

***Pwyllgor Ymgynghorol Harbwr
Aberdyfi
Harbour Consultative Committee***

02 Mawrth / March 2010

Adroddiad yr Uned Forwrol a Pharciau Gwledig – Maritime and Country Parks Unit Report

1 – Ffioedd a Thaliadau / Fees and Charges

- 1.1** The fees and charges relating to the next financial year, 2010/11, has been forwarded to the Statutory Officers and the Portfolio Leader for approval. It is expected that the Portfolio Leader will have confirmed the fees by the end of February/beginning of March. In order to ensure that our clients are aware of the forthcoming charges, the Maritime Unit has forwarded a copy of the draft fees and charges to all clients.
- 1.2** A copy of the fees and charges relating to the harbours of Aberdyfi and Abermaw is appended, and Members will note that it is recommended that the charges for those residing permanently within Gwynedd are not increased in 2010, whilst the fees and charges for those residing outside of Gwynedd be increased by **1%**. The re introduction of V.A.T to 17.5% will unfortunately incur a slight increase in costs to all users.
- 1.3** The increase in inflation for the harbours of Gwynedd for 2010/11 is forecast to be negative at -1.05%, which is based on the next Pay Award being 1%. This equates to a slight decrease in the overall Harbour Income Target of £2,600 during the next financial year. Members will be aware that the income target at Aberdyfi has not been reaching the required target for a number of years, and, as expected in such circumstances, further measures will need to be taken in order to ensure that the overall expenditure, and income targets achieve their targets without compromising standards.
- 1.4** The fees and charges relating to the launching and registration of Powerboats and Personal Watercraft have not been increased for the next financial year. A copy of the fees and charges for Launching and Powerboat Registration is appended and such fees remain at standstill.
- 1.5** The overall increase in the income target for the Maritime Unit for 2009/10 is £9,070 which compares with an increased target of £51,020 in 2009/10. This increases the overall income target of the Maritime Unit to £2,130,970 in 2010/11.

2. - Cyllidebau / Budgets

- 2.1** The financial position of Aberdyfi and Abermaw harbours as of the third quarter of the financial year up to the 31st December 2009 is appended. Members will note that the income target relating to the harbour of Aberdyfi for 2009/10 is £39,660, and that the total income generated to the end of December 2009 is £31,694. This is in comparison with having collected £32,821 in income for the same period last year.

- 2.2 As of the 31st December 2009, the present deficit in income for Aberdyfi harbour is £7,966. The deficit for the same period last year was £7,719, and therefore there appears to be consistency in the income deficit. It is not anticipated that a significant amount of income can be generated during the final quarter of the current financial year and it is therefore expected that the income target for Aberdyfi harbour will not reach its target.
- 2.2 As will be noted from the financial details, the expenditure to date has also exceeded the budget on a number of headings. Additional expenditure is anticipated during March, and the key financial indicators for the final quarter anticipates an over expenditure of £3,300 in the Aberdyfi harbour budget by the end of March. The total overall expenditure will have taken the income target into consideration and wherever possible, additional savings will need to be made. It is unacceptable for expenditure to be higher than the allocated budget as any over expenditure has to be identified from within the overall Maritime and Country Park Unit budget.
- 2.3 Given the current economic climate and the requirement to identify further savings, 2010/11 will be a challenging year for the Maritime Unit, especially for the harbour of Aberdyfi and Abermaw. It is emphasised that the over expenditure coupled with the deficit in income will need to be overcome, especially given the significant overall reduction in the budget available to Gwynedd Council and the savings that require to be identified in the future.

3 Mordwyo / Navigation

- 3.1 All Aids to Navigation leading to the harbour of Aberdyfi have remained on station during the initial part of the winter months. To date, the cost of servicing the Aids to Navigation and the harbour's moorings is £4,429, whereby the available budget is zero. It is anticipated that the overall mooring and navigation service expenditure for 2009/10 will be £7,430.
- 3.2 It is essential that work to maintain all Aids to Navigation will have been completed before the Easter festival, and, weather permitting, it is essential that all Aids to Navigation will be on station. The Fairway Buoy is due to be brought ashore in 2010, and the refurbished Fairway Buoy has been maintained and is ready for deployment.
- 3.3 As in previous years, funding from within the existing revenue budget will need to be identified in order to meet the cost of maintaining Aids to Navigation which is a statutory duty. All Aids to Navigation are inspected annually by Trinity House, and in previous years, Trinity House has been critical of the work, and the lack in quality of our Aids to Navigation.

To date, there are no Notices to Mariners in force for the harbour of Aberdyfi.

4 - Staff – Staffing

- 4.1 A number of officers from within the Maritime Unit continue to remain on secondment in other areas of the service. Of recent, the Harbourmaster at Porthmadog (presently on secondment to Pwllheli Harbour) tendered his letter of resignation and will be retiring from the post on the 31st March 2010. The Porthmadog Harbourmaster's impending retirement will be a loss to the service, and his experience and knowledge will be missed.
- 4.2 The forthcoming vacancy of Harbourmaster at Porthmadog has been **advertised internally** within Gwynedd Council and a short list of applicants has been drafted. It is anticipated that an appointment will be made in the very near future and that the successful applicant will be able to commence duties on the 1st April 2010.

- 4.3 The post of Harbour Assistant for Aberdyfi for the forthcoming season has been advertised, and the post will commence on the 1st April, and extend to the 30th September 2010. Similarly, the post of Harbour Assistant for Abermaw has also been advertised and the successful applicant will also be employed from the 1st April to the 30th September.
- 4.2 For the main part of the summer season, one beach officer for Aberdyfi will be appointed and will hopefully be able to commence duties in mid June. One seasonal Beach Officer will be appointed for Tywyn and will also commence mid June. Given that there are significant construction works underway at Tywyn, it is not anticipated that two officers will be required in 2010. This is to be confirmed.

The appointing of one additional seasonal Harbour Assistant for Aberdyfi whose primary responsibilities are to monitor, and manage Powercraft navigating in the harbour during the peak period is to be confirmed. Given the current financial position, funding for the post has to be identified from within the available budget.

5 – **Gwobr Traeth – Beach Award**

- 5.1 The Maritime Unit will not be in a position to submit a Blue Flag beach award application in respect of Aberdyfi beach in 2010. The bathing water quality did not reach the Guideline Standard in 2009, and therefore, no application can be submitted for a Blue Flag. The Bathing Water Quality did reach the Mandatory standard in 2009 and therefore the Maritime Unit has submitted an application for a Resort Beach Award for Aberdyfi.
- 5.2 The water quality at Tywyn reached the required ‘Guideline’ standard in 2009. However, due to the construction work at Tywyn, the Maritime Unit will not be submitting a Blue Flag or Beach Award application for 2010. It is hoped that the bathing water quality will reach the required standard during the summer and that the beach will re gain the award in 2011. It is hoped that the construction work will not adversely affect the Bathing Water quality. A total of twenty samples will be taken between May and the end of September.
- 5.2 A detailed list of bathing water test results for Aberdyfi is appended. Members will also be able to compare the Bathing Water Quality at Aberdyfi to that at Abermaw and Tywyn which are also appended.

6 - **Materion Cyffredinol – General Issues**

- 6.1 Of recent, the Maritime Unit has received a proposal to develop a project that would enhance, and improve access and safety to those embarking and disembarking passengers/mariners at Aberdyfi. The proposal involves the positioning of a pontoon that would extend from the most eastward point on the quay wall for a distance of approximately eighty meters. The western extent of the proposed pontoon would be in line with the most eastern point of the jetty.
- 6.2 The proposal to position a pontoon on the quay wall will require careful consideration, and detailed drawings will be required before any funding will be sourced. There are a number of factors that will require consideration, and such factors include:-
- Condition of the existing quay wall.
 - F.E.P.A License
 - Planning Application
 - Consultation with the Countryside Council for Wales
 - Possible Land Drainage Consent

- 6.3 During the early part of March 2010, consulting engineers working on behalf of the Coast Protection Unit of Cyngor Gwynedd will be undertaking a detailed survey of the quay wall. A detailed and full assessment on the condition of the sheet piles will be undertaken. The report on the condition of the sheet piles will be fundamental if the Authority is to give further consideration to the pontoon proposal.
- 6.4 If the proposal progresses, the facility will only be seasonal as the quay wall is subject to severe wind and wave energy that impact on the quay wall. The drift of tide along the quay wall is significant, especially during the winter months when fresh water run off from the land is high, and therefore increases the tidal drift. Such factors will affect any floating structure that is positioned alongside the quay wall.
- 6.5 The pontoon will need to be dismantled and brought ashore during the early part of Autumn, and re positioned during late April. Such a procedure will require additional revenue funding and additional resources.
- 6.6 The proposal is welcomed, and the Maritime Unit will be in further consultation with the Coast Protection Unit regarding the suitability of positioning a seasonal pontoon alongside the quay wall. We will also working on the project with the local community and seeking possible sources of grant aid. We appreciate the commitment and enthusiasm that has been demonstrated towards this project.

7 - Goddefiad Traeth – Beach Concession

- 7.1 The Maritime Unit has received an application from Dyfi Donkeys requesting that the Donkey Ride facility continues for 2010. The application has been approved pending confirmation that the applicant is adequately insured for the activity. We hope that the summer weather will be more favourable in 2010 in comparison with the heavy rain and inclement weather that was experienced in 2009. Additional checks will need to be made on all applicants that apply for a beach concession in Gwynedd especially for activities involving young people. This is consistent with normal practice used by employers.

8 - Pecyn Cychod Ymwelwyr – Visiting Vessel Welcome Pack

- 8.1 At the previous meeting, Members were presented with a proposal whereby visiting vessels would be presented with a ‘Welcome Pack’ that contains information on harbour facilities, local amenities, tides, restaurants, emergency services etc.
- 8.2 It is expected that all visiting vessels that arrive at Aberdyfi from the 1st April 2010 will be presented with a ‘Welcome Pack’. This scheme is being introduced at all harbours, and each Harbourmaster has been directed to ensure that a comprehensive and a quality ‘Welcome Pack’ is available. The Harbourmaster will present the Aberdyfi ‘Welcome Pack’ to Members at the meeting.
- 8.3 The Harbourmaster will provide Members with a detailed breakdown on the number, LOA and class of visiting vessels that have entered Aberdyfi harbour in 2009, and the income generated in harbour dues resulting from their visit will be made available.

9 - Cyfleusterau Pysgotwyr Masnachol – Commercial Fishing facilities

- 9.1** In 2008, the Maritime Unit were approached by Cardigan Bay Fishing Association requesting assistance with identifying a suitable storage area that would possibly accommodate a ‘Vivier’ plant and ‘Ice Making’ facilities. Further requirements are needed for a storage area ashore. Such facilities would be of significant benefit to commercial fishermen who land their catch at Aberdyfi and would probably increase the market value of fish especially during the close season.
- 9.2** Whilst the Maritime Unit did discuss the matter at length with the representative of the Association, no firm proposals have been drafted. Specific units that could accommodate the requirements of commercial fishermen at Aberdyfi are at a premium, and there is a distinct lack of available space.
- 9.3** The Maritime Unit did agree in principle to explore the possibility, and consider transferring the Unit presently used by the Maritime Unit in Canolfan Dyfi. If this is a long term solution, then additional work area will be required by the Maritime Unit in order to assess the suitability of releasing the unit for the benefit of commercial fishermen. It is envisaged that the Cardigan Bay Fishing Association will be able to provide further comments on their requirements in the very near future.
- 9.4** The land storage area which is situated on the outskirts of Aberdyfi and which was made available to commercial harbour users by the Maritime Unit has been subjected to significant misuse over recent years. Fly Tipping is a common problem, and unserviceable equipment, apparently belonging to users of the compound, continues to be discarded in the compound.
- 9.5** Of recent, harbour staff have been attempting to clear unwanted and discarded equipment and fly tip rubbish from this important area of land. A cost in excess of £1,000 has been incurred in the hire of commercial skips, and transferring the waste from the land to a registered landfill site.
- 9.6** If the land is to be made available to commercial users for the future, and if the visual aspect of the site is to be improved, then there will be a requirement to ensure that there is increased security on site. This will be achieved by ensuring that security key enabling access on to site are given to those ‘authorised’ to use the site, and that those accessing the compound are given individual security keys. The harbourmaster has been issued with suitable locks, and it is expected that the new system will be introduced on the 1st April 2010. The cooperation of commercial users is crucial.