

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 7 June 2016 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:

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|-------------------------|--|
| North Tyneside Council: | Councillor B Burdis Councillor A Percy |
| Gateshead Council: | Councillor W Dick Councillor K Dodds |
| Newcastle City Council: | Councillor D Wood |
| South Tyneside Council: | Councillor F Cunningham Councillor A Walsh Councillor K Stephenson |

Officers in Attendance:

Paul Sanderson Read, Deputy Chief Port Health Officer
Colin MacDonald, Clerk to the Authority
Alan Clark, Technical Officer, Port Health
Richard Gray, Senior Finance Officer, North Tyneside Council
Kevin McDonald, Group Assurance Manager, North Tyneside Council
Samantha Jobson, South Tyneside Council

JB01/06/2016 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.

JB02/06/2016 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.

JB03/06/2016 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors G Bell and I Graham from Newcastle City Council, Councillor P Oliver from North Tyneside Council.

JB04/06/2016 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Burdis declared an interest in Item 13 and explained he was a Board member of the Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NIFCA). No other declarations of interest were received.

JB05/06/2016 Appointments to the Joint Board for 2016/17

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 T Graham*

Members Appointed by North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor B Burdis
Councillor P Oliver*
Councillor A Percy*

Members Appointed by South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor F Cunningham
Councillor A Walsh
Councillor K Stephenson

This meant that there were three changes in membership from the previous year (new members are denoted with a * above). The Chair welcomed Cllr A Percy from North Tyneside Council to his first meeting of the Joint Board.

RESOLVED that the appointments made by the specified riparian authorities to the Joint Board for the year 2016/17 be noted.

JB06/06/2016 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting of the Joint Board held on Tuesday 2 February 2016 had been previously circulated.

RESOLVED that the minutes of 2 February 2016 be taken as read and confirmed.

There was one matter arising from the previous minutes:

JB06/02/2016 Schedule of Fees & Charges for 2016-17. It was reported that the 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.

JB07/06/2016 Appointments to the Authority for 2016-2017

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 Mrs Frances McClen, Environmental Health Group Leader 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, Head of Finance 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.

JB08/06/2016 Internal Audit Report for 2015/16

Kevin McDonald presented the report on behalf of the Internal Auditor for the Authority. Mr McDonald explained the internal controls that are subject of internal audit.

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 2016';
- b) The resulting conclusions reached, summarised in Section 4 of the 'Small Bodies in England Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2016', 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.

JB09/06/2016 Annual Accounting Statements for 2015/16

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 2015/16 for the Authority as attached to the report be noted; and
- b) Approve the accounting statements relating to the financial year 2015/16 for the Authority as attached to the report.

JB10/06/2016 Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16

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 2015/16 relating to the Authority as attached in the report be noted and approved and submitted to the External Auditor.

JB11/06/2016 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.

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.

A general discussion took place around the forthcoming Referendum on membership of the EU. Officers advised that, should the outcome be for Leave, the implications were unclear however they were likely to be medium to long term. The Joint Board acknowledged that the powers vested in the Authority are either international or European that have been adopted by the UK as domestic legislation. In any event the result of the Referendum would not impact on the Constitution.

It was therefore recommended that the current Constitution remains unchanged.

RESOLVED that no changes be made to the existing Constitution.

JB12/06/2016 Calendar of Meetings for 2016/17

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 with the next inspection proposed to take place on 13th September 2016.

It was recommended to the Joint Board to approve future meeting dates of 13 September 2016, 4 October 2016, 7 February and 6 June 2017, 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 13th September 2016 10am (inspection of port and river)
Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 10am;
Tuesday 7th February 2017 at 10am; and
Tuesday 6th June 2017 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.

JB13/06/2016 Guest Speaker - Mike Hardy

The Joint Board welcomed Mr Mike Hardy, Chief Executive of the Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NIFCA) to the meeting. Mr Hardy was invited to address members on the work of NIFCA.

Mr Hardy provided a comprehensive and informative presentation. The Joint Board were advised that NIFCA are one of 10 such authorities in England with functions being devolved in Scotland and Wales. The work of NIFCA is varied and includes enforcement, permitting, and scientific research.

Members asked questions of Mr Hardy and thanked him for taking the time to explain the role of the Authority.

JB14/06/2016 Operational Activity Summary Report for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016

The Deputy Chief Port Health Officer presented the report and it was explained that general vessel movements into the Port during 2015 decreased from those of 2014 by 9% to 2,816 which is reflected in the decrease in number of ship sanitation inspections undertaken by Tyne Port Health.

It was also explained that due to the announcement by Government of the closure or conversion of all coal-powered stations Port of Tyne suffered a decrease of 26% cargo volume during 2015 due mainly to the movement of coal. However, the increased demand for bio-fuel in the form of wood pellets is forecast to address the overall reduction of cargo. Indeed Port of Tyne has been awarded the supply contract to supply the newly converted biomass plant at Lynemouth.

Members were also informed of an increase in cruise ship arrivals with 34 vessels expected in the river during 2016 and 50 – 70 vessels during 2017 and the Tyne International passenger terminal showed an increase of passengers from 619,000 to 635,000.

Members were informed that 74 samples of potable water were taken from 20 vessels for bacteriological analysis and that of 274 vessels arriving 40 inspections were carried out with 8 minor defects found and 1 revisit referral undertaken

Members were also informed of a major outbreak incident involving the MV Balmoral which was due to arrive at the Tyne. At the height of the outbreak 327 cases of Norovirus had been reported. Upon arrival, the vessel was boarded by Port Health Officers to ensure proper infection control procedures were being appropriately implemented. The situation was found to be under control with the vessel having undertaken all required procedures to prevent further outbreak.

Members were also informed of several incidents regarding the illegal importation of highly venomous reptiles by an individual from Scotland via the DFDS Ferry and the reaction of that company to refuse the individual further passage on their vessels. Furthermore P&O Ferries of Hull have taken the same decision. In response to member questions the Deputy Chief Port Health Officer explained that the matter of illegal importation of animals was a Local Authority Function however this matter was being dealt with by Police Scotland who had received the intelligence regarding the offence however they believed the individual likely to re-offend and wished to make us and the DFDS aware.

Members asked questions of the officer and discussed the matters raised.

RESOLVED that the Joint Board note the report.

JB15/06/2016 Any Other Business

The Clerk highlighted to members that details of the inspection of the port and river would be communicated to them in good time before the meeting on 13 September 2016. Members were also reminded that should they wish to accompany officers in their day-to-day visits and inspections they were more than welcome to contact officers directly, particularly those members that were new to the Authority.