

Harbour Revision Order (HRO) Consultation – Response of Walberswick Parish Council  
10 June 2024

Government is consulting on an HRO for Southwold Harbour. If made, the proposed HRO would modernise and consolidate the statutory harbour powers applying in relation to Southwold Harbour. The proposed order provides for clarity on the limits of the Harbour; the composition of the Board established under articles 6 and 7 of the proposed order and the general functions of the harbour authority, the establishment of an advisory body consisting of harbour stakeholders with which the applicant is required to consult on material matters; modernised powers of management and control of the Harbour to vest in the applicant including provisions relating to powers of general direction and special direction, the making of byelaws, navigational safety, conservation, dredging, works, moorings, bunkering, levying of charges and the use of harbour revenue; and powers to vest in the applicant which include the power to borrow, to establish a reserve fund, to develop or dispose of land, and to grant tenancies. In short, these powers are nationally defined and required to support the effective management of the harbour and of those using the Harbour.

The HRO and related documents are highly technical. However, reading through them, and having attended Harbour Management Advisory Group meetings over the past two years where presentations and discussions of the HRO have taken place, suggests that the proposed HRO covers the issues of most importance including:

1. Revenues earned in the Harbour must be used in the harbour.
2. Governance requires a committee that is not just made up of ESC Councillors, but includes independent members who have specific skills and expertise in harbour management.
3. Requires the establishment of an advisory body (as is operating now) so that there should be voice from the Walberswick, Harbour users, the caravan park, etc.
4. Should provide more powers related to parking and use of the harbour road.
5. Specifically allows the Harbour to do work and spend revenue on the upstream area above the Bailey Bridge into the Estuary. They are not mandated to do so but would be allowed to do so which is better than the situation today. Whilst the proposal may not be perfect, and many felt it should go farther, it does extend the concept of the harbour into the estuary.

It is recommended, therefore, that WPC offer no objection to the HRO and that it send a short consultation response to the Marine Management Organisation that highlights support for the five elements above. Councillor Bassinette would be delegated to compose the response and work with the Clerk and the Chair to have the response submitted in accordance with the following requirements:

- Be received before the expiry of a period of 42-days consultation period. (15 June)
- Be made in writing and quoting reference HRO/2022/00003.
- State the grounds of the objection or representation.
- Indicate who is making the objection or representation; and
- Give an address to which correspondence relating to the objection or representation may be sent.
- email to [harbourorders@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:harbourorders@marinemanagement.org.uk)