their harbour area.

Ward Councillors will also be members. Where more than one ward is included within a Harbour Liaison Forum, all of the appropriate Ward Councillors will be members. In Brixham this will include a representative from Brixham Town Council.

Nominations for representatives to sit on the Liaison Forum will be sought from user groups, local businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations. Membership may also be extended to include local schools and colleges, community and voluntary groups, trade organisations and residents' associations.

Members of the Harbour Committee will also be invited to send representatives to meetings of each Harbour Liaison Forum. **Put bit in here about external appointments!!!!**

The statutory bodies will endeavour to meet reasonable requests for officers to attend meetings of the Harbour Liaison Forums to assist in the discussions.

Quorum

No business will be carried out at a meeting of the Harbour Liaison Forum unless at least four members are present, not counting officers from Harbour & Marine Services. The membership will be agreed by each Harbour Liaison Forum.

Frequency of Meetings

Each Harbour Liaison Forum will meet normally every quarter. The dates and times of the meetings will be agreed with the Executive Head, Harbour & Marine Services to ensure that they occur at least 14 days prior to the scheduled quarterly meetings of the Harbour Committee. These dates and times should be published on the Tor Bay Harbour website.

Venue of Meetings

The venue for meetings of Harbour Liaison Forums will be determined by the Forums.

The Harbour Masters will make available premises for meetings of each Harbour Liaison Forum and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the venues are easily accessible for everyone who wishes to attend meetings of the Forums.

Chair and Secretary

The Chair (and Deputy Chair, if appropriate) will be elected (from the membership of each Forum) by each Harbour Liaison Forum at its first meeting after 31st March each year. The Chair will preside at meetings of the Forum.

In the absence of the Chair (and Deputy Chair, if appointed), those present will elect a Chair for that meeting.

The Chair (or Deputy Chair) of each Harbour Liaison Forum have three main responsibilities:

- To co-ordinate the arrangements for meetings of the Harbour Liaison Forum.
- To ensure that meetings of the Forum are conducted efficiently, fairly and harmoniously.
- To deliver an accurate set of Minutes of the Harbour Liaison Forum to the next meeting of the Harbour Committee.

The Secretary will be appointed by the Forum at the first meeting of the Forum after 31st March each year.

The Secretary will prepare agendas and take minutes for each meeting and will assist the Chair with the administration of the meeting.

Matters for discussion at meetings of Harbour Liaison Forums

All members of a Harbour Liaison Forum can ask for items to be considered by the Forum subject to the following:

- Any proposed item of business must be notified to the Forum Chair or Secretary at least 5 working days before the meeting of the Forum is due to take place.
- Individual or personal complaints or issues cannot be accepted for discussion unless the person asking for the item to be discussed can demonstrate that the issue is of wider concern to the harbour area.

Urgent items of business can be discussed at meetings provided that the Chair agrees that discussion on the matter could not reasonably wait until the next meeting.

The Harbour Committee will ensure that contact arrangements for each Harbour Liaison Forum are well publicised and included on the harbour website.

The Secretary will publish an agenda listing all of the matters to be considered at the meeting of the Forum at least 5 working days before the meeting is due to take place.

Any person or organisation that has an item for discussion at the meeting will have up to 5 minutes to address the Forum on the item. This time can only be extended with the agreement of a majority of those present at the meeting. There is no time limit on the amount of time a Harbour Liaison Forum can take to discuss an item, although the person presiding will guide the Forum taking account of the other business to be discussed.

The Harbour Liaison Forums are not decision making bodies and may only make recommendations to other persons or bodies. However, from time to time the Harbour Committee, or other parts of Torbay Council or the Community, may find it helpful to ask for the views of the Harbour Liaison Forum on a particular issue.

Any resolution of the Harbour Liaison Forum will be reached by consensus of the members of the Forum present at the meeting.

Draft minutes of each meeting of each Forum will normally be finalised within 10 working days of the meeting, approved by the Chair and be published as a standing Agenda item for the scheduled meeting of the Harbour Committee. Minutes will then be formally approved (with any appropriate amendment) at the next meeting of the Harbour Liaison Forum.

Conflicts of Interest

Members of the Forum shall consider whether they have individual interests on matters being considered by the Forum and declare such interests (including details of those interests) at Forum meetings. When a Forum member has declared an interest, it will be recorded in the minutes, but the member may normally remain in the meeting and speak on the matter unless the Forum resolves otherwise.

Variation and Suspension

Two thirds of the Harbour Liaison Forum present at any meeting of the Forum may vote to vary or suspend this Constitution for that meeting.

Development

The Harbour Committee recognises that it has taken time for each Harbour Liaison Forum to develop and become established. Also, the Harbour Committee appreciates that this new Harbour Liaison Forum Constitution will allow the Forums to evolve and develop even further. To help in this, the Harbour & Marine Services will continue to provide support to each Forum and will, where necessary, organise particular events or activities aimed at developing each Forum. The Council and the Harbour Committee will also provide as much assistance as possible to user groups, local businesses, clubs, agencies, statutory bodies and organisations who wish to become involved in each Harbour Liaison Forum.

This Constitution may be reviewed and amended by the Harbour Committee in consultation with the Harbour Liaison Forums.

Approved for consultation by the Harbour Committee on 29th September 2008