

## Full Council Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Cruise Ship Consultation – Harbour Master Report / Resident Representation

#### Harbour Master Report:

'I would like to talk about Dart Harbour's proposal to bring slightly larger cruise ships into the water. I would like to emphasise at the start, this isn't a done deal. We're doing a lot of consultation, we're talking to people, we're doing environmental and economic surveys and some safety work. If anything doesn't fit, we won't go ahead and this is something our board have been very clear about. This is part of what we want to do, to make sure this is something that works for the people of Kingswear.

Our proposal is to reinstate the mooring roughly opposite Warfleet Creek. This was a mooring that was used up until the 1980's to take some relatively large ships and we want to reinstate it and to start using it for cruise ships up to 250m in length. To give you an indication the largest ships we've brought into the River so far are 200m in length, so we're talking about 25% larger and possibly another deck higher.

Our current mooring is useful but it is too shallow and the length is restricted on it, so we are not able to take all of the ships we would like to take in the river. We could allow some ships to moor outside of the Harbour, but this is quite restrictive with reference the amount of space before the ships start to get very close to the rocks. It is quite rough outside of the Harbour and difficult tendering operations, so it is not an ideal one. When we do it, we would swing the ships around outside the Harbour and then bring them in backwards and moor them up to the new mooring.

Why do we want to do this? The first reason is economic for the region. We think it will bring about £2.7 million by 2030. This will be income in from approx. 25,000 passengers, across both of our moorings as we would still be using our existing mooring. Of that, £425k would come into Kingswear Parish. This is money that is most easily able to be identified. Cruise ship passengers when they come ashore. Our 3 biggest tour destinations are all within Kingswear – Greenway, Coleton Fishacre and on the Steam Train. Linked to that we think is the cruise tourism is an exceptionally good fit for the Dartmouth and South Devon area. It's outside of our traditional peak season (the peak season for cruise ships is from April through to June and in September. We can very few ships at all in July and August. They tend to be going further north to the Baltic and into Norway. In many ways they are ideal tourists. They don't come in a car, they don't need to park, they don't need to have houses converted into Airbnb's. They come in for the day, spend money when they are here and they go again, so they are quite efficient tourists.

There will be income to Dart Harbour and we estimate this to be two to three hundred thousand pounds as contribution toward our projects by 2030. Currently 90% of our income comes in from leisure boats and so forth. At the moment it is quite a strong market, but we can't guarantee that, so having a decent amount of money coming in from elsewhere would be very useful.

There are also other reasons which are not financial. Probably the most important reason is that Dart Harbour is a port. It has been a port for centuries. At the moment we are borderline as to being able to sustain what we currently do as a port. To bring big ships into the river, we need to have competent, qualified pilots and at the moment we are barely bringing in enough ships in to maintain the competency of our existing pilots and training new pilots is very difficult. So, we do need to maintain and to grow our number of ships. The only way realistically is to increase the cruise ship business. That to me is the most important thing is to maintain our heritage as a port.

As I said previously, we want to do this right, to consult with people. We are deliberately setting rules on ourselves to make sure that we don't swamp the town, that we don't have ships in on every single day and we don't have ships laid up for long periods of time. A lot of places have done that and had issues. Places like Venice for example have become very overcrowded because they haven't considered what the local community needs and what they can support.

Air pollution - There is CO2 going up the funnel, but it is a similar figure as to what it would be for people coming here by car for example. The amount of CO2 for a cruise passenger sailing on the ship from Southampton coming into port and spending the day here, then heading off is broadly similar to if you drive down from London and spent the night in a hotel.

As part of our consultation, people have brought up bats and bird flights, so we are now looking into that to make sure that we're not impacting the local wildlife. With regards the seabed, we have already done a survey with video cameras etc. We know that it is relatively sterile. We are trying to look at ways we can eliminate any damage to the seabed. We are looking at all the environmental factors that have been identified internally and externally and we have involved external experts to ensure there is no significant environmental impact.

#### Resident Representation:

- 1) There are an awful lot of ports around the world who are all fighting to either ban or eliminate cruise ships because of the effect they have on the local environment and I would like to know what Dart Harbour will do differently to make sure that Dartmouth doesn't fall out with cruise ships and I would like to know how you are going to make sure we don't have a bad experience with the cruise ships that everybody else seems to have had.

You also mentioned about pollution and again from a study they did in Amsterdam, they are saying that the average cruise liner, as far as Nitrogen oxide is concerned, produces in one day as much as 30,000 trucks. There is a great variance between what Dart Harbour have said and this study regarding sea breezes.

There will be significant pollution in the atmosphere that doesn't exist now.

Harbour Master response: What we're doing is setting limits in advance, so that we don't get to the point of upsetting the local community. The pollution figures you are talking about seem very different from the figure that I have received from DEFRA and from engine manufacturers. In a study I was looking at from Southampton for example, the nitrous oxide submissions is 3% of the total of the whole city, so for a very much larger port than us it is still a very small percentage. Specifically, regarding CO2 the equivalent per passenger is the same for a car. For Nitrogen Oxide and for sulphur it's a bit higher, but not much higher. We will be monitoring emissions based on figures from the ships.

- 2) The environmental tests that have been undertaken, have they been carried out by independent assessors or has the Harbour Authority undertaken the tests themselves?

Harbour Master response: We have done initial tests by ourselves and we are going to be getting independent people in to verify these.

- 3) Can I challenge that the car is the right comparator? There are ultra-low emission zones in London. Stockholm are looking to ban all combustion engine cars by 2025. So, when the rest of the world are looking to remove cars, we are using cars as comparators for ships. Shouldn't we actually be looking at reducing our total emissions, rather than saying it's okay, it's only as bad as a car?

Harbour Master response: It is a useful comparator. Cruise ship emissions are actually getting better. Like with cars there is a legal obligation for cruise ship emissions to get better. Its

challenging to get them down to zero, but its something they will have to do eventually, by 2050 like everything else.

- 4) Are you looking at installing electric for the cruise ship mooring?

Harbour Master response: We are not looking at the moment, we have at least thought about it. At the moment it is not practical, but the technology is moving on very rapidly and eventually I suspect it will be practical, we're probably talking 10 to 15 years. There is the element of the number of ships using it, so I suspect if we only have a few ships in port then it is most certainly not viable. If there are more ships in port, then it becomes more viable.

- 5) How many ships a year are you expecting?

Harbour Master response: We are planning to limit the number of ships to thirty. However, that is a limit that we will strive to reach – There is still a lot of work to be done to get people interested, as the competition is huge amongst ports.

- 6) The ships will be coming in on average once per week. The steam train comes in four to five times a day. The pollution from those trains is enormous.

- 7) I attended the Guildhall meeting and one of the issues raised then, was a challenge to you and the Harbour Authority board to find better information to verify the additional income cruise ships bring in. This is information that should be obtained through a consultancy. There are many companies that might be able to help you do a proper demographic analysis of the retail sales going through the town. You should have better financials prepared professionally.

Harbour Master response: We provided in our original consultation document, some relatively detailed figures. Since then, we have spent a day stood on the pier at Dartmouth when we had a cruise ship in, counting shopping bags and talking to passengers. We felt that this was a very good way of finding out where people are shopping, what people are buying, whether they have been ashore for lunch. We also visited the shops to ask whether cruise ship passengers had called in. We think our financial information stacks up very clearly.

Cllr Hawkins advised that a new Dartmouth Chamber of Trade is being established and it may be a good opportunity for Dart Harbour to liaise with them regarding the financial information supporting the business case for the cruise ship consultation.

- 8) Who will be employed to undertake the environmental studies and what parts of the environment are they going to address?

Harbour Master response: We haven't decided exactly which consultant we are going to use. We will start off by liaising with the AONB and we will probably need to look at additional outside consultants. We have on our board a member whose day job is with the Environment Agency and with them, we are looking through all of the potential impacts and deciding ones need independent verification.

- 9) Have you looked at the experience in Fowey and

Harbour Master response: Yes, I have colleagues that work at both ports.

Fowey is an interesting one. On the news in the evening there was a very positive report, lots of businesses and local people saying that the ship was great. The following day, a tabloid newspaper managed to find the two people in town who didn't like it. I have spoken to the Fowey Harbour Master – They had done a survey and there were two people who had negative views about it, none of whom lived in the town. In general, the views are completely positive.

What they are doing Stornaway is very different to what we are planning to do. From speaking to the Harbour Master, in general the people are very supportive. They have had some issues

about the port being open on Sundays because they have some very specific issues, but they are navigating their way round them.

10) Will you be making publishing the results of the consultation?

Harbour Master response: Yes, the results of the consultation will be made public.

11) On the self-imposed limits on the number of cruise ships, if there is any decision to expand that limit do you need a further consultation to do that?

Harbour Master response: We will carry out further consultations if necessary.

12) Are you planning to do any tendering into Kingswear as well?

Harbour Master response: We typically only do this if there is an early steam train with a short excursion, we will tender to the Railway pier. Technically Greenway is in Kingswear and we tender to Greenway Quay. We wouldn't expect to be doing anything more than that.

13) As you are probably aware, we are hoping that Warfleet Creek is going to become a designated swimming beach with the intention of getting the river cleaned up. I have a bit of a problem with having a designated swimming beach, with a cruise ship right in front of it. There are quite a few people that use that bit of the river for swimming.

Harbour Master response: The bow of the ship will be quite a long way off shore. Obviously if you are a strong swimmer, it would be entirely possible to swim there but it is also possible to swim out into deep water and have a lot of space between you and the ship. The designated swimming area will be Warfleet Creek and not the river.