



# Minutes

Name of meeting	FB User Group Meeting
Date and time	11 <sup>th</sup> March at 6pm
Venue	East Cowes Town Council, York Avenue, East Cowes
Present	Cllr Ian Ward (chair), Cllr Lora Peacey-Willcox, Cllr Jane Rann, Cllr Neil Oliver, Cllr Michael Paler, Cllr Lora Peacey Wilcox, Alex Minns, Sean Newton, Peter Carter, Jayne Tyler (Isle of Wight Council Staff) Roger Rickman, Jane Perry, Jennifer Galddis, Nichola Roe, Will Darling, Jill Bredon, Ken Glendinning, Pauline Wallis
Apologies	Jeanie Pelling, Daniel Bailey
1.	Welcome and introductions IW
2.	Minutes of the meeting IW  these were agreed in principle, although NO raised the issue relating to the comments regarding the footprint of the current FB6 being similar to FB5. The group discussed this and AM noted that drawings could be brought to the next meeting to illustrate the hulls of the 2 floating bridges
3.	Management update AM/SN  Management update SN noted he had 3 things to update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In respect of the incident involving the technical officer last year, SN confirmed that he was now back at work.</li><li>• Still assisted by MMSL and there is an extended warranty in place.</li><li>• Trials 21<sup>st</sup> March WSY – looking at potential solutions for chain clearance. The issue relates to a fast flowing ebb tide, looking at tensioning and also looking whether independent drive wheels can be applied. <b>A number of trials being done. Replacement launch in place 12- 5pm Action PRESS RELEASE needed.</b></li></ul> WSY will get a report back and the council able to understand whether this has been successful, if yes a detailed design and full costing for the works will be requested.  NO asked if the vessel had been accepted yes. It was confirmed that this has not happened yet No – further dicussions would need to take place if works would be carried out.  The group discussed chain noise with loose chains and it was noted that there is now an agreement in place to tighten the chains on neap tides (5

links) and as a result the vessel transits better across the water. Noise testing will take place place and we will publish the results.

One member of the group noted that can hardly hear the FB.

SN added that there are new chains are on order no delivery date yet, waiting for the shipping date, early to mid-April with 2 days out of service, noting to avoid school holidays in respect of the work activity.

AM added the workboat will be procured as a service which may provide better Value for Money.

MD noted the FB6 was running 98-99% percent of scheduled operating time currently

NR noted the number of crossings was not being monitored. MD noted the complaint from early February and he had monitored the busy period of 5-6pm and if you just missed it, it was 22 minutes on average, NR noted that this was less than 3 crossings per hour.

It was appreciated that there was a time issue and noted picking up children can be late and having to wait beyond more 20 minutes. RR noted that each stage of the journey would be 7 mins as 22 minutes was the time needed to wait for the FB to get to the other side, return and pick up the passenger that had missed the original sailing.

**RR dicussed saver cards, total lack of communication west side around saver cards, missing an opportunity. Where can you get them?**

It would be useful if they could be held on-board. Also noted that they could be purchased in the post office (for instance) but only the spyvelo shop in Cowes. NO discussed a pre-loaded card. AM noted that this was considered in the past, but there have been issues in the past over fraud. It was mooted that they could be handed out on board, whilst they were free.

**Action consider the potential or to consider cashless operation**, it was noted that this was important for people coming over here on holiday.

SN noted that the ticket machines were contactless. AM noted that the card provides data which is useful and the card has a beneficial cost attached. Contactless costs were noted together with the equipment.

**RR noted that there needed to be more on advertising about these cards he also asked if would be appropriate for comms team to get more messages out about the reliability of the FB?**

JB discussed giving the cards away on a longer-term basis, to make it a more attractive option, **and added that there needed to be a study on how people use it.**

NR discussed being able to buy a card on the Red Funnel ferry.

LPW noted how difficult it was to register in the first place and noted the suggestion by NR of giving the card out. MD stated that 600 saver cards have gone to Halls since the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, where they were being given out free of charge currently.

LPW stated that that she had used the FB today pm the staff were more efficient and the girls were really slick, and stated that it was a busy service.

SN noted in terms of payment and there is a web app which will supply a QR code.

It was noted by KD that there was a human touch in terms of waiting for passengers and, but it did ruin the statistics!

AM noted the crew stopped a lot of the time but had to leave quickly sometimes due to tide issues.

4. You said/we did MD

Noted the issues that were have raised at the last meeting and at the first meeting.

MD noted the service charter had been drawn up he will share with the crew first and then with the User Group. **This will be sent to the user group before the next meeting.**

MD noted:

- Discussed the perception – of the FB leaving later and noted that a PA message could be broadcast if this was going to happen.
- Vaping, drinking, smoking – clearly understandable that this shouldn't happen. He added that the domestic safety manual had been updated and staff are having additional training.
- Foot passengers and vehicles departing at the same time MCA was discussed and PC noted that the MCA rules confirm that that the skipper is responsible for the vessel and the safe operation of the vehicles coming on and off the FB
- Live information available at all times, MD can now update the website.
- Advance warning signs not in the best place, MD stated that the council is taking advice from IR.
- Variable Message Signs SN stated that the council is working on this and taking advice from IR. This is ongoing work and in conjunction with Red Funnel. Red Funnel have been looking at VMS as well. Subject to receiving costs from IR, Red Funnel will part fund 3 of the signs, messages have been supplied by both parties, sizing of the signs being worked on, and costs will need to be signed off and should be in place by the summer. SN noted the lengthy process of changing the signs.
- Shoes and prow noise – the chains are being tightened next week on the neap cycle.

The group asked about vehicles grounding and it was noted that there had been 13 claims in respect of grounding since the FB came into service.

- H&S – list of all safety equipment discussed and the vessel and launch carry appropriate numbers of life jackets.

A replacement launch procurement was debated and PC noted that the MCA licences required and log book, would be difficult to keep up as a certain number of hours were required to maintain this.

LPW noted thanks for explaining and good to get the message.

MD stated that there would be a full day of customer training on 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

LPW regarding the signs and good that RF have kept up with that, not heard about the lorries getting stuck and interested in the MCA approval for getting the cars/foot passengers loaded at the same time. LPW noted that this will make it faster, it needs to be looked at again. **How can we chase up the road works and meeting with MCA.**

NO why can't the pedestrians and cyclists go on first. It was noted that they didn't want pedestrians in front of cars, as potentially this was risky. PC noted bad examples of pedestrian activity. AM noted near misses.

RR raised the issue of 'Seaclear' and there is no communication about what the barge is doing and why it is there.

AM noted the legal dispute that was still on-going. LPW asked about the sales and marketing and there were no suitable offers coming in on the tendering process. Discussion regarding the marketing process and other opportunities for promoting the cards. The group noted that it was strange that there was no opportunities on board. MD stated that these can be kept in the crew room.

JR noted that the 'you said we did' would be a good document to promote

RR asked the council staff if there were now less grumbles from the public. The team noted that this were the case. It was noted there are several people that offer cash at peak time and that that slows the process down considerably. It was suggested that the pre-loaded card could be offered as 'change' and noted people that did this on a regular basis. Suggested no change given. LPW has there been an increase in traffic due to the roadworks and this was confirmed by the IWC team.

Monthly stats 2017 onwards can be supplied to the group. LPW noted ongoing festivals such as the randonee.

PC noted that the crew can't win in respect of the 'change' and change should be given on a saver card. Action MD **Can you find out legally whether this can be done or send a bill instead?**

## 5. Open Forum

PC noted there was a defibrillator on the FB now and staff were trained in its use.

RR asked about risking a good news story in the press and the group noted the bad news that often comes up on Facebook and fake news. The group discussed the randonee and positive benefits on the floating bridge.

PW asked what is the council policy on drug testing on staff?

MD noted that we looked into it and the response was not helpful and AM added that we don't actively undertake this.

**Action: AM Investigate random drug and drink testing**

**Action: MD/PC can you clean the shelter/FB up for gumminess as looks appalling after posters etc are taken down.** PC discussed the need for a proper notice board.

**Action: Press on how the service runs to raise awareness with the public, and positive news about the randonee.**

6. Date of next meeting

The next meeting should be in June. IOW Festival is 13-16<sup>th</sup> and it would be good to reflect on usage after this – meeting will be in Cowes on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Monday. Start at 5:30pm.