
PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
19-03-13

Present: Councillor Michael Sol Owen (Chair)

Councillor Robert J. Wright (Gwynedd Council), Councillor Mici Plwm (Pwllheli Town Council), W.A. Partington (Maritime Traders Association), Andrew Picken (Pwllheli Chamber of Commerce), David Dewsbury (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club)

Also present: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Wil Williams (Pwllheli Harbour Manager), Llyr B. Jones (Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department), Ken Fitzpatrick (Assistant Maritime and Harbours Officer) and Gwyn Parry Williams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillor Peter Read and Councillor Gethin G. Williams (Observer)

Chairman's Announcements

- a) He drew attention to the fact that some of the organisations represented on the committee had been sending two representatives to the committee in the past, and it should be noted that only one representative was allowed.
- b) The Lifeboat Institution should be encouraged to nominate a member as its representative on the committee.

Assistant Maritime Officer's Retirement

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to the fact that this would be the Assistant Maritime and Harbours Officer's last meeting as he would be retiring at the end of August 2013. He was thanked for his conscientious work for the Council over the years and was wished well in his retirement.

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Consultative Committee meeting held on 23 October 2012 as a true record.

3. MARITIME SERVICE REPORT

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer presented his report which addressed the following specific matters:

- Navigation, Moorings, Dredging
- Harbour Budgets
- Events
- The Sailing Academy
- Maritime Statistics
- Harbour Staff

Navigation, Moorings, Dredging

- i) The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to the fact that there had been little change in relation to the aids to navigation. Those in the harbour mouth had been

improved. A meeting had been held recently with the Hafan's Manager and others to discuss the difficulties when it was found that some work was required. It was also intended to review the other aids further out in the channel.

ii) In relation to the beach zone markers, they would be installed by a contractor from the Pwllheli and Abersoch area by the beginning of May (in Pwllheli). He noted that a boat exclusion zone had been created in the Glandon Beach area.

iii) Regarding mooring maintenance, the moorings in the harbour had been restructured. A contractor had been appointed to examine the remaining moorings at a cost of around £2,000.

In discussing this issue with Trinity House who inspected aids to navigation, they were completely satisfied with the situation in Pwllheli.

He noted that Bangor University had not yet completed the report on the sediment monitoring station.

iv) In relation to the dredging work, the officer noted that the work of draining the lagoon had commenced, and the sediment had been currently left on the land. The cost of undertaking the whole contract was substantial. There were discussions underway to look at what use could ideally be made of the material. The sediment could be transported elsewhere, in accordance with the contract, or could be levelled on the land.

The Senior Officer – Economy and Community Department, noted that the 2013 improvements included a commitment to arrange dredging work, including maintenance of the channel and the marina basin in addition to capital dredging works in relation to the Sailing Academy work to the north of the Hafan. Earlier this year, a tender exercise had been held to identify a company to undertake the work, and following this process, the contract had been issued to the Jones Brothers Company. He noted that there were advantages to including a contractor as part of the discussions and the preliminary work. The tender process had been slightly different as the companies had been requested to suggest solutions to the problem of disposing of the sediment. Five tenders had been received, but none of the companies had been able to offer an option which involved the disposal of the sediment from the site. The current scheme would create an additional "bund" between the site of the island and the existing lagoon which would create capacity not only for the coming year's work, but also for the long-term. Consideration would also be given to various possible uses of the sediment, including the material from the lagoon. He referred to the idea of landscaping, including the site of the island, and initial work was being undertaken. Another idea was to use some of the sediment to landscape the site of the Sailing Academy.

In relation to the timetable, the officer noted that it had originally been anticipated that the work could be split into two parts, with the maintenance of the channel taking place before the summer, and the dredging of the Hafan and the Sailing Academy taking place after the summer. However, following discussions, it had been agreed that one large contract would commence on the site in September 2013, in order to ensure the best value for money. He acknowledged that there were issues in the channel which required attention, and that the work there would be undertaken before the summer. The Welsh Government had confirmed that a full environmental impact assessment was needed on the plans, and much of the report had already been completed.

Harbour Budgets

In relation to the Hafan, the officer noted that there was no intention to increase the fees again this year, which was to be praised and demonstrated the Council's commitment to its customers.

The fees in the outer harbour had increased by 1.5% due to inflation. The previous year, boat owners could order the moorings before a certain date in order to receive a discount. However, the Council was unable to offer a discount this year. He referred to the direct debit payment system that had been established but was very complex and placed additional pressures upon the already scarce resources within the Maritime Unit to manage the harbour. There was also an option to make one payment at the start of the year, which offered the individual a reduction in the cost.

In response to a question from a member regarding the increase in mooring fees and the decrease in the number of applications for them, the officer noted that the current economic situation was insecure and that there had been a general reduction in the number of applications for moorings throughout Gwynedd.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department, noted that a considerable deterioration in numbers would have a certain impact on the Council and Pwllheli. The work of analysing the effects had started, and proposals would be submitted during the year as a means of resolving the situation. He noted that the other North Wales marinas were not full, and that it was possible that the marinas along the periphery were more seriously affected.

Details were given on the number of vessels that had vacated moorings between 2007 and 2013, and unfortunately, only a few new boats were replacing them.

The member referred to the need to market the harbour. In response, the officer explained that substantial investment in this had been made recently, and referred to the fact that "Sailing Today" and "Practical Boat Owner" intended to visit Pwllheli that week to write an article about the harbour.

A member asked whether it would be possible to have a different definition of harbour visitors. The officer promised to consider the practicality of this.

Events

The officer noted that the Wakestock Festival was continuing to develop and that discussions were ongoing with the event organisers regarding the use of the north basin for holding their competitions.

The Food Festival was also continuing in the same vein.

He noted that Pwllheli Sailing Club intended to hold various competitions again this year. The Sailing Club's representative on the committee referred to a request made to hold a world event competition in 2015, with Pwllheli and South Africa under consideration. He gave details of other similar competitions during 2016 and 2017.

In relation to the Dog Control Order, the officer stated that the order that would come into force on 1 April 2013 would be likely to have a positive impact on Glandon Beach. This meant that dogs would be prohibited on beaches which were subject to this order.

In relation to the disposal and safety of fireworks, the officer noted that it had cost almost £3000 to dispose of flares left in the harbours over recent months. Consideration would be given to establishing a centre in Porthmadog, which would be licensed to store these.

The Sailing Academy

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department provided an update on the academy's plan.

The officer noted that the contract for the dredging work had been given to the Jones Brothers Company. Tenders had been invited and assessed for the building, and the procurement process was currently underway whereby feedback was offered to companies following the submission of their tenders. Members would receive information in due course about the successful company.

In relation to the other developments, considerable work had been undertaken over recent weeks to establish the Plas Heli Company to manage the resource to be developed, and Stephen Tudor had been chosen as the Company's Chairman.

The Company's Chairman gave details of the work which was underway to establish sub-committees to consider the various activities etc. The community work had also commenced.

Harbour Staff

The officer noted that steps had been taken to restructure the harbour and Hafan staff with the Hafan's Manager now also responsible for the management of the Harbour. These arrangements were working well and would provide more resources as a whole to the Hafan and harbour.

Consideration would be given to outsourcing the outer harbour and the matter would be discussed further with the Hafan's Manager over the next weeks.

The harbourmaster had been relocated to the Hafan side where the majority of activities took place.

The maintenance work programme was being effectively implemented by the Hafan's Manager.

With regard to the harbour's administration, there was also an intention to fund a part-time post to support the current Administrative Officer.

It was also intended to advertise for a night surveillance post.

RESOLVED to accept the report of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 22 October 2013.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.30pm