

## **Tyne Port Health Authority Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Joint Board**

**At the annual meeting of the Joint Board of the Tyne Port Health Authority duly convened at 10am on Tuesday 2 June 2015 at 10am, Quadrant (East), The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say:-**

### **Present:**

North Tyneside Council:	Councillor B Burdis Councillor M Hall
Gateshead Council:	Councillor W Dick
Newcastle Council:	Councillor D Wood Councillor G Bell
South Tyneside Council:	Councillor F Cunningham Councillor A Walsh

### **Officers in Attendance:**

Stephen Taggart, Chief Port Health Officer  
Colin MacDonald, Clerk to the Authority  
Richard Gray, Senior Finance Officer, North Tyneside Council  
David Jamieson, South Tyneside Council

### **JB01/06/2015 Election of Chairman**

It was moved that Councillor B Burdis be re-elected to the office of Chair of the Joint Board and his appointment was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor B Burdis be, and is hereby elected, Chair of the Joint Board for the ensuing year and until a successor becomes entitled to act as chair.

### **JB02/06/2015 Appointment of Vice Chairman**

It was moved that Councillor W Dick be re-elected as Vice Chair of the Joint Board and this was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor W Dick be, and is hereby elected, Vice Chair of the Joint Board for the ensuing year and until a successor becomes entitled to act as Vice Chair.

### **JB03/06/2015 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor I Graham from Newcastle City Council, Councillor K Stephenson from South Tyneside Council, Councillor T Mulvenna from North Tyneside Council and Councillors K Dodds and P Ronan from Gateshead Council.

### **JB04/06/2015 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **JB05/06/2015 Appointments to the Joint Board for 2015/16**

The Tyne Port Health Authority had been notified by each of the riparian authorities of their appointments to the Joint Board of the ensuing year.

Those appointments were:

#### **Members Appointed by Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council**

Councillor G Bell  
Councillor I Graham  
Councillor D Wood

#### **Members Appointed by Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council**

Councillor W Dick  
Councillor K Dodds  
Councillor P Ronan

#### **Members Appointed by North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council**

Councillor B Burdis  
Councillor M Hall  
Councillor T Mulvenna

#### **Members Appointed by South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council**

Councillor F Cunningham  
Councillor A Walsh  
Councillor K Stephenson

This meant that there was only one change in membership from the previous year and the Chair welcomed Cllr A Walsh from South Tyneside Council as a new member of the Joint Board.

**RESOLVED** that the appointments made by the specified riparian authorities to the Joint Board for the year 2015/16 be noted.

### **JB06/06/2015 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the previous meeting of the Joint Board held on Tuesday 3 February 2015 had been previously circulated.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of 3 February 2015 be taken as read and confirmed.

There was one matter arising from the previous minutes:

JB06/02/2015 Schedule of Fees & Charges for 2015-16. The Chief Port Health Officer reported that new recommended fees for Ship Sanitation Inspection had been published by APHA since the last meeting and these fees had now been adopted by the authority under delegated powers.

### **JB07/06/2015 Appointments to the Authority for 2015-2016**

The Clerk presented the report that outlined appointments that are required to be made by the Authority for the year to ensure the proper discharge of its functions and for the Joint Board to make those appointments.

It was outlined that the Joint Board is responsible for the conduct of the Tyne Port Health Authority and is accountable for ensuring both that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards are maintained. In order to do this the Joint Board was advised to make a number of appointments to ensure the proper discharge of accountability and that these be revisited annually at the Annual Meeting.

No changes to existing appointments in existence were proposed.

**RESOLVED** that the following appointments be made for the year:

- a) To reappoint North Tyneside Council as Lead Authority;
- b) To reappoint Mr Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services from North Tyneside Council as Clerk to the Authority;
- c) To reappoint Mr Stephen Taggart, Principal Environmental Health Officer from North Tyneside Council as Chief Port Health Authority and delegate the powers conferred on the Authority by the legislation contained within the Schedule to the Tyne Port Health Authority Order 2010 and all other legislation that assigns statutory duties and powers to a port health authority and to make all necessary appointments of officers on behalf of the Authority;
- d) To reappoint Mrs Janice Gillespie, Senior Manager, Finance and Commercial Services from North Tyneside Council as Responsible Financial Officer; and
- e) To reappoint Ms Allison Mitchell, Senior Manager Internal Audit and Risk Assurance from North Tyneside Council as Internal Auditor.

### **JB08/06/2015 Internal Audit Report for 2014/15**

In the absence of the Internal Auditor Ms Mitchell, the Clerk presented the report. Ms Mitchell had sent her apologies and requested that if there were any queries that could not be answered at the meeting she would respond to them formally in writing.

The opinion received from the Internal Auditor was a positive one in that the Authority was able to demonstrate that the control objectives set out in the Small Bodies Annual Return were achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Authority as a body.

#### **RESOLVED** that:

- a) It be noted that the Internal Audit Service of the lead Council to the Tyne Port Health Authority (North Tyneside Council), has undertaken sufficient testing to form an Internal Audit opinion on the control objectives set out in Section 4 of the 'Small Bodies in England Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2015';
- b) The resulting conclusions reached, summarised in Section 4 of the 'Small Bodies in England Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2015', attached in the report be noted; and
- c) The related Internal Audit Report, which sets out Internal Audit's coverage, findings and recommendations, attached in the report be agreed.

### **JB09/06/2015 Annual Accounting Statements for 2014/15**

The report was presented by Richard Gray on behalf of the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Officer highlighted and explained key variances against budget. The report was agreed.

#### **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The accounting statements relating to the financial year 2014/15 for the Authority as attached to the report be noted; and
- b) Approve the accounting statements relating to the financial year 2014/15 for the Authority as attached to the report.

### **JB10/06/2015 Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15**

The report was presented by the Clerk. It was explained that following an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control the Authority must approve an annual governance statement. This statement was set out within the report.

Following the outcome of the internal audit report all of the statements of assurance have been answered 'Yes' and reflected that there were no internal or external qualification reports that the Authority was required to address.

**RESOLVED** that the annual governance statement covering the financial year 2014/15 relating to the Authority as attached in the report be noted and approved and submitted to the External Auditor.

### **JB11/06/2015 Annual Review of the Constitution**

The Clerk presented the report and outlined that the Tyne Port Health Authority Order 2010 provides the core constitutional arrangements for the Authority but that this was supplemented by a Constitution that it had developed which built on the statutory provisions.

It was explained that the Constitution was last reviewed at the Annual General Meeting in June 2014. That review did not identify that any changes that were required however the Clerk was instructed to consult with the Legal Advisor to explore the impact of local election dates for the Authority. This was due to the scheduled meeting being inquorate, a key reason being that the local elections were later than usual in order to accommodate the European elections. This resulted in some riparian authorities not being able to make their appointments to the Board on time and thus allowing business to proceed.

Advice was provided to the October 2014 meeting whereby it was concluded that it was impractical to redraft the Constitution to cater for such events. The solution was a practical one in that any potential issues should be highlighted at the February meeting with the Joint Board agreeing the steps to take, in particular in relation to being able to sign-off the annual return before the statutory deadline of 30 June.

The Clerk reported that in consultation with the Legal Advisor he had reviewed the current Constitution and there were no matters arising that would necessitate amendment for the new Municipal Year.

It was therefore recommended that the current Constitution remains unchanged.

**RESOLVED** that no changes be made to the existing Constitution.

### **JB12/06/2015 Association of Port Health Authorities Conference 2015**

The Chief Port Health Officer presented the report and informed Members of arrangements for the Association of Port Health Authorities Conference 2015 to be held on 8 to 10 September at the Marriott Hotel, Liverpool.

The Chief Officer informed members of the value of attending Conference to enable officers and members to keep up to date with good practice and current developments in port health. It was reported that the programme had yet to be finalised.

An outline of expected costs of attending conference was given and members were informed that this had been provided for in the 2015/16 budget.

It was explained that the Joint Board had previously agreed that one member and one officer should attend Conference and it was also previously resolved on 6 February 2007 to operate a rota system for selecting members between each of the four riparian authorities. According to the rota it fell to Newcastle to select a member for 2015.

It was agreed that Cllr Dave Wood from Newcastle would attend accompanied by an officer of the Authority.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The arrangements being made by the Association of Port Health Authorities to hold the annual conference at the Marriott Hotel, Liverpool from 8 to 10 September 2015 be noted; and
- b) An officer from the Authority and Cllr Wood from the Joint Board represent the Authority at the Association of Port Health Authorities Conference 2015.

### **JB13/06/2015 Calendar of Meetings for 2015/16**

The Clerk presented the report and explained the requirements under the Tyne Port Health Authority Order 2010 for the Joint Board to meet no less than three times in each year beginning 1 June. Historically, meetings have been held on the first Tuesday of the months of February, June and October each year.

In addition, the Authority bi-annually undertakes an inspection of the port and river but the next inspection is not scheduled to take place until 2016.

It was recommended to the Joint Board to approve future meeting dates of 6 October 2015, 2 February and 7 June 2016, all meetings to commence at 10am, North Tyneside Council's main offices at Quadrant, Cobalt Business Park.

**RESOLVED** that the following meeting dates be approved:

Tuesday 6 October 2015 at 10am;  
Tuesday 2 February 2016 at 10am; and  
Tuesday 7 June 2016 at 10am.

All meetings to be held at North Tyneside Council Offices, Quadrant, Cobalt Business Park with the exception of the inspection of the port and river where the venue would be provided by officers in due course.

### **JB14/06/2015 Operational Activity Summary Report for the period 1 December 2014 to 31 April 2015**

The Chief Port Health Officer presented the report and it was explained that the four monthly reporting cycle would shift one month forward. To accommodate the change, the current report covered a 5 month period and this accounted for some of the increases in activity reported.

The reasons for the change were to bring more current activity reports to the Joint Board in future, and also to better align with service planning and Port of Tyne published data which is used in the reports.

A significant increase in ship sanitation inspections was reported. Water sampling and imported food sampling activity was also presented and there were no unsatisfactory sample results during the period.

Members were informed of a notification received in May of an outbreak of Norovirus on a cruise ship. The outbreak was first reported at the previously port but officers visited the ship on arrival on the Tyne to ensure proper infection control procedures were being fully implemented.

Officers were satisfied that the outbreak was under control and they were generally pleased with the ship owners response to the ongoing incident. There were a total of 44 cases confirmed on board at the time the vessel left the Tyne. As this was a relatively small scale outbreak, no formal action was required and the next port of call was notified of the situation.

In response to a member question, the chief port health officer explained that there is close co-operation between port health authorities in dealing with outbreaks and passing on information as a vessel moves from port to port. The officer explained that there were no formal protocols between port health authorities for dealing with outbreaks but responses to larger outbreaks were co-ordinated by Public Health England.

It was reported that the migration of activity reporting to the host authorities 'Uniform' database is complete. This, together with use of Destin8 and sharing information already held by Port of Tyne had created significant efficiencies. Officers had also begun trialling mobile devices for recording inspections and issue of certificates. The authority is believed to be one of the first port health authorities in the UK to develop use of mobile devices.

An update on Ebola was given and members were informed that monitoring continues for vessels or crew members who may have recently visited West Africa due to the ongoing outbreak. Total cases had exceed 26,000 with over 11,000 deaths attributed to the disease however the spread of the disease has slowed considerably over recent months with only a handful of new cases being reported each week since early May. This compared with over 100 new cases each week when the outbreak was at its peak.

It was reported that officers have agreed with DFDS to deliver food hygiene training to the galley crews of both ferries operating out of Port of Tyne. Also, the Northern Port Health Liaison meetings had been reinstated by the Association of Port Health Authorities after a period of inactivity. Officers from the authority had started attending the meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the Joint Board note the report.

## **JB15/06/2015 Any Other Business**

The Clerk highlighted to members that the Joint Board's bi-annual inspection of the port and river falls due in 2016 (as highlighted in Item 13 when the calendar of meetings for the Municipal Year was agreed). Nevertheless an open invitation exists for any member who wishes to accompany officers in visits to the Port.

The Clerk highlighted that he and the Chair had received positive feedback following the presentation provided by Andy Forster, Commercial Manager from the Port of Tyne. Members may want to put forward suggestions for presentations to be delivered by speakers at future meetings of the Joint Board.

A number of suggested topics were discussed including; commercial activity at the Fish Quay, Port of Tyne logistics, investment and development, and River Tyne dredging.

It was agreed that Chair would reflect on the discussion with the Clerk and the Chief Port Health Officer and make arrangements for relevant presentations to be brought to future meetings of the Joint Board.