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Newlyn Pier and Harbour Commissioners

Meeting of the Advisory Board held at 1.30 p.m. on Thursday 18 February 2021 on Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Nick Howell (Vice Chairman) (NH)
Simon Cadman
Paul Durkin (PD)
Laurence Hartwell (LH)
John Lambourn (JL)

Cllr Sue Bosworth
Cllr Dick Cliffe (DC)
Cllr Nigel Davis

Also in attendance: Andrew Watts

	<p><u>Questions from Members of the Public</u></p> <p>This was a virtual meeting to comply with COVID-19 safety restrictions.</p> <p>No questions from the public had been submitted in advance of the meeting.</p>	
1	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Daisy May, Fr Keith Owen and Jason Ward.</p>	
2	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>JL declared a personal interest in any items on the agenda in connection with the harbour as a boat owner, the owner of a business premise situated adjacent to the harbour and which benefited from a delineated right of way over the harbour to the Strand.</p>	
3	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting were a true and accurate representation.</p>	

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4	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising that were not already items on the Agenda for discussion at the meeting.</p>	
5	<p><u>Cornwall Council Presentation</u></p> <p>The AB and invited town councillors reviewed the presentation given to Cornwall Council on the plans for developing Newlyn Harbour, which emphasised the competitive advantage of Newlyn's location and how the plans were transformational, deliverable and fitted the Council's economic strategy. Cornwall Council could, the presentation concluded, act as the enabler for an economic project of this complexity.</p> <p>The feeling from the town councillors on viewing the presentation was very positive. Local planning has already allocated Sandy Cove for employment opportunities, so there were no objections to its development. In addition to the advantages identified by the AB, a new deep-water port in Newlyn would be able to service the growing marine renewables sector, for which there is a huge potential locally following the Crown Estate's auction of sites for offshore wind farms. The presence of a private sector partner, MDL, would also attract national government investment.</p> <p>NH reported that he and Fr Keith Owen had spoken to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, who now specialised in bringing private and public partnerships together, who were interested in MDL's involvement, but insisted that Cornwall Council should take the lead. MDL's director had also spoken of his desire to see progress with Cornwall Council: while MDL could start work on the breakwater, using stone from the Penlee Quarry, before the access road was built, they could not do so without a guarantee that it would be built.</p> <p>PD, however, reported that there had been a disappointing response from Cornwall Council. The basic concept of moving to Sandy Cove - transforming not just Newlyn but the whole of Mounts Bay, linking in with central government plans post-Brexit - relies on the council providing an access road, both for this project and the affordable housing already planned for Chywoone Hill. Since the presentation had been given, the Chief Executive of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP has been on holiday, and there was no indication of whether the access road was a possibility.</p> <p>PD also had not heard from Derek Thomas, the local MP.</p> <p>The feedback from the town councillors was that, although the road could be built with national funds, Cornwall Council needed to be fully on board.</p>	

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	<p>(Apart from anything else, a new bypass removed the political risk of redeveloping Newlyn.) In the context of a large and important project like the redevelopment of Newlyn, the money that a new road would cost is much more reasonable; and they suggested that MDL should go directly to the Council's Chief Executive to demonstrate their commitment to this project. (MDL has already offered stone for the road, as well as the breakwater, at cost.)</p> <p>They warned, however, that elections were taking place in May, and there may well be changes in the council's political make-up; it was suggested it could be more positive about the possibilities of Brexit afterwards.</p> <p>All parties, it was suggested, should work towards commissioning a full strategic study, which would place the plans in a regional and national context and validate its business case, including the Harbour Commissioners. It was very possible that this could be paid for by the national government, for political reasons, and it would be a risk-free option for the Council as it did not commit them to any course of action. It might also open up additional sources of funding, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund developed to replace EU funding.</p> <p>PD agreed to try to contact the Chief Executive of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP (who was responsible for the administration of the Shared Prosperity Fund locally) as a matter of urgency, especially given that they would be going into purdah in several weeks' time.</p> <p>As for Derek Thomas MP, the feeling was that national politicians would be reluctant to get involved unless and until there was evidence of local support.</p> <p>Penzance Regeneration Partnership has grown to allow Penzance to speak with one voice on new developments, and was politically useful in demonstrating community demand to Cornwall Council. They were very keen to support economic regeneration in Newlyn, especially since this could have an effect on Penzance's harbour (for example, by the relocation of certain facilities to Newlyn). DC agreed to add the Newlyn project to the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>NH agreed to contact Rob Parsons to ask him to support the strategic study.</p>	PD DC NH
6	<p><u>Newlyn Neighbourhood Plan</u></p> <p>DC outlined the status of Neighbourhood Plans (NPs): they were not there to endorse projects, but could facilitate projects.</p>	

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<p>DC went through the stages in a neighbourhood plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Public Consultation/Evidence gathering● Develop Plan and Specific Policies● Public Consultation● Amend NP (as required)● Submit to Cornwall Council - EIA Screening/Statutory Consultees● Independent Examination● Amend NP (as required)● Parish Referendum <p>DC pointed out that neighbourhood plans had a surprising amount of authority, now that councils have lost judicial reviews, once they have been agreed, which only happens after a rigorous process locally and external examination.</p> <p>They are intended to be permissive in nature - stating what development is allowed, rather than what is not - and they cannot contradict a higher-level Local Plan (although they can of course embellish it).</p> <p>DC said that the Penzance Neighbourhood Plan was at the second stage. The consultations had been extensive, since all NPs have to be supported by evidence, and Penzance is one of the largest parishes in Cornwall, with 4% of the Duchy's population.</p> <p>The draft plan should be completed within the next three months, so that it should be able to proceed to stage 3 (with minor amendments) and presentation to Cornwall Council. Then - unless there is an Environmental Assessment, which could add another six months - the whole process could be completed within a year.</p> <p>The vision of the NP is broken down into communities - Heamoor, Gulval, Newlyn, Mousehole, Paul, Eastern Green and Penzance - and only Newlyn and Penzance have economic sections in the NP. It was recognised that the harbour and maritime sector was key to Newlyn's prosperity, but at the moment it was constrained by the harbour's limitations. Without these constraints, there was a potential for growth in vertical integration and diversification into marine leisure and renewables.</p> <p>The Sandy Cove development was mostly on land already earmarked for employment opportunities by Cornwall Council, together with the brownfield site provided by MDL, so there was no conflict with any higher-level plans for the area.</p> <p>As such, the AB's plan fitted into the NP. Development of the harbour - and, above all, the access road - also provided the possibility of additional housing and parking, and the growth of the entertainment and artistic</p>

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	<p>sectors in Newlyn, which was not necessarily a concern of the NPHC but was integral to the NP and vital to community support for the plans.</p>	
7	<p><u>Commissioners</u></p> <p>Since the last meeting, the NPHC has been moving forward on the parts of the AB's plan within the existing harbour footprint.</p> <p>DC pointed out that harbours have their own permitted development rights and so would not be part of the NP.</p>	
8	<p><u>Website</u></p> <p>LH reported that he was unable to login to the NPHC website and has not had any reply to his queries from Fastnet, the internet provider. He agreed to pursue them further.</p>	LH
9	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The councillors were asked whether the breakwater could serve more of a purpose in coastal defences across the whole of Penzance. DC said that the NP envisaged that sea defences should be coordinated to create economic benefits.</p> <p>Several members of the AB reported that they had received enthusiastic support for the plans from the local community, and wondered if there was a way of logging this support. LH is working on a way of recording comments which does not require WordPress, and the AB agreed to discuss how to collate feedback at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman and other members of the AB thanked the town councillors for attending the meeting.</p> <p>There was no other business, and the meeting closed at 3:27 pm.</p>	
	<p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 18 March 2021 at 1 p.m.</p>	