

MEETING	Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	12 October 2021
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR(S)	Maritime Officer and Pwllheli Harbour Manager

1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Committee's main function is to consider, discuss and advise on matters relating to the management, safety and development of the Harbour and to receive Member's observations on matters relating to Pwllheli Harbour.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update for the attention of the Committee on harbour matters for the period March 2021 to October 2021, in order to receive feedback from the members on safety matters and the operational matters of the Harbour.
- 1.3 The Pwllheli Harbour Committee is a non statutory Harbour Committee, set up in accordance with Council approval. The approval provides that fifteen (15) members serve on the Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee. A comprehensive list of the groups and organisations represented on the Harbour committee can be seen in the agenda.

Port Marine Safety Code.

The Port Marine Safety Code ('PMSC') sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the port marine environment. It applies to all Statutory Harbour Authorities.

The Code represents good practice as recognised by a wide range of industry stakeholders and Gwynedd Council understands that a failure to adhere to good practice may be indicative of a harbour authority being in breach of certain legal duties. It is necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Port Marine Safety Code and to regularly receive observations on its contents, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to the harbour activities, navigational aids, suitability of by-laws, safety matters and general day to day work at Pwllheli Harbour.

Following a thorough inspection of the Gwynedd Harbours Port Marine Safety Code and its associated safety management system by examiners from the Maritime and Coastguard agency last year, the Service intend to send a letter of compliance with the code to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. This will be completed after an annual external audit of the safety management system has been undertaken.

Strategic review-Hafan and Pwllheli Harbour

Members will recall that during 2019/20 a Project Board was established to undertake a strategic review of long term management arrangements for Hafan and Pwllheli harbour as a whole. Unfortunately, the work of the Project Board had to be delayed in early 2020 due to the pandemic.

This area of work remains one of the priorities of the Economy and Community Department, and it is intended to resume work in the coming months (recognizing that COVID continues to create uncertainty.)

A short-term program of work has been prepared and includes the following aspects:

- Review and modify the current structure of Hafan and Pwllheli harbour
- Cross Departmental group to co-ordinate property, legal, financial and managerial issues
- Prepare a Development Plan (Masterplan) for Glandon and the harbor area
- Implementation of the Dredging Strategy (consideration of long-term solutions to trying to re-use sediment from the harbour)
- Prepare an Investment Strategy for the short, medium and long term

We will be submitting further updates to the Harbour Committee as the situation develops in due course.

Dredging

Unfortunately, the 2020 dredging campaign for the main navigational channel using cutter suction method was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Council were able to dredge the harbour entrance in accordance with the annual maintenance dredging plan.

Plans are in place for the navigable channel and the fuel quay area to be dredged and it is anticipated that this work will commence in November 2021.

A recent hydrographic survey has been undertaken and a digital copy of the survey is available to Committee Members by request.

Financial Matters.

A brief summary of the Hafan and harbour budget and current financial situation will be presented at the meeting.

During this period, it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following;

Installing a new door/barrier security access system

Maintenance of land

Dredging of harbour entrance and planning of autumn dredging campaign

Hoist maintenance – new tyres, wire ropes, load cell and hydraulic hoses etc

Tools and equipment including safety equipment

Defibrillator

Fees and Charges. 2022/3

The Service is currently awaiting confirmation on the inflation rate and is giving due consideration to fee proposals that will apply to Hafan and Pwllheli harbour for 2022/23.

Operational Items

Navigation - All Aids to Navigation within Pwllheli Harbour are working and on station. There are no Notices to Mariners currently in operation in Pwllheli Harbour.

Fuel Quay – Self Service Unit/Red Diesel - Since the last Harbour Consultative meeting we still await guidance from HMRC regarding the sale of Red Diesel to ‘pleasure craft’. We shall therefore continue with the HMRC recommended 60/40 split pending further direction.

Petrol – from 1st September we are stocking E10 petrol. The E5 petrol previously stocked is no longer available. The quantity of Ethanol has been increased by the government in order to tackle climate change, of which Hafan Pwllheli is fully supportive.

Vessel Registration – during the early part of the summer it became possible for Powerboat and PWC owners to register their vessel and purchase the annual launching permit on-line.

It is pleasing to report that the system worked very well and has reduced the administrative work significantly especially on beaches.

In 2022 we will not be accepting postal applications and will not be processing in person applications in harbours, marinas or on beaches. All applications will be on-line.

Hafan Slipway – It is of concern and is very disappointing to report to the Committee that authorised Park and Launch companies using the Hafan slipway were not ensuring that vessels being launched by Park and Launch companies were duly registered in accordance with Council and harbour requirements.

On several occasions Park and Launch companies were challenged by maritime officers and were reminded of this requirement. During the August Bank Holiday weekend this was of greater concern as the number of vessels being launched had increased significantly. Numerous vessels were launched without displaying a registration number.

Despite being challenged, maritime staff were informed that it was not the duty of the park and launch company to ensure compliance. This is completely incorrect.

Given the complete lack of non-compliance stricter measures will be introduced for 2022. This will include additional security in the form of a locked security barrier; increased charges and additional staff being employed to ensure compliance at all times.

As Members will recall the annual charge for commercial use of the Hafan slipway was significantly reduced in 2019 with assurance being given that no vessel would be launched unless registered. This has clearly not been the case.

Annual Harbour/Hafan Statistics etc

Details of the Hafan and Harbour statistics for 2021 are included with this report.

Annual resident numbers have increased substantially this year with the Hafan close to capacity with 92% of the berths taken up by annual residents and enquiries for berths for 2022 already coming in. Boat hoist/storage ashore – The Hafan boat hoist utilisation seems to be steady but as reported at the last Harbour meeting, land space for the storing of vessels ashore is at a premium. This winter the Berth Holders’ Association has requested that we give priority to Resident Berth Holders, to which we have agreed.

Staffing Matters

One employee has moved from Hafan to Y Felinheli marina. The permanent staff member operated the travel hoist at the Hafan. We wish the staff member well in the future. The vacant post has been advertised.

This past summer we employed three seasonal Harbour assistants. Unfortunately one seasonal staff member departed the service mid season and took employment with a local marine engineer. The contracts for the two remaining staff members has been extended to the 31st March 2022.

Ports Division - Consultation

Department of Transport Consultation Paper: The Service draws to the attention of Committee members the Department of Transport consultation paper on “Strengthening enforcement of the dangerous use of recreational and personal watercraft”.

In essence the consultation paper proposes altering legislation to bring recreational and personal watercraft within the scope of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, to ensure safe practices. The document is available for viewing on the United Kingdom government website by following the below link:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-enforcement-of-the-dangerous-use-of-recreational-and-personal-watercraft

Comments on the proposal should be sent to maritimesafety@dft.gov.uk.

The consultation closes at 11:45 pm on 1st November 2021.