

MEETING	Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	22 March 2018
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR	Maritime and Country Parks Officer

1. Port Marine Safety Code

- 1.1 The Safety Code is a 'live document' and is regularly reviewed by Service's harbour staff. It is also necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of the Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Safety Code, as well as observations on its contents regularly, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to harbour activities, standard of aids to navigation, suitability of the by-laws, safety and day to day general work at Aberdyfi Harbour.
- 1.2 Between the 19th and 21st of September 2017, a thorough inspection was carried out by Coastguard Agency's inspectors on the current safety arrangements and systems at Gwynedd municipal harbours in order to ensure compliance with the Port Safety Code.
- 1.3 Following a review by the Coastguard Agency that took place in September 2017, the Service has received a report following the inspection by external experts. A copy of the report is appended and the Service will act on the inspectors' recommendations during the next few months. The Committee's observations are welcomed on the contents of the report.
- 1.4 As reported to this Consultative Committee in the Autumn, the inspectors' initial opinion was that the Council complied generally with the requirements, however, some aspects needed to be adapted relating to recording duties and noting who is the Duty Holder and the Designated Person. It is anticipated that this will need to be discussed further within the Council and that the Duty Holder's responsibility will transfer to the Council's Cabinet in due course.
- 1.5 Regarding the Designated Person, the Council has received support from Conwy Council and the Designated Person for Gwynedd harbours will be Conwy's Harbour Master. It is essential that the Designated Person does not have a connection with the Council or the Harbour Authority in order that he/she is totally independent.
- 1.6 During the inspection the inspectors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog (centre of inspection work) and Pwllheli. They did not visit Barmouth due to time restrictions.
- 1.7 It is emphasised that no improvement notice was issued relating to serious safety issues or arrangements; standards or shortcomings in the harbours. The inspectors 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. These matters have been acted upon by Service staff during the winter months. Observations were submitted regarding the lack of width of the navigation channel in Pwllheli harbour, although it is not anticipated that this would technically be a matter within the inspection procedure. No observations were submitted on safety matters in Porthmadog harbour.
- 1.8 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 it is relevant to harbour operations and is locally appropriate.

1.9 The Coastguard Agency inspectors will re-visit the Council next autumn. A review follow-up is proposed on a date when the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee is held, where members of all Gwynedd Harbour Consultative Committees will be invited to receive a presentation by the inspectors on matters associated to the Port Marine Safety Code. This will also be an opportunity for Members of the Consultative Committees to question experts on matters concerning the Port Marine Safety Code and for the Inspectors to confirm the responsibilities for the contents and operation of the Safety Code.

2. Navigation Matters

2.1.1 It is anticipated that a detailed inspection of Aberdyfi aids to navigation will be conducted by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors on 14th August 2018.

2.1.2 Currently there are Two Mariners' Notices in operation in Aberdyfi harbour.

2.1.3 Notice No. 1 - 12/01/2018 - 52°32.290' N 004°04.637' W Starboard Navigation Aid - No. 3 QFl G is not on station

2.1.4 Notice No. 2 - 05/02/2018 - 52°32.469' N 004°02.861' W Navigation Aid YSM 4 knots - YSM FL.Y 2s- is not on station.

2.1.5 It is proposed to ensure that the maintenance work on the Fairway Buoy is completed in the next few weeks to ensure that the buoy is ready to be re-located in the bay.

2.1.6 The Navigational Aids maintenance work programme for the Harbour has been completed in accordance with the agreement, instruction and guidance of the Consultative Committee. An update of the current situation will be given to Members by the Senior Harbours Officer at the meeting.

2 Maintenance

2.2.1 At the meeting the Harbour Master will present the maintenance arrangements and work programme for the key elements of Aberdyfi Harbour.

2.2.2 The Harbour Master will also submit a maintenance work programme to be undertaken at Aberdyfi Harbour during January - March 2018, and will provide an outline of the work programme to be undertaken in October - December 2018. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.

2.2.3 Unfortunately, due to technical matters there was no suitable vehicle available to complete some tasks. It is confirmed that the Council has invested significantly and the service has received three new vehicles to serve the County's beaches in the future. One vehicle is located in Aberdyfi to serve the area south of Friog.

2.2.4 The moorings contractor has commenced work to re-locate moorings in Aberdyfi harbour. Although it is not anticipated that many boats will be launched before Easter, the contractor is aiming to ensure that some moorings are available for mariners if boats intend to launch. All Council visitor moorings have been maintained to the expected standard. It is essential that the moorings contractor submits a Mooring Quality Certificate to the Harbour Master prior to mooring any boat. This is a requirement under the Harbour By-law.

- 2.2.5 **Boardwalk** - The Boardwalk, that leads across the sand dunes near the golf course, has been closed due to serious deficiencies in the structure. Several key stakes have deteriorated which means that the path is unsafe for use and has been closed temporarily. The public continue to visit the beach and walk parallel to the Boardwalk but unfortunately this will cause damage and erosion to the sand dunes. The path is not a public footpath and therefore there is no statutory requirement for the boardwalk to be repaired.
- 2.2.6 As the Boardwalk is popular and vitally important to safeguard the sand dunes, the Service will make preparations to maintain the path during the next few months. It is proposed to strengthen the Boardwalk by using plastic stakes. Unfortunately, due to the lack of resources we cannot specify a date when the boardwalk will re-open. As the position of the service budget is serious we will need to seek local financial support to contribute to the maintenance costs of the Boardwalk.
- 2.2.7 The Cemetery Beach has been identified under the Bathing Water Directive and the water is monitored regularly during the bathing season by Natural Resources Wales. As the cemetery beach is a bathing water beach we anticipate that the use of the beach will increase and this means that we need to consider the most suitable path to reach the beach. The service has a supply of Sand Ladders and the Senior Beaches Officer will consider the suitability of these for the site.
- 2.3 **Picnic Island (Bryn Llestair)** - The footbridge that crosses over to Picnic Island (Bryn Llestair) continues to cause concern. Although the main structure of the bridge is in a safe condition, the timbers on the surface of the bridge have deteriorated. It is proposed to re-surface the main section of the bridge with plastic material as used on the surface of the boat pontoon. Despite submitting an application for financial assistance no capital funding was received for the work. The bridge is inspected regularly by engineers from the Gwynedd Consultancy Unit. The inspections are very important to ensure public safety and as the bridge crosses the main rail of the Cambrian Railway line.
- 2.4 **Pontoon** - During the strong winds that had a disastrous impact and caused serious damage at Holyhead marina, less damage was caused to the pontoon at Aberdyfi harbour. We do not anticipate that it will be possible to restore the pontoon and it will be necessary to find alternative ways to store tenders in the Church Bay area in the future. Unfortunately, some floats were significantly damaged and caused litter pollution in a section of the harbour. Staff have attempted to clear the litter, however, it is anticipated that the polystyrene balls will be seen on the foreshore for a long time.
- 2.4.1 **Safety Signs** - The Service, jointly with the RNLI and a local representative from the Lifeboat, has completed a detailed review of all the safety signage around the Aberdyfi harbour area and Tywyn beach. In response to the inspection and in consultation with the RLNI, the Service intends to order new signage that will be erected on several sites around the harbour and near the beach in Aberdyfi.
- 2.4.2 The Service will consult further with Local members in Tywyn as minor amendments may be required to the information presented on the signs. It is anticipated that Aberdyfi signs will be in place prior to the May Bank Holiday and Tywyn signs will be in place before the main summer holidays. The Service, jointly with the RNLI has completed a detailed review of all the signs at the county's main beaches, and during 2018 we intend to extend the programme to renew signage to include every beach designated as Bathing Water.
- 2.4.3 Between both sites it is anticipated that the total cost of the signage will be £12,500 with the design and preparatory work, namely preparing templates, at £500 (ex VAT). Due to the nature of Aberdyfi beach it is anticipated that it will be necessary to take some signs

down from the site during the winter months to reduce any damage that may be caused by inclement weather. The expenditure was funded partly via the TAIS scheme, namely the Welsh Government Tourism fund.

- 2.4.4 **Beach Leaflet** - attached is a beach/harbour leaflet that was recently reviewed and we request the Members' views on the contents of the leaflet. It is proposed to produce the leaflet before Whitsun. The Plan will also be exhibited on signs in suitable sites.
- 2.4.5 **F.L.A.G -2018 (Fisheries Local Action Group)**. The new F.L.A.G. period has commenced in Wales and an Officer has been appointed via an arrangement by Ceredigion Council, to lead the project. Subject to the Chair's permission, the Chair of the FLAG Group will attend the meeting to report to this committee on F.L.A.G. matters. No further details regarding the F.L.A.G programme have been received thus far. The service will assist the group in order to ensure the success of any events organised in Aberdyfi. It is understood that only applications for revenue grant assistance will receive FLAG approval, and not applications for capital financial assistance.
- 2.4.6 **Sand Removal - 2018**. It is envisaged that sand removal from the beach will commence on the 12th of March 2018. The period and size of the work will be dependent on the quantity of sand that has accumulated in the area. It is anticipated that the accumulated sand on the Car Park and on the small 'promenade' will also be cleared as part of the contract. In order to try and prevent sand from blowing off the beach towards the car park and the high street, harbour staff have extended the fence near the side of the promenade.
- 2.4.7 **Containers** - Several containers used to store sailboarding and canoeing equipment are parked on land near the Yacht Club's compound. The containers are on Council land and not on land leased to a third party. Owners of the containers have had unauthorised use of the site for some time.
- 2.4.8 The condition of a number of the containers is a matter of concern, and there has been no obvious attempt made to maintain the site or the containers by the owners. Due to the lack of maintenance and a lack of information regarding who owns these containers, the Council via the Harbour Master will take steps to remove the containers from the site unless the owners submit their full details to the Council and agree to pay an annual fee for the right to place the container on the site.

2.5 **Staffing Matters**

- 2.5.1 The employment period of the Aberdyfi Harbour Assistant (seasonal) ended on the 30th September 2017. As reported in the autumn, the employment contract was extended up until 31 December, 2017 for three days a week. In order to ensure the continuation of the service and the completion of key work the post has been extended on the basis of three days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) until the end of March 2018. It is hoped that Harbour Assistants posts at Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Porthmadog will return to be full-time in April 2018 until 30 September 2018.
- 2.5.2 Despite the serious financial position and the cut in the Service budget it is proposed to appoint a Beach Assistant for Aberdyfi in 2018. Although a Beach Assistant will be appointed no application will be submitted for a Beach Award for Aberdyfi Beach in the future. It is the Council's decision to submit applications for a beach award where the quality of bathing waters attains the 'Excellent' standard. Bathing water quality in Aberdyfi reaches the 'Satisfactory' standard. This is extremely heartening as in the past the standard of water quality did not reach the lowest standard.

- 2.5.3 **Quay Wall** An update regarding the plans and latest developments about the Quay Wall will be presented for Members' attention at the meeting. Posters have been distributed locally drawing the public's attention to a 'Drop In' session held by the Council where there will be an opportunity for the public to discuss the plans with engineers from Gwynedd Consultancy. The 'Drop In' session will take place at Neuadd Dyfi between 14.00 and 19.00 hours on 22nd March 2018. Everyone is welcome. A copy of the poster is attached for information.
- 2.5.4 **Common Land / Storage Waste** Work to clear the site where waste had been deposited illegally has commenced. The appointed contractor has cleared an extensive section of the site, however, there is asbestos waste and pots, a fridge and freezer that still need to be disposed. There will be an additional cost attached to this and the service will organise this work soon.
- 2.5.5 As reported to Committee in October, it is vitally important that individuals with fishing tackle on the site ensure that all their equipment is tidy and stored correctly. Unfortunately, there has been no cooperation with this locally. In the second campaign it is stressed that any fishing tackle will be disposed of if the Service is of the view that the equipment is stored incorrectly and unused.
- 2.5.6 Unfortunately, we continue to stress once again the requirement for the fishermen, the Fishing Association representative and other representatives to ensure that a clear message regarding this intention is given without delay to the fishermen. Despite our warnings, no attempt has been made by the fishermen to clear materials or to store equipment tidily on the site.
- 2.5.7 The cost of the initial work was as follows: - Hire of plant = £410.00. Skip hire = £100 (x5 skips) with the cost of waste disposal at £150 per tonne. 30 tonnes of waste was transported for landfill and this means that the landfill cost is £4,500. Contractor work cost = £2,450.00. All costs exc. VAT
- 2.6 **Fees and Charges 2018/19.** The spreadsheet for the proposed fees in 2018 in Aberdyfi Harbour, has already been submitted to the Harbour Committee requesting Members' observations. Although it was reported that the inflation rate of Gwynedd Harbours for 2018/19 would be 1.78% the inflation percentage has been reviewed following a number of factors that have an impact on inflation. It is confirmed that the inflation rate for Aberdyfi Harbour in 2018/19 will increase to 3.44% with the average inflation for Gwynedd harbours at 2.9%. This means that the harbour's income target will increase to a target of £25,560 in 2018/19. The total income target of the Maritime Service is £2,073,000.
- 2.7 As the service has already corresponded with harbour customers it is proposed to suggest that the fees and charges continue to increase by 2% on average in the 2018/19 financial year. As a result of the challenging targets and as there might be a deficit in income it will be necessary to ensure that the Service identifies alternative income opportunities and reduces possible expenditure during the next financial year.
- 2.8 The 2018/19 inflation increase for Maritime and Country Parks is as follows: -

	<u>Original Inflation</u>	<u>Reviewed Inflation</u>
• Beaches-	3.10%	4.43%
• Hafan -	1.73%	2.50%
• Pwllheli -	1.78%	2.53%
• Harbours -	1.78%	2.90%
• Aberdyfi -	1.78%	3.44%
• Victoria Dock -	1.45%	2.08%
• Parc Padarn -	3.25%	3.73%
• Parc Glynllifon-	3.00%	3.89%

3 Financial Matters

- 3.2 A balance sheet reporting on the financial position of Aberdyfi harbour up to the end of February 2018 will be circulated at the meeting.
- 3.3 The service will continue to commit financial resources for the following:-
- Maintenance and purchasing of Navigation Aids and Lamps. Purchase of new chains
 - Maintenance of equipment and furniture.
 - Maintenance of boat and boat trailer
 - Extending staff employment periods.
 - Grounds Maintenance.
 - New engines Aberdyfi Harbour Patrol Boat. Delay with project with intention to complete before end of May 2018.