

Press Release

For immediate release:

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

The States of Alderney General Services Committee held a special meeting on 12 June 2014 to consider an independent audit report on the Harbour Authority.

The report prepared by Stephen Taylor considered the Harbour Authority in terms of regularity and value for money and suggested that efficiency savings of £100,000 could potentially be made over time through different ways of working.

The executive summary from the audit report is set out below

“The headline conclusion is that the day to day harbour operations are well run and the necessary controls are evident within systems. The service provided is well regarded by all users despite the fact that some shipping charges are known to be comparatively high.

The harbour currently operates at a large deficit which should be a concern for the States in the wider context of pressure on revenue funding. In my view there are opportunities to reduce the deficit and in time possibly bring the harbour back into balance. My conclusion is that, despite pressures on funding, the culture is such that there is insufficient challenge to the status quo. There is a limited focus on continuous improvement or looking for different ways of doing things on the part of States Members as well as harbour officers. As a result, whilst the day to day operations run well, the vision, improvement focus and implementation of change is lacking. For example, longer term pilot arrangements and mooring maintenance are urgent issues with no current solution. With some creative thinking there is potential to reduce staffing and running costs without a detrimental effect on the current level of service.

In comparison with data obtained from other harbours as part of this exercise, fees charged to harbour users are high in most areas. In particular, commercial shipping fees are high and States Members need to continue taking this into account at the annual review time. It is not recommended that these are increased in the near future. Conversely, the States should look at the wider picture to see if any future cost reductions could be used to provide concessions for fuel imports and passenger dues.

Visitor mooring fees are also high in comparison to others but States Members should not rule out a review and an increase here given the relative size of the fee and the fact that it is unlikely to deter yacht visitors.”

Chris Rowley said “the Committee welcomes this report and its clear findings. We have agreed with the recommendations and the Harbour Authority has also embraced the findings. A further report will come to the Committee with an implementation plan so that we can deliver improvements and efficiency savings over the forthcoming period.”

Ends

¹ The members of the General Services Committee are:

Chris Rowley
(Chairman)
Raymond Berry
Steve Roberts
Ian Tugby

Chris Rowley – Chairman, General Services Committee