



TRINITY HOUSE

## **Minutes of Trinity House Lighthouse Board**

### **16 July 2024 – Aboard THV Patricia, Harwich**

#### **Present**

Captain Lance Batchelor (Chair)  
Rear Admiral Iain Lower (Deputy Master/ Chief Executive) (CEO)  
Captain Andy Holt (Director of Operations) (DOps)  
Commander Nigel Hare (Director of Navigational Requirements) (DNR)  
Mr Ton Damen (Director of Business Services) (DBS)  
Mrs Valerie Owen (NED) (VO)  
Mr Alan Moore (NED) (AM)  
Mr Curtis Juman (NED) (CJ)

#### **Present (non-voting)**

Mrs Natalie Gull (Director of People & Culture) (DPC)  
Mr Damien Oliver (Director of Major Projects) (DMP)

#### **In attendance**

Mr Thomas Arculus (Head of Legal and Estates / Board Secretary)  
Ms Jessica Willan (Head of Safety & Environment) (JW) (items 1-2.3)

### **1. ADMINISTRATION**

#### **1.1 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and thanked Captain Paul Vallely and the crew of THV Patricia for their hospitality aboard the ship this afternoon.

#### **1.2 Apologies**

None.

### 1.3 Declarations of Interest

None other than already declared.

### 1.4 Minutes of Lighthouse Board - 31 May 2024

Approved as a full and accurate record.

### 1.5 Log of Actions/Matters Arising

Received and noted.

The Board discussed the impact of agency staff on operations and the nature of risk associated with whether they are adequately trained to carry out some tasks on the ship. CEO confirmed that this risk is addressed in the CEO's risk review report. DOps explained how the risk was managed and confirmed that work was in hand to understand the problem fully so that it could be addressed.

A discussion followed on the status of the TH control and management system and the differences between the systems on the two ships THV Galatea and THV Patricia.

## **2. PERFORMANCE**

### 2.1 CEO's Report and Risk Review

The CEO presented his report emphasising IALA change of status, changes to the Operations Report, H&S Governance, Staff engagement, the recent Employee awards ceremony and the first Servicewide All Hands Dial-in.

The Chair applauded the efforts being made to change the culture of the organisation and asked how progress would be measured.

DPC advised that an employee survey would be conducted later this year and would ask specifically the reasons why people stay at TH and what they like about working for TH. DPC also outlined improvements in communications to and from staff including the planned introduction of an intranet.

CEO said he considered a key measure of success would be if he was able to turn around the attrition rate on the SVS.

Visiting Committee over the previous weekend had been a great opportunity for the CEO to speak directly to staff on the ground or in the engine room.

The Board discussed the challenges of retaining staff especially in the SVS. This subject was included in the Emerging Risks Section of the CEO's report.

#### 2.1.1 CRR Dashboard Report and Dashboard

The Board reviewed the CRR Dashboard which had been updated following the ARAC meeting on 3 July and the ExCo the previous week.

The report now contains a section on emerging risks including risks to TH operations in Harwich resulting from the forthcoming Bathside Bay port development.

### 2.2 JSB Draft Minutes 1-2 May 2024

The Board noted the draft JSB minutes from May 2024.

The CEO explained the key points from the meeting and the benefits of JSB meetings.

### 2.3 Health & Safety Report and H&S Committee ToRs for approval

JW reported that the H&S Manager had resigned and the department was undergoing a reorganisation. The team is being rebuilt with recruitment for a new H&S Manager ongoing.

The Board noted with approval the benefits of the new weeklong safety campaigns.

The reporting of near misses is actively encouraged and is increasing as a result.

The Board noted ongoing work to address the issue of wood dust air pollution at Swansea depot caused by the neighbouring tenant.

JW explained improvements which have been made to H&S in the organisation since she started in her role 10 months ago. Work is being done to improve unwieldy processes. In relation to this, feedback from staff on the ground or on the deck is actively being sought as to what is good and not so good about the H&S management system.

The Chair requested that the Head of H&S should attend the Board every 6 months to deliver an update.

The Board **APPROVED** the H&S Committee Terms of Reference.

AM said the Board needed to understand its risk appetite in terms of safety and the priorities of the organisation.

### 2.4 TH Strategy Away Day – 17 July 2024

The CEO explained his plans for the Strategy Away Day the following day and the aims for the day. In the afternoon there will also be a session on “barriers to achievement”.

The focus of the Away Day will be mainly on making the Strategy tangible in terms of how we get to where we want to go.

The Board discussed a handout explaining the fundamentals of the developing Strategy on one page showing the current state of the organisation, where we want to go by 2040 and how we plan to get there, starting with the first 3 years.

The Strategy will be used to write the Corporate Plan.

The Chair counselled that in his view the Strategy should be launched as soon as it has been endorsed by the Board.

The Board discussed the time scales for implementation and incorporation into the next Corporate Plan.

CJ said that communication was essential to the success of the Strategy with quick wins identified and progress communicated.

The Board **AGREED** that the ExCo should seek approval for the Strategy by 1 September and to launch the Strategy as soon as approval had been given by the Board.

The Board **AGREED** to measure progress with the communication of the Strategy via an employee engagement survey in November 2024.

**[Action: ExCo to seek approval of the Strategy from Board by 1 September and then to launch it]**

**[Action: ExCo /SMT to develop a Comms plan for launching and monitoring the success of the Strategy]**

## 2.5 Business Performance (KPIs)

The KPIs are all showing green with the exception of:

- Percentage of work completed for commercial BSL (red);
- TH capital excluding risk (red)- overspent mainly due to overrunning marine projects from 2023-24;
- Running costs (yellow)- of which non-staff budgets are underspent mainly due to ship fuel costs, staff budgets are underspent due to budgeting at top of competency and several gapped posts due to recruitment and retention issues and delays in implementation of the 2023-24 pay award.

## 2.6 Business Services Directorate

### 2.6.1 Business Services Directorate update

Noted.

### 2.6.2 Financial Appendices A – Q1 Financial Position; B - Management Accounts, Variance, C- Capital

There has been an underspend in quarter 1. The Board discussed work being done to identify potential areas of underspend early so that they can be addressed.

### 2.6.3 Aviation Services Project (ASP) Update

There had been an extraordinary ASP project board meeting on 10 July to discuss questions of affordability of the new contract.

The GLAs discussed their precise requirements in terms of the number of airframes and crews and spare airframes required to service their needs. The demand for helicopter availability has increased in recent years due to factors such as shortened periods when stations are accessible due to environmental factors and the fact that the GLAs all need to fly at the same time in the summer months.

The project will also be affected by the introduction of the new procurement regime – the Procurement Act 2023 which comes into force in October 2024.

## 2.7 Navigational Requirements

### 2.7.1 Navigational Requirements Report including Availability Progress Report and Casualty Return

During the reporting period 21 May to 4 July AtoN casualties had occurred at two lighthouses, one lightvessel and seven buoy stations. These had been or were being rectified. Previously reported casualties had been rectified. The Category 1 Hurst Point PEL light availability remains below IALA standards due to the three year rolling average despite the problem being remedied.

### 2.7.2 Annual Report to Secretary of State on Local AtoN and Offshore Structure Inspections

The Inspector of Seamarks resigned last week. A recruitment campaign for a new Inspector will be initiated.

DNR introduced the report and circulated copies to the Board with the exception of DOPs and DBS (to avoid potential conflict of Interest with their role in Commercial work for TH)

NEDs were invited to review the report and revert with comments within 7 days.

**[Action: NEDs to review the SoS Local AtoN report and revert to DNR with comments within 7 days]**

DNR said that problems with ship availability were having an impact on his ability to conduct 100% of inspections each year.

### 2.7.3 Navigational Risk Report – 20 May – 2 July.

The Board noted that in the reporting period no incidents were reported resulting from a failure of either TH or local AtoN or those exhibited from an offshore structure. There were no requests, as a result of local AtoN inspections, for Examiners to reconsider any marking previously specified. There have been three wrecks since the last Board meeting. One requires a non-urgent survey, which is planned to be carried out by THV Galatea's workboat in mid-July, but none required marking.

Since the report was issued there had been one further wreck which occurred on 12 July off Mousehole. THV Galatea located and surveyed it. No further action was deemed necessary.

## 2.8 Operations Directorate

### 2.8.1 Operations Directorate update

There have been two instances of ships not being able to put to sea due to lack of staff.

The Senior Marine Superintendent (SMS) and Deputy Marine Superintendent (Deputy MS) have both resigned, attracted by other opportunities elsewhere. Recruitment of these roles will commence as a priority. The Board discussed the consequence of high turnover of staff and in particular the departure of the SMS and Deputy MS. This will understandably result in risks to the organisation. A temporary Designated Person Ashore will be appointed.

DOPs described work being done in the Operations Directorate on fleet contingency planning.

Procurement for a new West Coast work boat is now underway.

Risk response has been above target in the last quarter.

DOPs reported the completion of work arising from potential improvement notices and non conformance notices arising from the GIAA audit of Governance and Management of Projects.

The Board praised the quality of the report.

#### 2.8.2 St. Just Lease Update

DOPs explained the work being done to extend the lease of TH's Forward Operating Base at St. Just aerodrome.

A confidential discussion followed.

#### 2.8.3 THV Patricia Contingency Report

Discussed above under 2.8.1

All of the GIAA report's recommendations have now been completed or are in hand.

### 2.9 People and Culture

#### 2.9.1 People and Culture Directorate Update including Pay Remit

The pay award outcome had been delivered including the new competency framework in principle.

Leadership behaviours have been developed and endorsed by the ExCo.

Trade Unions have accepted the pay offer in a pragmatic way.

In the ballot process there was a 5-day delay in the ballot being delayed, this led to a lot of hard work under tight deadlines for the TH Pay Roll administrators to make sure that people were paid on time. The Board recognised this hard work and thanked Pay Roll section.

The Board RESOLVED to recognise the recent efforts of the Pay Roll team with instant recognition awards.

**[Action: DPC to arrange instant recognition awards to be awarded to the Pay Roll Team.]**

The Board discussed the discrepancy between NLB and TH pay rates for the SVS and historic reasons for this.

The new pay business case for 2024-25 will now begin to be developed.

Publication of the pay remit by Government is expected in late September *[Post meeting note, published earlier than expected in July]*.

#### 2.10 Futures Afloat

A commercially confidential discussion followed.

#### 2.11 IALA Update Report

Report noted.

TH will work with DfT to ensure the UK has the best chance of being voted onto the new IALA Council.

The GLAs cannot underwrite the risk of the UK not being returned to Council as the UK will be the Member State of the new IALA in its NGO guise.

### 3. GOVERNANCE

#### 3.1 ARAC Meeting 3 July Report

The Board noted the HIA's draft opinion is '*moderate*' which is positive in view of the large degree of change at the top of the organisation.

The Board noted that the IT Department was able to provide cyber-security training for the NEDs and noted the importance of NEDs keeping up to date with their training.

#### 3.2 Conflict of Interest Lessons Learnt

Report noted.

VO suggested that some improvements should be made to the governance of the Court/GLA relationship including whether it is essential for the CEO/Deputy Master to be a qualified and experienced Master Mariner.

The CEO responded to the points made by VO and measures that had already been put in hand to improve corporate governance and diversity on the Court.

The exit interview report recommends regular NED meetings with DfT at Director General level. In practice the NEDs have found it difficult to obtain an audience with the Director General.

The Board agreed to map out stakeholder relationships at DfT which they would like to cultivate and engage with.

**[Action: Lighthouse Board to map out stakeholder relationships at the DfT which they would like to cultivate and engage with]**

The Board discussed paragraph 24 of the report, noting the issues involved but agreeing that it was not the Board's greatest priority to resolve them at the current time.

#### 3.3 NED Recruitment Update (including VO extension and succession planning)

The Board noted that VO's second term of appointment will end in September 2024. The Chair had formally requested for her to be renominated for a period of three years.

*[Post meeting note, VO was renominated by the Secretary of State for 12 months from 14 September 2024]*

### 4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 DPC and VO were invited to set a date for the annual Directors' RemCom.

**[Action: VO and DPC to set date for annual Directors' RemCom.]**

**4.2** The CEO reported that he was in the process of finalising the drafting of the introductory ministerial note.

## **5. Dates of Forthcoming Meetings**

- ARAC 18 September
- LHB 24 September

## **Record of Decisions.**

1. The Board **APPROVED** the H&S Committee Terms of Reference.
2. The Board **AGREED** that the ExCo should seek approval for the Strategy by 1 September and to launch the Strategy as soon as approval had been given by the Board.
3. The Board **AGREED** to measure progress with the communication of the Strategy via an employee engagement survey in November 2024.
4. The Board **RESOLVED** to recognise the recent efforts of the Pay Roll team with instant recognition awards.