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REVIEW OF CLUB SAFETY AND WORK BOAT REQUIREMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richard Jenner & Diarmid Hogan were tasked in September to do an option paper for RIB versus workboat replacement or addition for the club; the full paper is attached below.

In summary the paper concludes:

Two RIBs remains the cost effective number for the Club for safety etc.

While Ness & Beaulieu are carrying a number of minor faults neither boat is near the end of its useful life.

A non-RIB work boat is clearly required for moorings work and would also be more suitable than a RIB for race mark laying and removal.

The Sea Scout Pioneer makes a good work platform but there are serious question marks over the life expectancy of the engine.

A reliable and fast work boat could supplement the safety fleet in a limited role for open events.

The main issue with the RIBs has been the lack of serviceability.

The paper recommends:

The Club needs to improve the serviceability of the RIBs by:

- a. Forming a small team of volunteers to tackle minor maintenance issues.
- b. Impressing upon members via newsletters and training the importance of good boat husbandry.
- c. Using local mechanics who are more responsive than Caley Marina to service boats whenever practicable.

The Club should open discussions with the Sea Scouts on how the Club can help improve the serviceability and availability of the Pioner as a work boat for moorings etc. Purchase of boat by the Club would be desirable but may not be possible. However, given that the main issue is the engine, the Club should at least consider replacing Ness's 40HP with a new engine and passing on Ness's engine to the Sea Scouts for use on the Pioner.

REVIEW OF CLUB SAFETY AND WORK BOAT REQUIREMENTS

TASK

1. The Committee minutes of September 2015 record the following action:

3b

DF pointed out that in view of ongoing problems with Beaulieu RIB we are likely to be faced with the decision to purchase a new RIB sooner than expected.

There followed a discussion on the relative merits of refit vs replacement. RJ had thought this through and felt there was some merit in purchasing a third RIB to ensure two working RIBs are always available, particularly as the RIBs do not command good second hand prices and are still relatively "young" (Ness 2007, Beaulieu 2010).

Other options include purchase of a Pioneer rigid workboat which can double as a safety boat (DH), however there is no doubt that RIBs are superior. The possibility of a smaller RIB was also considered.

Action *RJ and DH to do option paper for RIB vs Workboat replacement/ addition for CSC.*

2. This paper audits the state of the current powerboat fleet, looks at the operating changes since 2006 when this topic was last visited, examines recent issues that have caused a shortfall in boats, reaches conclusions before proposing a way ahead for Committee endorsement.

AIM

3. The aim of this paper is to propose a way ahead for Committee approval that satisfies the Club's need for powerboats for the foreseeable future.

CURRENT SITUATION

4. The Club owns two 5 metre Humber Assault RIBs principally to provide safety boats for dinghy sailing while serving also as platforms for instructing & coaching. Ness was purchased in 2007 (fully club funded after a grant application was refused twice) with a 40HP Yamaha 3 cylinder 4 stroke carburetted engine with electric tilt and start. Beaulieu was purchased in 2010 (fully club funded) with a Yamaha 4 cylinder 4 stroke electronic fuel injected engine also with electric tilt and start. Both RIBs have the same hull design and have been equipped with

extra cleats, towing eyes and in the case of Beaully, extra hand holds and a keel band. After several quotes, both boats were supplied by Caley Marina and have been maintained by Caley.

5. Both RIBs were purchased as a result of a study conducted by Richard Evans, Richard Jenner, Richard Robinson & Roxby Robson (aka 'the 3 Dicks & Roxby') in 2006 as part of the Club development plan that was adopted at the 2006 AGM. The study concluded that the cost effective requirement for the Club was 2 safety/instructional boats and on advice from RYA Scotland, RIBs, were the best solution for our operating area.

6. Both RIBs remain serviceable but are carrying a number of non-critical faults. Ness has a slowly deflating sponson (port rear) and considerable play in the steering head. Beaully has a slowly deflating sponson (starboard bow) and drains its battery unless isolated when not in use; the electric bilge pump on both boats is not working. Neither trailer is considered reliable for road use although wheels, tyres, hitches and jockey wheels have all been replaced over the years.

7. For mooring and other heavy work the Club has access by agreement to a Pioneer Multi owned by the Avoch Sea Scouts and generally kept on a Club mooring during the sailing season. The boat has a 40 HP Yamaha 3 cylinder 2 stroke engine with pull start and manual lift that the Club had gifted to the Sea Scouts (ex RIB engine). The engine and steering on the Pioneer were unserviceable at the end of last year's sailing season and after much self-help by the Sea Scouts the boat was re-launched in a much better state this spring; however, the engine is tending to oil-up and stall during prolonged slow manoeuvring.

REQUIREMENT CHANGES SINCE 2006

8. Since 2006 when the plan was formulated to acquire the current 2 RIBs, there have been several changes to how the Club dinghy sails. The main change has been that the number of times both RIBs are in use together has increased markedly through the expansion of the training programme and through increased coaching activity including hosting HMS Coaching during the winter. This has placed a greater requirement for both boats to remain serviceable and reduced the 'down time' period when more major repairs can be undertaken

9. The number of times when more than 2 safety/coaching boats are desirable has increased slightly. Open events with dinghies such as the Ness Cup and regattas require more safety cover than the Club can generate from within its own resources and in recent years we've hosted a major coaching weekend when 3 RIBs have been used (extra capacity found by using a member's own boat). However, the number of occasions 3 RIBs or more are required still remains small. In 2015 even with 2 dinghy regattas (Club + Laser traveller) and an open coaching weekend (Adam Bowers) there have only been 4 occasions when 3 RIBs or more have been used with private boats or boats from other clubs (Invergordon BC) making-up the shortfall.

10. The 2007 Club Development Plan introduced the Trot Mooring project and more permanent moorings have been laid to replace the individual mooring kits owned by mooring holders that were totally lifted and refitted each season. This very heavy work required a commercial barge with lifting gear. Mooring maintenance was then the responsibility of each owner to carry out ashore over winter. With the trot moorings considerable work is done instead by a small group of volunteers led by the Harbour Master which includes fitting and removing strops on the water, fitting winter risers which allows the mooring buoys and upper risers to be brought ashore to reduce wear and re-instating the moorings each spring. The mid & outer trots require a diver to fit & remove the winter risers and he/she requires a support boat. While some light work can be carried out from a RIB, the hauling of heavy moorings to the surface is totally unsuited to RIBs as serious damage to sponsons is inevitable. The Sea Scout Pioner has proven to be a very good work platform with the dropping ramp being most useful although the lack of internal cleats is a disadvantage when trying to secure loads under strain. The requirement for a non-RIB work boat is proven. While the Pioner is too unwieldy and hard sided to be a full safety boat it can

have a role as a rescue boat in larger events for example being used to ferry casualties to shore while the RIBs deal safety issues.

11. A beneficial change since 2006 has been the earmarking of Club funds against the need to replace RIBs and trot moorings with both sub-funds in a healthy state.

RECENT ISSUES

12. The winter of 2014/15 saw a number of 'pinch' points. Ness had been holed in August 2014 during an accident recovering the boat to its trailer. While the cost of this repair was met from the Club insurance, the repair itself took over 3 months to complete highlighting the relatively few professionals locally who will undertake this sort of work. There was also a gearbox issue with Ness requiring a rebuild and this had to be tackled by Caley after the boat was returned to the Club by the hull repairer and took considerable time to resolve. As a result Ness was out of commission from August to December and the full coaching programme was only possible because a member provided her own RIB.

13. Mooring work was equally frustrated because the Sea Scout Pioner built-up sufficient faults to the point where it was unusable unless towed alongside a RIB forcing the Sea Scouts to lift and remove the boat for self-help repairs over winter and before winter maintenance on the moorings could be completed.

14. Husbandry of the Club RIBs is poor. As there is no pride in ownership small problems go unfixed and the boats are often put away poorly (the most recent example was found in October when Beauzy was left with the keys in and the isolator on which resulted in a flat battery within 3 days since it was used rendering the boat unserviceable). Many of the issues such as gear box problems and steering head wear can be attributed to poor driving practices. Neither RIB is old nor near the end of its useful life but both boats require work some of which would be best undertaken by volunteers.

CONCLUSIONS

15. Despite increased training & coaching activities when 2 RIBs are generally required, 2 boats remains the cost effective number for the Club for safety etc

with any shortfall for open events made-up in the usual manner of inter-club support or by privately owned boats. While Ness & Beaulieu are carrying a number of minor faults neither boat is near the end of its useful life.

16. A non-RIB work boat is clearly required for moorings work and would also be more suitable than a RIB for race mark laying and removal. The Sea Scout Pioner makes a good work platform but there are serious question marks over the life expectancy of the engine (known to be over 14 years old). A reliable and fast work boat could supplement the safety fleet in a limited role for open events.

17. The main issue with the RIBs has been the lack of serviceability. While some of this was hopefully due to a one off incident, it is not easy to obtain timely support from Caley Marina and husbandry of the boats by the Club members is poor.

18. The Sea Scouts are clearly struggling to keep the Pioner serviceable, especially the engine. Some lack of availability last winter can be attributed to the Club not articulating its requirement in a timely manner.

PROPOSED WAY AHEAD

19. The Club needs to improve the serviceability of the RIBs by:
- a. Forming a small team of volunteers to tackle minor maintenance issues rather than relying on a single Safety Boat Convener who has no resources at his disposal.
 - b. Impressing upon members via newsletters and training the importance of putting the boats away correctly (eg taking a 2nd look before leaving), recording faults in the log book, checking the log book before using the boat and driving the boats with moderation, especially until the engines are warm, unless responding to an emergency. Slam throttle changes and full lock turns under power will lead to damage.

- c. Using local mechanics who are more responsive than Caley Marina to service boats whenever practicable.

20. The Club should open discussions with the Sea Scouts (a Committee member is the Sea Scout Chairman) on how the Club can help improve the serviceability and availability of the Pioner as a work boat for moorings etc. Purchase of boat by the Club would be desirable but may not be possible. However, given that the main issue is the engine, the Club should at least consider replacing Ness's 40HP with a new engine and passing on Ness's engine to the Sea Scouts for use on the Pioner. The installation would require cable changes and a battery system for the start & tilt and the Club should consider funding these parts.

Richard Jenner

Diarmid Hogan

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