

PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 15/10/19

Present: Councillor Hefin Underwood (Chair)

W. A. Partington (Maritime Traders Association), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club), Michael Sol Owen (representing Plas Heli), Councillor Mici Plwm (Pwllheli Town Council) and Councillor Gareth Thomas (Cabinet Member – Economic Development).

Also in attendance: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Llŷr B. Jones (Senior Manager – Economy and Community), Wil Williams (Pwllheli Harbour and Hafan Manager) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democratic Services Officer).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to re-elect Councillor Hefin Underwood as Chair of this Committee for the year 2019/20.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to re-elect Councillor Peter Read as Vice-chair of this Committee for the year 2019/20.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Peter Read, David Dewsbury (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association), and Alwyn Roberts (RNLI).

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

5. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee, held on 26 March 2019, as a true record.

A request was made for the results of the hydrographic survey conducted in March 2019 to be shared with members.

7. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

(a) A report was presented by the Maritime and Country Parks Officer and the Harbour Manager giving a brief update to the Committee on harbour matters for the period from March 2019 – October 2019. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

- That a detailed inspection of Pwllheli's navigational aids was to be undertaken by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors in October 2019. The officers did not foresee any issues.

- That developments such as a new weather station, web cameras and upgrading broadband improved customers' access to timely information
- That Parking and Launching companies were launching a number of boats without displaying appropriate PW and PC registration stickers. **It was suggested that the Maritime Traders Association representative should discuss with the companies and encourage them to register**
- That Hafan and Harbour customers had welcomed the self-service facility for red diesel fuel. Despite this, following a consultation and the action of the European Union Justice Court regarding diesel fuel used in private pleasure boats, and the decision that the UK would not be able to supply red diesel; it was possible that Hafan would be required only to provide a white diesel supply in the future. If any changes occurred, officers would notify users at once.
- That maintenance work on the North Quay had become more difficult over the last few years, with a lack of resources, funding and staff to complete the necessary works. **Officers were urged to give due attention to the area and to hold discussions with the Highways and Municipal Department regarding the sharing of responsibilities for maintenance work.**
- Reference was made to a brief summary of the Harbour and Hafan's budgets and current financial situation up to the end of September 2019.
- It was recommended that the Hafan Pwllheli and Outer Harbour fees should be raised by 2% for 2020. **The recommendation was accepted.**
- It was recommended that daily launching fees should be increased from £10 to £15. It was highlighted that launching fees had not increased in over 18 years, and that this increase would be a boost to increasing income. It was reiterated that there would be no amendments to the other fees. **The recommendation was accepted with a request for officers to encourage users to register and use the service.**
- The number of boats stored onshore over a number of years had added to the boat storage problem. **It was suggested that the situation be reviewed, with consideration given to charging rent depending on the length of the 'onshore stay' period.**
- That the Hafan's accounting system was now based at the Gwynedd Council Income Department, Caernarfon. As a result, it was reported that it would be possible to cancel the additional fee of 5% for the cost of an annual mooring in the Hafan by direct debit payments.
- That work had now commenced on the new RNLI lifeboat station. It was reported that Wynne Construction was responsible for this development. It was reiterated that this would be a new and exciting attraction for the local area.
- The British Dragon Association event and the Jester Challenge had been successful.
- An update was received on Plas Heli events, in which it was reported that 1060 competitors had taken part in events; eight major competitions had been held; and that the Sailing Association had 31 young members (four of whom represented Wales). Eight weddings and 18 funerals / funeral teas had been held; between three and five meetings were held weekly by various associations; 27 members of staff worked there at busy times. It was agreed that Plas Heli was certainly a boost to the local economy. The Pwllheli Sailing Club representative noted that landscaping work had been completed for the beach car park and the quay, along with drainage improvement works; and that three flagpoles were to be moved to the Plas Heli entrance to add colour. **It was suggested that more signs were needed to direct visitors / residents to the café.**

RESOLVED to note and accept the report.

8. UPDATE ON SAFETY CODE AND DREDGING MATTERS

- **Port Marine Safety Code**

Following the Consultative Committees' decision that an item on the Safety Code was to be a standing item on the agenda of every meeting of the Consultative Committees, an update was received on safety code matters. It was explained that the Maritime and Country Parks Service reviewed the Safety Code for the municipal harbours of Gwynedd on a regular basis to ensure that all safety systems at the harbours complied with the requirements of the code, the expectations of customers; and conformed to Health and Safety requirements.

Members were reminded that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Chief Auditor had carried out a follow-up review of the safety procedures and systems at Gwynedd's municipal harbours in March 2019. It was confirmed that the Council conformed to expectations. It was highlighted that no issue or cause of concern had been submitted for the attention of the service by Members of the Harbour Committee in 2019, to date, in relation to the Harbour's statutory responsibilities and duties.

- **Dredging**

Following an invitation to tender on Sell2Wales, it was reported that the work of restoring Grwyn y Crud had been offered to the Jennings company for approximately £225,000. It was noted that, despite completing the necessary preparatory work for submitting an application for a Marine Licence to Natural Resources Wales, the licence had not been received (although a draft of the confirmation had been received). Members were reminded that it was essential to receive a Marine Licence as the footprint of the groyne extended beyond the existing footprint. It was noted that there was no intention to extend the nose of the groyne (this would mean additional costs and a time restriction of up to 10 years). It was added that the development was well designed and that the news was encouraging. The original groyne was to be demolished, and the new groyne built of stone.

In response to the plan, disappointment was expressed that there was no way of structuring and extending the nose of the groyne, as this would be an ideal solution, in accordance with the true need. Although it was accepted that there was a need for the work to commence, it was also suggested that there should be an effort to forward-plan for a long-term solution. **It was proposed that the Assembly Member Dafydd Elis Thomas, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism (Dwyfor and Meirionnydd constituency) should be contacted to draw attention to Natural Resources Wales' strict regulations, along with obstacles in environmental legislation and policies preventing the construction of effective groynes. It was reiterated that the Harbour was a valuable resource to attract tourists into the area, which was of economic benefit to the County.**

- **Distillation Lagoon**

It was noted that around 18,000 cubic metres of material had been dredged from the harbour basin and channel, and that alternative methods of sediment disposal would need to be considered before starting the next campaign.

- **Dredging Work**

It was noted that the 'Royal Smals' company had completed the dredging work in the navigation channel and in the Hafan/Plas Heli basin. It was reported that the price for the work was £140,000, and that the company had worked in an effective and convenient manner, without impacting upon the harbour's operations in any way.

- **Sand Mound**

It was reported that the sand mound near the Harbour entrance was almost full and that it was not possible to undertake any substantial additional dredging work until the sand and gravel had been removed from the site. It was noted that the Council was

in the process of advertising opportunities for companies to purchase the sand through Sell2Wales. It was also noted that discussions had been held with Natural Resources Wales regarding the relocation of the sand to the nearby beaches of Abererch and Traeth Crugan. It was added that Gwynedd Council would have to move the sand should there be a decision to do so.

RESOLVED to note and accept the reports.

9. REVIEW OF PWLLHELI HAFAN AND HARBOUR

An update was given by the Senior Manager – Economy and Community on the management model review for the Harbour and Hafan. It was noted that, despite the work schedule having slipped somewhat, Strategic Leisure had now completed the report and its main recommendations received. It was reported that those recommendations were being discussed with the Council's Legal and Property Departments. The next step would be to arrange meetings with those organisations who had contributed to the review, in order to discuss the main conclusions.

An extraordinary meeting of the Consultative Committee to receive a presentation on the main conclusions was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED to accept the information and to request that the Department arrange a meeting with the Members of the Consultative Committee to receive the main conclusions of the review

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was to be held on 17 March, 2020.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.45pm.

CHAIR