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| MEETING | Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee |
| DATE | 23 November 2017 |
| TITLE: | Update on Harbour Management Matters |
| AUTHOR | Maritime and Country Parks Officer |
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1. Introduction

- The Committee's main function is to consider, discuss and advise on matters relating to the management, safety and development of the Harbour and for officers to receive Members' observations on matters directly related to Aberdyfi Harbour.
- The purpose of this report is to present a brief update for the attention of the Committee on harbour matters for the period March 2017 to October 2017 and to receive feedback from Members on safety matters and harbour operational matters.
- In 2014 the Council's Cabinet resolved that the Harbour Committees of Aberdyfi, Pwllheli and Barmouth would comprise: -
 - Up to 4 Local Members from Gwynedd Council
 - The Gwynedd Council Cabinet Member who holds the Harbour Authority portfolio
 - One Member of the Town/Community Council
 - Up to seven other members to represent the various interests of harbour users
- During the summer the Member Support Officer corresponded with all representatives of the above mentioned organisations to remind them of the need to nominate a representative for the coming year and to also send a copy of the constitution and minutes of the annual meeting of the relevant groups. It is essential that this information is submitted to the Council.
- Porthmadog Harbour Committee is a statutory harbour committee and was formed in accordance with part 6 (2) (a-j) of the Porthmadog Harbour Revision Order. This Order instructs that 15 Members will serve on the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee. A full list of the groups and organisations represented on the Harbour Committee can be seen in the Harbour Order. A copy of the Order is available to Members.

2. Aberdyfi Harbour

- In 2017/18, the number of boats on moorings in the Harbour were as follows:-
- There were a total of 78 boats on an annual mooring in 2017. This compares with 79 boats on moorings in 2016.
- On the whole, when comparing all Gwynedd Council harbours, a small reduction was seen in the number of customers over the last year including an increase at Hafan Pwllheli. The only exception in terms of the number of boats on moorings, was at Victoria Dock in Caernarfon where there was a reduction in the number of boats on the pontoon mooring, this was due to mooring difficulties as a result of the increase in mud which meant a lack of water depth in the Dock.
- From the number of boats on a mooring in the Harbour 72% are powerboats with 28% yachts. 46% of the customers reside in Gwynedd while 54% reside outside the county.

- 903 Powerboats were registered in Gwynedd in 2017 and this compares to 1011 in 2016. 53 powerboats were registered at Aberdyfi Harbour and this compares to 57 boats in 2016. 9 Power boats registered in Tywyn with 7 registering in 2016. It is expected that the numbers will increase as the Morfa Nefyn register has not been received thus far.
- 725 Personal Watercraft have registered in Gwynedd in 2017. This compares to 729 that registered in 2016. In Aberdyfi Harbour, 28 Personal Watercraft were registered and this compares to 29 Personal Watercraft in 2016. 6 Personal Watercraft were registered in Tywyn compared to 4 in 2016.

3. Port Marine Safety Code

- In November 2016, the Department for Transport published revisions to the Port Marine Safety Code. Copies of the new Code have been circulated to all Members of the Consultative Committees and a copy is also available on the MCA's website. The Maritime and Country Parks Service reviews the Safety Code for Gwynedd municipal harbours regularly to ensure that all safety systems in our harbours comply with the requirements of the code and our customers' expectations and to Health and Safety requirements.
- The Government's Department for Transport has reviewed and published 'A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations' which is linked to the Marine Safety Code and a copy of this document is available to Members upon request to the Maritime and Country Parks service.
- Between the 19th and 21st of September 2017, a thorough inspection was carried out by the Coastguard Agency's inspectors on the current safety arrangements and systems of Gwynedd municipal harbours in order to ensure compliance with the Port Safety Code. The inspectors' initial opinion was that the Council complied generally with the requirements, however, some aspects relating to recording duties and noting the Duty Holder needed to be revised. The inspectors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Pwllheli during the inspection.
- The Coastguard and Maritime Agency have submitted a draft written report to the Service outlining the matter which need to be addressed by the Council. Once the final report has been released by the Coastguard and Maritime Agency it will be ensured that the Consultative Committees receives a copy of the report. When the inspectors' report is received the Council will have a specific period to revise its arrangements and the Coastguard Agency will revisit the service within 12 months of submitting the report, when it will be expected that the report's recommendations will have been actioned.
- Following a discussion with the inspectors it was agreed in principle that it would be beneficial for the date of the second visit to coincide with the date of the Harbour Consultative Committee. It was suggested to the inspectors that it could be beneficial for them to attend a meeting of the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee and to invite representatives from the Consultative Committees of Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli to the meeting. This would enable Members to receive information from the inspectors regarding the main issues of the Safety Code and the expectation on the Council to comply with the Safety Code.
- It is emphasised that no improvement notice was issued relating to serious safety issues or shortcomings in the harbours. They noted that there was an opportunity to tidy-up the area around Aberdyfi harbour quay as effects and ropes had been stored on the quay in a way that may pose a risk. Concern was stated regarding the number of vehicles that park on the quay side in Aberdyfi at busy times in the summer. No observations were submitted on standards in Pwllheli or Porthmadog. It is also expected that the report will include feedback regarding narrowing of the channel in Pwllheli harbour.

- Although the Port Marine Safety Code is regularly reviewed by the service, it is necessary to remind Members of the Consultative Committees of their duty to submit any observations on the suitability of the Safety Code and to receive observations on the work arrangements of the harbours so that the Code can be reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to harbour operations, the propriety of the location of navigation aids, general safety and the day-to-day work of the harbour.
- No matter or cause for concern has been submitted for the attention of the service by Members of the Harbour Committee during 2017 that are associated to the statutory responsibilities and duties and safety matters of the Harbour.

4. Operational Issues

- **Navigation**

- A detailed inspection was conducted by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors on 2nd August 2017. Compared to previous reports the 2017 report confirmed further improvement in the condition and locations of Navigation Aids in Aberdyfi Harbour.
- The inspector drew attention once more to Navigation Aid N-02909, namely Tywyn seawall navigation aid, as it continued to be defective and required urgent attention as was not on station. In response to Trinity House the Maritime Service has reported that the contractors had specified a date to reinstall the navigation aid on several occasions, however, the weather had not permitted the work to be undertaken. The Service has drawn the attention of Gwynedd Consultancy to this and we now anticipate that it will be reinstalled as soon as possible in 2018.
- The Navigational Aids maintenance work programme has been completed in accordance with the permission, instruction and guidance of the Consultative Committee. An update of the current position will be given to Members by the Senior Harbours Officer at the meeting.
- Two Mariners' Notices are in operation in Aberdyfi harbour. Buoy aid No. 1 or buoy No. 2 were not on station and mariners were advised to navigate with care in this area. The buoys will be reinstalled once the weather allows and when the contractor is available to undertake the work. The PANAR reports are submitted quarterly to Trinity House Authority.
- One report had been submitted to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) in relation to an incident at Aberdyfi harbour. This reported on a person who had fallen from a pleasure boat whilst the boat was navigating within the harbour area. The individual received injuries as the boat propeller hit him as he fell overboard. Fortunately these were not serious injuries.

- **Maintenance**

- i. At the meeting the Harbour Master will present the maintenance arrangements and work programme for the key elements of Aberdyfi Harbour.
- ii. The Harbour Master will also submit a maintenance work programme which is to be undertaken at Aberdyfi Harbour during the October - December 2017 period, and will provide an outline of the work programme which will be undertaken in January - March 2018. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.

- **Staffing Matters**

- i. The employment period of the Aberdyfi Harbour Assistant (seasonal) has come to an end since 30th September 2017. In order to ensure support and a continuation in the service across the county the service is considering extending the employment period of the Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Barmouth Harbour Assistants to the end of December 2017. Any extended employment period would be dependent on the harbour work programme and of course on the result of the finance review for the second quarter of 2017/2018.
- ii. The three harbour assistants will be part of the wider service team and extending their employment will ensure that it will be possible to respond to coastal incidents and assist with maintenance work programme targets at Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Barmouth harbours over the Winter months.

- **Harbour and Grounds Matters**

- i. **Matters concerning Fishermen.** The Service continues to express concern regarding the pots, ropes and fishing tackle stored at the quayside and on the wharf especially during the Summer season. Unfortunately, the equipment and tackle are not stored tidily and this causes a risk to other harbour users. Unless there is compliance with harbour requirements to tidy up the site then the Council will have no option but to adapt the current arrangements without delay and the Harbour Master will be responsible for its operation.
- ii. During the summer a number of harbour commercial users park their vehicles at the quayside for long periods. Driving and parking vehicles in this section of the harbour is a high risk and it will be necessary that no vehicles can gain access to the quay wall and parking on the quay for long periods. Access is permitted to vehicles for loading and unloading goods or fish.
- iii. We remind fishermen who store tackle on the quay to ensure that it is secure and safe and does not cause any risk to other Harbour users. In recognising the importance of the fishing industry it is essential that all fishing tackle is put away in an orderly manner. Once again this year commercial fishermen have received guidance from the Service of the requirement for all ropes to be stored in a purposeful box and that no equipment should prevent access to the quay wall or to lifesaving equipment situated around the harbour.
- iv. A comment had been submitted by local fishermen that the representative for commercial fishermen on the Harbour Consultative Committee had not attended the last two meetings. Aberdyfi fishermen are eager to ensure that their group and industry is represented in all future Consultative Committee meetings. They asked that their association should ensure that a representative attended every meeting to ensure that matters concerning fishermen are submitted before the Committee.
- v. **Quay Wall** An update of the current situation regarding the plans and latest developments regarding the Quay Wall will be presented to Members at the meeting.
- vi. **Illegal Waste - Common land area** Concern continues regarding illegal dumping on land under the Council's responsibility near the Golf Club. Unfortunately due to the lack of resources and suitable providers locally the Service has failed to commission a contractor to undertake waste clearance work. Although there has been some delay we now aim to complete the work before the end of March 2018. As previously reported, some 'asbestos' type waste was illegally disposed on the land and this will entail that site clearance costs will be high.
- vii. It is vitally important that individuals with fishing tackle on the site ensure that all their equipment is tidy and stored correctly. Unfortunately, there was no cooperation regarding this in 2017. We stress that during the clear up any fishing tackle will be disposed if the Service is of the view that equipment is stored incorrectly and unused. It is stressed that the Fishing

Association representative should ensure that a clear message regarding this intention is given without delay to the fishermen.

- viii. Once the work is completed the Service will arrange to install a security fence on the site to prevent unauthorised access. Initial quotes indicate that the unit should put aside up to £8k towards the fencing work.
- ix. **Bathing Waters** - The Bathing Waters of the main Aberdyfi beach and the 'Cemetery Beach' bathing waters will continue to be monitored regularly by Natural Resources Wales, and as part of a wider scheme the Bathing Water at 'Cemetery Beach' also continues to be tested by Natural Resources Wales to ensure that the bathing waters in Aberdyfi are of a high standard. The results of the 2017 tests appear promising and we anticipate that Aberdyfi harbour bathing water has improved during 2017 compared to 2016.
- x. **Safety Signs** The RNLI have conducted a signage review on the beaches of Aberdyfi and Tywyn. The draft report has been circulated to Elected Local Members inviting observations on the draft document. It is anticipated that the Harbour Master and the Senior Harbours Officer will meet with a representative of the RNLI during the autumn to assess the suitability of the locations identified as suitable sites for signage. It is anticipated that the new signs will be in the most suitable locations before April 2018.

5. Financial Matters

- A summary of the Harbour budget up to the end of Quarter 2 together with the 2016/17 final financial report is attached.
- During this period, it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following: -
 - Maintenance and purchasing Navigation Aids and Lights
 - Maintenance of Council moorings
 - Extending staff employment periods.
 - Grounds Maintenance. Disposal of Common land waste
 - New engines Aberdyfi Harbour Patrol Boat (project delayed with a revised target for completion before March 2018)
 - Maintenance of Board-walk path
- **Fees and Charges 2017/18.** Attached is a spreadsheet for Aberdyfi Harbour proposed fees and launching fees for 2018. It is anticipated that the inflation rate of Gwynedd Harbours for 2018/19 will be 1.78%. In order to meet with the budget challenge and the service's income target it is recommended that Aberdyfi harbour fees are increased by 2% on average for the 2018/19 financial year.
- It is stressed that only a draft has been submitted before Members and the fees are subject to the receipt of confirmation from the Portfolio Leader early in 2018 prior to their publication.
- The 2018/19 inflation increase is as follows: -
 - i. Beaches - 3.1%
 - ii. Hafan - 1.73%
 - iii. Harbours - 1.78%
 - iv. Victoria Dock - 1.45%
 - v. Parc Padarn - 3.25%
 - vi. Parc Glynllifon - 3.0%

6. Events

- The following events were organised in Aberdyfi Harbour in 2017: -
- Aberdyfi Food Festival Event that took place on 19th August 2017. Due to the forecast of inclement weather it was necessary to change the main festival's location. It is hoped that the festival will continue and will be staged once again in 2018.
- Annual events organised by Dyfi Yacht Club volunteers. Several events throughout the season.
- Events organised by Dyfi Rowing Club volunteers.
- August Bank Holiday - (Dyfi Fest) Event organised by a community group. Activities permitted on the quay as part of this event will need to be reviewed as the service has a concern about some of the activities. We will discuss this with the organisers in 2018.