

PORTHMADOG HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 3/10/23

PRESENT:

Councillor Gwilym Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd) (Chairman)
Councillor June Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd) (Vice-chair)

Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd), Robert Owen (Commercial Interests Representative) and Will Walker-Jones (Cricieth RNLI Representative).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Llyr Beaumont Jones (Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department), Bryn Pritchard-Jones (Maritime Service Manager), Arthur Francis Jones (Senior Harbours Officer), Malcolm Humphreys (Porthmadog Harbourmaster) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

OBSERVER: Desmond George (Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee)

Will Walker-Jones, Cricieth RNLI representative, was welcomed to the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Gwilym Jones as chair for 2023/24.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor June Jones as vice-chair for 2023/24.

3. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

5. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 7 March, 2023 as a true record.

7. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

The following reports were presented, and members were invited to give feedback on the safety matters and operational matters of the harbour.

- (1) The Senior Harbour Officer's report, providing a brief update to the committee on harbour matters for the period March to October, 2023.

As part of the report, the Maritime Service Manager gave a short summary of the Harbour's budgets 01/4/23 – 31/3/24 (August 2023 Review), which was included as an appendix to the report.

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He also detailed the Service's performance indicators (which were also included as appendices to the report).

On a general note, the Maritime Service was thanked for their work during the summer keeping everyone safe on the beaches, and for bringing a balanced budget to the committee.

- (2) The Harbourmaster's report, summarising the Navigational and Operational matters that had been completed and experienced between March and October 2023, including maintenance issues.

Matters were raised under the following headings:-

Operational Matters

Referring to the two recent instances of pollution in the harbour (paragraphs 2.2 and 4.2 of the report), it was enquired whether it would be possible for such matters to be made known to the local members at the time, rather than waiting until the next meeting of the committee, so that the members could respond to enquiries by their constituents. The following was noted in response:-

- They accepted the point, and they did try to update the local members when there were quite serious incidents in the harbours.
- It could be confirmed that the relevant authorities had been notified of the two incidents in question, and that all necessary procedures had been followed.
- A marine surveyor had been commissioned to carry out an inspection of the former fishing vessel '*Beverley*' which had flooded during heavy rainfall and partially submerged, causing it to release a small amount of diesel fuel into the harbour waters. The boat had been inspected while it was in the water, and following its relocation close to the harbour slipway. Once the surveyor's report had been received, the Service planned to discuss the content of the inspection with the owner of the boat, and the members would be updated once more details became available.
- Natural Resources Wales were investigating the liquid that was emerging from the outfall pipe near the road bridge in the northern part of the harbour during heavy rainfall. They had not sent a formal written report to date, but the members would be updated once there was information available about the source of the contamination.

A member questioned what would happen to the '*Beverley*' vessel in the future. In response, it was noted that they would have to wait for the report of the marine surveyor on the condition of the vessel and discuss with the owner before being able to make any decision regarding what would happen to the vessel in future.

The Harbourmaster noted that he wished to thank the company Robert Owen Marine, Porthmadog, for lending the personal watercraft to the Service to patrol the Porthmadog channel.

Maintenance

Further to the content of the report, the Maritime Service Manager explained that the net cost of £12,293 for two new engines for the Powercat patrol vessel had not come from this year's budget, but had rather been paid out of a designated fund for them.

Also, further to the content of the report, the Harbourmaster noted that the Service had invested £1,200 in purchasing a drone and that the staff had received training

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on its use. He noted that the drone was of huge assistance in locating missing buoys, and it could also highlight when people on beaches were in danger of being engulfed by the tide.

Other Matters

The Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department congratulated the harbour staff on their work assisting with the preparations on Morfa Bychan beach to receive a large barge which was transporting an electrical transformer for Trawsfynydd Power Station. It was also noted that the company had written to the Council to express their satisfaction with the arrangements.

A member enquired whether the company had been charged, since the arrangements had involved considerable work and costs for the Department. In response, it was explained that the maritime officers had kept a record of all the signs, fencing, concrete blocks etc. that had been ordered, together with the administration fee, thus the Service had been more than reimbursed for the cost.

The Chairman thanked the Maritime Department for providing information to the councillors and for answering enquiries so quickly.

The Maritime Service Manager emphasised that the Service wished to remind everyone of the need to ensure that the sea defence gates in Borth y Gest remained shut during the winter.

RESOLVED to note and accept the report.

8. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 27 February, 2024.

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm and concluded at 6.15pm.

CHAIR