
PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 19/03/14

Present: Councillor Peter Read (Chairman)

Councillor Michael Sol Owen (Gwynedd Council), David Dewsbury (Hafan Berth Holders' Association), W.A. Partington (Maritime Traders Association), Andrew Picken (Pwllheli Chamber of Commerce) and Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club).

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Wynn Jones (Cabinet Member for the Economy);

Also present: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Llŷr B. Jones (Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department), Wil Williams (Pwllheli Harbour Manager), Alun Jones (Chief Engineer – for item 3(a) below), Gareth Wright (Unit Manager – FCERM- for item 3(a) below) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer)

Others invited for item 3(a) below: Hefin Davies (Contracts Manager – Jones Bros Company), Richard Darch (Foreman – Jones Bros Company) and Mathew Hellier (Van Oord Company).

Apologies: Councillor Mici Plwm (Pwllheli Town Council).

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Consultative Committee meeting held on 22 October 2013 as a true record.

3. MARITIME SERVICE REPORT

(a) Dredging Pwllheli Harbour and the Sailing Academy

Officers, along with representatives of the companies of Jones Bros and Van Oord were welcomed to the meeting for this item.

An update was provided on the dredging work. It was noted that work had been hampered by the inclement weather but they were confident that the work would be completed on time. It was reported that they aimed to complete the work by the Easter holiday but if the work had not been completed then the contractors would complete the work in an area which would not interfere with users.

In response to an observation by a member regarding the amount of dredged material, the Unit Manager - FCERM noted that the problems with the calibration of the survey equipment had been resolved and it was anticipated that the amount of material which needed to be dredged was in accordance with the contract, namely 81,000 m³.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department reported that an announcement would be made tomorrow that the Wynne Construction company had been appointed to construct the Sailing Academy. He noted that work on the site would commence in the next few weeks.

The officers and representatives of the companies of Jones Bros and Van Oorde were thanked for their contribution.

(b) Maintenance and Dredging Strategy

The tender specification for preparing a Maintenance and Dredging Strategy for Pwllheli Harbour was submitted which would be advertised on the Sell2Wales website. It was noted that the closing date for receiving applications was 7 April and approximately 11 enquiries had been received thus far.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department noted that it was crucial that an affordable sustainable long-term strategy was in place. It was added that it was anticipated that the work of preparing the strategy by the successful company would be completed no later than July 2014.

A member noted his support to create a strategy for the harbour that would enable the Council and others with interests in the harbour to plan for the future and he noted the importance of informing users of the strategy.

In response to an enquiry by a member regarding the plan to move the bund, the Senior Manager - Economy and Community Department noted that there was a question mark regarding receiving financial support from the Welsh Government for the work and he suggested that consideration should be given to holding a meeting to discuss the dredging strategy and clearing the bund.

A member expressed concern that only sections of the harbour were receiving attention and that there was a shorter tide entrance because of the depth of the channel. In response, the Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department noted that priority was being given in the short term to the harbour entrance, the entrance channel, the Hafan basin and the basin of the Sailing Academy. He added that a clause in the specification noted that it was expected for the successful company to review the depth and costing the options in full.

(c) Harbour Consultative Committees

It was reported that the details of the changes to the constitution of the Consultative Committees had been discussed at the previous meeting. It was noted that the Council would be in correspondence in the next few weeks with the various organisations regarding nominating a representative. It was elaborated that it would be emphasised in the letter that if the representative could not be present at a meeting then a substitute should be sent and that it was a requirement that the organisations had a constitution.

A member noted that it should be noted in the letter if the organisations wished to continue to be represented on the Committee to provide an opportunity for another organisation to have a voice on the Committee.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that issues involving the harbour, such as navigation, safety and the budget were considered by the Committee.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department added that in accordance with the Marine Safety Code an annual report was submitted to the Cabinet with the minutes of the Harbour Consultative Committees attached which ensured a direct route to the work of the Cabinet.

A member expressed his support to this change as the Cabinet would consider the decisions of the Committee and this placed a duty on members of the Committee to give their observations which would make them more accountable to the organisations they represented.

In response to an observation by a member regarding receiving a response in writing if a refusal was received by the Cabinet Member to the Committee's recommendation, the Cabinet Member for the Economy noted that it was the Cabinet's duty to explain its decision.

(ch) Port Marine Safety Code

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer reported that as observations had not been received on the document, a copy of the final Port Marine Safety Code would be shared with the organisations. It was noted that the 'Designated Person' reviewed the code on an annual basis.

(d) Navigation

It was reported that the seasonal buoys along with speed restriction signs would be installed in the harbour mouth by the Easter holiday and they would be installed in South Beach and Abererch before Whitsun.

(dd) Inclement Weather

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer stated that he was grateful to staff for their dedication and their flexibility in terms of working hours during the period of inclement weather.

The officer elaborated on the damage caused by the inclement weather and it was reported that financial assistance had been received from the Welsh Government for repairing the paths on the beach at South Beach and that it was hoped that the work would be completed by Whitsun. It was noted that the levels of the beaches had reduced and a plan had been prepared for the restoration work on Abererch beach.

(e) Trinity House Inspections

It was reported that Trinity House had stated that the moorings had achieved 98% in terms of their requirements.

(f) Maintenance

It was noted that maintenance work on the pontoons would be undertaken in October 2014.

(g) Pyrotechnics Disposal and Safety

It was reported that a specialist company had been commissioned to dispose of flares. No fees were charged for individuals and it was felt that it was crucial to offer the service to ensure the safety of users.

(h) Moorings

It was reported that 251 individuals had confirmed their moorings compared with 296 last year in the Hafan and it was anticipated that after contacting individuals again that 300 could be achieved. It was noted that 76 had confirmed moorings in Pwllheli Harbour.

(i) Maritime Statistics

It was noted that there had been a reduction in the numbers of annual boats but this was not unexpected considering the state of the economy. It was added that it was heartening to see an increase in the number of visitor boats.

In response to an observation by a member that the figures did not distinguish between actual visitors and Park and Launch, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the information was gathered consistently each year to reflect a true comparison.

A member noted that distinguishing between the two types could be worthwhile.

(j) Budgets

An amended copy of the budget document for Pwllheli Harbour and the Hafan were submitted by the Maritime and County Parks Officer. It was noted that the financial year had been challenging and it was foreseen that there would be an overspend of £100,000 in the Hafan's budgets because the income target had not been achieved but the position was much healthier than had been forecasted at the previous meeting.

In response to an observation by a member that the income of the Hafan was down substantially compared with the last financial year, it was noted that an e-mail had been received from the member regarding this and the Service would submit a response as soon as possible.

(k) Fees and Inflation

It was reported that some of the Hafan's fees for 2014/15 would be increasing but the fees of the banding scheme would not increase. It was noted that it was felt that it was fairer to increase the boat fees per metre and the remainder of the Hafan's services.

(l) Fuel Costs

It was noted that a request had been received to extend the scheme where commercial users paid 1p more for purchasing red diesel and for petrol also but it was felt that they should pay the cost at the pump in the same way as other individuals.

A member noted that he agreed that it should not be extended to petrol as commercial use could be claimed against the business.

RESOLVED not to give a discount for petrol sold in the Hafan to commercial users.

(II) Red Diesel

With regard to the discussion at the last meeting of the Committee to consider selling white diesel only, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that changes to this system would mean an additional financial burden to users of the Hafan and therefore it was decided to delay making the change and it was intended to review the situation in six months.

It was noted that the red diesel supplied in the Hafan had been tested on two different occasions with the tests in January showing that there was 0.1% Fatty-acid methyl ester (FAME) in the diesel. It was noted that enquiries had been made with suppliers who sold red diesel without FAME but it was not possible to receive diesel to the required grade. It was added that the service advised users and sold additives to put in the diesel to reduce the risk to boat engines.

A member noted that up to 7% of bio-diesel could be included in red diesel for use in boat engines. He added that some individuals were unaware that additional oil was available to be mixed with red diesel and that the oil reduced the potential of pollution in red diesel standing in boats which were not used often. The member noted that he was of the opinion

that the diesel supplied to the harbours controlled by Gwynedd Council was unsuitable for navigating boats.

In response, thanks were tendered for the observations and it was noted that research work would be undertaken to examine the supply options. It was noted that it would be of assistance to receive confirmation from somewhere else in Wales which used a supplier that could meet the requirement.

(m) Harbour Staff

It was reported that the spring work continued and there was one additional member of staff for the fuel pontoon.

The staff were thanked for their commitment to their work and the Maritime and Country Parks Officer was asked to convey that message to the staff.

4. Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 28 October, 2014.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.55pm.