

**NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSE BOARD  
NAVIGATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES – 18 March 2021**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Alastair Beveridge	Chair
	Mike Brew	Commissioner
	Hugh Shaw	Commissioner
	Brian Archibald	Commissioner
	Duncan Murray	Commissioner
	Mike Bullock	Chief Executive
	Phil Day	Director of Operations
	Mairi Rae	Director of Business Services
	Peter Douglas	Navigation Manager
	Andrew Stevenson	Asset Manager
	Alastair Rae	Project Lead
	Craig Pake	Planning Engineer
	Karen Charleson	Senior Executive Assistant (notes)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Paul Hudson (Programme and Renewals Manager) and Tom Cairns (Delivery and Planning Manager).

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting held on 9 December 2020 were agreed. A copy will be published on the website.

*Action: Senior Executive Assistant*

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Committee noted that the majority of Matters Arising from the previous meeting would be addressed within the relevant subject areas.

**IOM Wreck Response** – A tabletop exercise was held on 12 January with participation from IoM Harbours, DfT, SOSREP and NLB. The scenarios promoted very good discussion and the feedback on the event was universally positive. A report containing 7 recommendations has been compiled by Commissioner Shaw and it is proposed that a small working group be established to take these recommendations forward.

**Alerts to monitor shored based planning applications (MPPs)** – Commissioner Archibald undertook to contact Orkney Islands Council, Marine Planning section on the basis that Orkney and the Pentland Firth are being used as the ‘test bed’ for MPPs. Feedback from Orkney Islands Council is that links to the NLB on operational matters is good but that a virtual meeting/brief on Policy Development, etc might be worth undertaking. It was agreed that a presentation/briefing on MPPs from Orkney Islands Council would be included in the next SUCG meeting. Commissioner Archibald will liaise with Orkney Islands Council to progress.

**Action: Commissioner Archibald**

**4. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Committee noted the report and discussion took place on the following items:

### Pentland Firth Reporting Area

The Navigation Manager discussed the Pentland Firth Reporting area with UKHO and it was noted that ENCs will contain all the appropriate warnings along with the tidal eddies and races, however they do not supply any live feeds into ECDIS. The Director of Operations has also discussed broadcasts or warnings with the MCA.

### GLA Navigation Policy Documents

It has been agreed to postpone the issue of the revised Navigational Strategy and Marine Navigation Plan documents until early 2022, due to the various external impacts on GLA strategies, including Brexit and COVID-19 and ongoing development in the VHF Data Exchange Service (VDES).

### Whiting Rock

It was noted that CMAL still intend to deploy a buoy in East Loch Tarbet, however the deployment programme has slipped until later in 2021.

### Groundings

- **MV SCOT TRADER** - On 15 November, the Master of MV SCOT TRADER contacted NLB to query whether the Eileanan Dubha light at Kyle of Lochalsh was functional as 'they hadn't seen it whilst passing through'. The light was confirmed as functional by monitoring and the harbour master. NLB were subsequently contacted by the MCA Regulatory Compliance Team.
- On the evening of 14 January 2021, a fishing vessel ran aground on Brest Rocks, south of Turnberry, but refloated successfully. Brest Rocks has an unlit NLB beacon. Following discussion by the Committee it was agreed to review the lighting of Brest Rocks again at the next AtoN Review.

### Rubha Cuil-cheanna

Work has restarted at this site with a planned commissioning date of 29 March 2021. The directional light sectors will be confirmed by seaward inspection.

### Stornoway Harbour

The Committee noted the revised plan for the development of Glumaig harbour at Stornoway. A full navigational risk assessment will be conducted out as part of the revised Harbour Revision Order and Marine License process.

### GLA Research & Development (GRAD) Reports

NLB receive a number of reports from GRAD, including technology developments and light measurement reports. A selection of these have been copied (as uncontrolled documents) to NLB's SharePoint site for Committee members' information.

### ScotWind offshore wind energy leasing round

The Crown Estate awarded six new 'Round 4' offshore projects for 8GW generating capacity in English and Welsh waters on 8 February, split between Dogger Bank, the Humber and the Irish Sea.

As a result of the high level of interest in this leasing round, Crown Estate Scotland have extended the closing date for the Scotwind leasing round from 24 March 2021 to an as-yet undisclosed date.

Offshore projects will be considered as a subject for discussion at the SUCG.

## Eyre Point

The minor light at Eyre Point, Raasay is scheduled for a light upgrade to an LED sector light. The current light has a nominal range of 9M White/6-mile Red. The Committee discussed and approved the proposal to establish a Red/White light of all-round range 8 Miles, using one White and two red rings of LEDs.

## GNSS update

GLONASS 705 was launched on 25 October and is currently in flight-test stage.

## Offshore Oil & Gas Inspection Voyage

NLV PHAROS completed 84 offshore oil platform inspections and was programmed to undertake the remaining platforms in late February 2021, however a weather window was not available for these platforms to the West and Northeast of Shetland.

The inspections carried out did not identify any major failings and a preliminary report has been forwarded to OPRED. Full details will be included in the Annual Report.

## Marine Licence and Sanction Requests

The Committee noted the summary of Marine Licence Activity and Sanctions for the establishment/disestablishment of AtoN for information and as required under the Navigation Committee Terms of Reference.

## **5. ENGINEERING**

The Committee noted and discussed the Engineering report:

### Programme and Renewals

Temporary lights remain at Stroma and Cape Wrath. The establishment of the permanent light at Butt of Lewis was completed on 19 December 2020.

Work continues at Cape Wrath, and Barra Head with Stroma and Butt of Lewis substantially complete. Sound of Harris Fairy beacon painting has been postponed due to COVID concern. There has been delays at Barra Head due to weather preventing materials and staff accessing the site which have now been overcome, however these further delays continue to impact the project. At Cape Wrath progress is being made but there is emergent drainage work.

In the meantime, construction of Rubha Cuil-cheanna is on track and NTM date for the light to be lit has been agreed as on or about 29 March 2021.

Tidal windows were missed for the Portain Beacon install due to weather and a concern regarding local sensitivities regarding COVID however work is due to commence at the end of March 2021.

### Assets

**Availability** - The Committee noted the 3 year rolling availability figures to 8 March 2021. Since the last Committee there has been 11 outages over 72 hours. There has been a number of Category 1 failures.

Skerryvore and Dubh Artach have both suffered from age related issues in charge cycle systems. Dubh Artach has had its single alternator fail and required a temporary portable generator to be taken out to conduct a full battery charge. The hybrid nature of this site with solar panels has to date kept the station operational while arrangements are put in place for a replacement generator to be prepared and fitted. Preparation work to replace the generator is ongoing.

Skerryvore which has a previously reported battery failure has required frequent generator runs, it now looks as if battery 2 has issues and the generator has been running almost constantly. This has meant that the fuel has not lasted as long as hoped and the station ultimately ran out before supplies could be delivered. An emergency refuel was further delayed by a helicopter fault lasting 3 to 4 days. A project to replace these batteries is being planned for the coming summer.

## DGPS

The DGPS system continues to work well. Earls Hill DGPS has a broken antennae wire resulting in low power transmissions, but whilst all other overlapping DGPS stations remain operational this is not an urgent issue. A contractor will attend to resolve this issue. There is a project in the Corporate Plan for 2024-2026 to clear the 4 DGPS sites to remove masts, engine rooms, ground mats and return to greenfield sites. Earls Hill DGPS will be part of that project.

## Monitoring

The Existing monitoring system and servers continue to operate reliably. NLB staff working from home and the Harwich staff have continued to provide 24-hour cover throughout. This was impacted by COVID cases in Harwich and for a period over the New Year NLB monitoring staff were covering the late shift from home while Harwich covered the remainder.

The replacement system project was affected by delays due to NLB router issues. This problem persisted for some weeks and the contract took resources off to other projects until it was resolved. The project was restarted in February 2021 and the top end work will be substantially complete by FY20/21 end. Training and install of 13 RTU has been severely impacted by COVID and will occur in FY21/22. The system will not therefore be operational until later in 2021.

## Sealite

Following a number of cross GLA concerns regarding Sealite product reliability a meeting is being arranged with the manufacturer.

## Net zero challenge

The Asset team have been working with other GLAs on a number of studies regarding carbon reduction. These include, electric vehicle and vessel charging, new battery technology trials and a new power generation technology study for pillar rocks led by Irish Lights.

## **6. NOTICES TO MARINERS**

The five Notices to Mariners published since the last meeting were noted.

## **7. RISK CARD REVIEW**

The Committee reviewed the Risk Card. The following changes were identified:

- Reference to manufacturing defects to be included.
- Brexit Helicopter Provision – should be resolved by the time of the next review by the Executive Group when it can hopefully be removed.
- Earls Hill – check that is covered within the riskcard.
- Aging AtoNs – include within Control & Treatment the investment in the ongoing refurbishment programme.

The Director of Operations will take the comments off-line and update the Risk Register accordingly.  
**Action: Director of Operations**

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Mike Bullock, Chief Executive, leaves the meeting.  
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## 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### Marine Management Organisation (MMO) consultancy

MMO's purpose is to protect and enhance the precious marine environment and support UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development. MMO have approached NLB's Navigation Manager regarding the "Blue Belt" programme, which is a development plan for British Overseas Territory. NLB were asked to provide advice on virtual aids to navigation. A small consultancy project was set up and NLB's Navigation Manager has since written a couple of reports. Positive feedback on NLB assistance has been received.

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Commissioner Murray leaves the meeting.  
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### OWEC Project

The Navigation Manager gave a presentation on the OWEC Project which looks at offshore wind development and the impact on shipping. This presentation was given by TH at the recent IGC Forum.

The presentation covered:

- Increase in Marine Licensing Activity – size and complexity.
- Increase in Staff Engagement
- Growth in Operational Windfarms
- The Maritime Navigation Challenge
- OWEC Purpose
- Objectives
- Core Themes
- Key Interdependencies
- Delivery
- Programme Steering Group Members – TH represent the GLAs.
- The GLA Response
- Project Proposals – Layout, Equipment, Cumulative Effect
- Direction of Travel and Assumptions

Commissioner Archibald asked whether consideration will also be given expand the project to cover tidal turbine farms and largescale offshore fish farms. The Navigation Manager noted that these were outwith the scope but that there would be applicable crossover into these areas.

It was noted that project was still be officially approved. Any budget allocated will be accredited with the GLF.

The Director of Operations will give consideration as to whether to bring this subject to a future Board of Commissioners and/or JSB meeting for information.

**Action: Director of Operations**

### Commissioner Alastair Beveridge

It was noted that this would be Commissioner Beveridge's last meeting as Chair of the Committee. The Committee thanked him for his hard work and dedication to Committee over the last few years

as Chair and looked forward to welcoming him as a Committee member going forward. Commissioner Brew will take over as Chair from 1 April 2021.

**9. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Navigation Committee will take place on 23 June 2021 at 10.30am.