

APPENDIX A

FALMOUTH & TRURO PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held in the boardroom at the Port Health offices at 14:00hrs on Friday 7th March 2008.

Present: Cllr G F Evans (Chairman)
Cllr M J Cox
Cllr V J Rogers
Cllr M A Varney
Cllr M A Vella
Cllr Mrs M Davies
Cllr S D Eva
Cllr W N Sanger
Cllr L E T Jenkin
Cllr P T Martin

In Attendance: Mr A Hopson, Chief Port Health & Executive Officer
Mrs K L White, Finance & Administration Officer

29. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A J Wallis, Cllr Mrs M Ryan & Dr Brian Guttridge, Port Medical Officer.

30. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 2nd November 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31. Matters Arising

(a) One Cornwall

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer referred to the letter, previously circulated, that he had sent to Mr Mark Jones, requesting confirmation that the introduction of One Cornwall would not prejudice the Authority's independent status. He reported that he had not received a written response to his letter of November 2007. A discussion ensued on the best way for the Authority to move forward in this regard and it was eventually proposed by Cllr M A Varney, seconded by Cllr L E T Jenkin and

RESOLVED that the Chairman and Vice Chairman, together with the Chief Port Health & Executive Officer, decide an appropriate course of action on behalf of the board.

(b) Environment Agency

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer referred members to correspondence, previously circulated, that had taken place between the Authority and the Environment Agency regarding the deterioration of water quality in the River Fal and requesting a meeting with a representative of the Agency to discuss the progress the Agency had made towards resolving the problem.

(c) Cornish Sea Salt Factory

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer informed members that, as per their request at the last meeting of the Authority, a tour of the Cornish Sea Salt factory had been arranged in February and had been attended by several members. Further information regarding the visit was included in the Chief Port Health Officer's report, previously circulated. Members who had attended extended their thanks to the Cornish Sea Salt Factory for a very interesting and informative visit. Cllr W N Sanger reported that a further visit to the Sea Salt Factory had been confirmed for 15th March 2008 and that any members who had not been able to attend the first visit were welcome to participate.

32. Environment Agency

Judy Proctor (Environment Manager) and Mark Pilcher (Team Leader) at the Environment Agency, attended the meeting at the request of the members in order to answer questions on measures currently being taken by the Agency to address the apparent deterioration of the water quality in the River Fal. They reported that the actual quality of the water had improved since 2000 and that the current bacteriological levels complied with the Bathing Waters Directive. However, it was agreed that certain areas of bacterial concentration gave cause for concern.

It was pointed out by Cllr L E T Jenkin that levels of bacteria in the water and levels of bacteria in shellfish flesh did not always correlate in the way that would be expected. A discussion ensued regarding the possible causes of the high levels of bacteria in the shellfish flesh and it was accepted that there was unlikely to be a single cause, but probably several contributing factors, therefore making it much more difficult to identify.

The Environment Agency reported that, although they were sympathetic to the situation in the Fal, their limited resources were more likely to be used in areas where statutory obligations were not being met, for example the poor bathing water quality in Bude. However, it was indicated that the Environment Agency, in collaboration with other statutory bodies or agencies, had secured funds to participate in a study which would hopefully determine the origin of the bacteria, i.e whether it was human, avian, bovine etc. Members all agreed that this study should commence as soon as possible.

Mark Pilcher advised members that the Authority had, in the past, refused to carry out additional sampling on behalf of the Environment Agency at its own expense. The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer explained that this was a decision which had been approved by members because it was not deemed fair that the Authority should subsidise the work of the Environment Agency. The Authority had always been willing to undertake the additional sampling if the Environment Agency was prepared to meet the additional

expense. Cllr L E T Jenkin requested that the Environment Agency advise the Authority, in writing, of the additional shellfish sampling they would require in order to meet their obligations, and that the Chief Port Health & Executive Officer advise members at the next meeting of the cost of this additional work.

Cllr M A Varney requested that the Environment Agency produce a strategy, along with a timescale, for dealing with the issue and advise the Authority accordingly. Ms Proctor agreed that she would get a strategy drawn up in writing and send it to the Authority as soon as possible. Members were unanimous in the opinion that action was needed urgently in order to save the shellfish industry on the Fal. Cllr M J Cox thanked Ms Proctor and Mr Pilcher on behalf of the Authority and stated that he hoped to see better cooperation in the future between the Authority and the Environment Agency.

33. Chief Port Health Officer's Report

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer presented his report, previously circulated, for the period 1st November 2007 to 29th February 2008. The report covered all normal operational matters, details of which are held in the Authority's records. Matters specifically referred to were:

- Diffuse pollution source study on the River Fal
- Shipping
- Visit to Salt Plant at Porthkerris and Porthoustock quarry
- Fishing vessel inspections
- Cruise Calls
- Importation of Animal feed, Falmouth Docks
- The Environmental Protection Regulations 2008.

It was proposed by Cllr M J Cox, seconded by Cllr S D Eva and

RESOLVED that the Chief Port Health Officer's report be adopted.

34. Port Medical Officer's Report

The Port Medical Officer submitted his apologies to the Chairman and advised that he had nothing to report to the Authority for this period.

35. CIEH Fellowship Award

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer referred members to his report, previously circulated, regarding the presentation of his CIEH Fellowship Award. These awards had been sanctioned by the Council of the CIEH in 2006 and 2007 following nomination by peers against laid down criteria designed to acknowledge an outstanding contribution to the work and development of environmental health. Members extended their congratulations to the Chief Port Health & Executive Officer.

36. Discretionary Compensation Regulations

The Chief Port Health & Executive Officer reported that he understood from South West Provincial Employers that the Authority was required under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulation 2006 to maintain a policy regarding discretionary compensation.

Given the limited resources of the Authority, officers had attempted to obtain the policy and background papers from both Kerrier and Carrick District Councils as examples of the implementation of these regulations. The policy had not been forthcoming from Carrick District Council but the documentation from Kerrier, previously circulated, was available on their web site and had already in part been adopted by Fowey Port Health Authority. It was

RECOMMENDED that the recommendations accepted by Kerrier District Council's cabinet regarding compulsory redundancy as recorded in CB990 on 2nd January 2007 be adopted and incorporated into a policy to be presented to the board at the next meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr W N Sanger, seconded by Cllr M A Varney and

RESOLVED that the recommendations with respect to compulsory redundancy accepted by Kerrier District Council's cabinet as recorded in CB990 on 2nd January 2007 be adopted and incorporated into a policy to be presented to the board at the next meeting.

37. Budget Monitoring Report

The Finance & Administration Officer presented her budget monitoring statement and report up to 22nd February 2008, which had been previously circulated. The report explained some very minor fluctuations across some of the budget heads and showed a projected net saving of £130 and a projected balance of reserves of £55,972 as of 31st March 2008. There were no questions from members regarding the report and it was proposed by Cllr S D Eva, seconded by Cllr M A Varney and

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 29th February 2008 be adopted.

38. Annual Review of Internal Control System

The Finance & Administration Officer referred members to the policies for review under the internal control system. All of these documents had been previously circulated, apart from the Business Continuity Policy which was a restricted document and therefore had to be circulated at the meeting. The policies to be reviewed were:

- (a) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- (b) Risk Management Policy
- (c) IT Policy

- (d) Internal Control Policy
- (e) Business Continuity Policy
- (f) Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy
- (g) Officer's & Member's Code of Conduct

The Finance & Administration Officer recommended to members that section 5 (Significant Internal Control Issues) of the Internal Control Policy should be substituted with the internal control issues identified and the proposed actions to be taken as set out in the Internal Auditor's Report for the financial year 2006/2007. Members did not identify any other amendments in any of the above policies.

It was proposed by Cllr V Rogers, seconded by Cllr M A Varney and

RESOLVED (a) that section 5 (Significant Control Issues) of the Internal Control Policy be amended to show the internal control issues identified and the proposed actions to be taken as set out in the Internal Auditor's report for the financial year 2006/2007.

(b) That no further amendments be made to any other policies for review under the internal control system.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 15.20 hours.

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Chairman

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Date