

**Minutes of a meeting of the Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee
that took place on 22 March 2016 at the Dragon Theatre, Barmouth**

PRESENT

**Councillor Gethin Williams - Chairman
Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams - Vice-chairman**

Cllr. Rob Triggs (Barmouth Town Council), Cllr. Julian Kirkham (Arthog Community Council), Cllr. Mark James (RNLI), Mr John Johnson (Barmouth and Ceredigion Sea Fisheries Association), Mrs Wendy Ponsford (Meirionnydd Yacht Club), Mr Martin Parouty (Barmouth Harbour Users Group), Mr Mike Ellis (Three Peaks Race Committee), Dr John Smith (Barmouth Viaduct Access Group)

Officers

Barry Davies - Maritime and Country Parks Officer
Mr Arthur Jones - Senior Harbours Officer
Mr Glyn Jones - Barmouth Harbour Master
Mrs Glynda O'Brien - Members' and Scrutiny Support Officer
Mrs Mererid Watt - Translator

Apologies: Councillors Louise Hughes, Mandy Williams-Davies (Cabinet Member - Economy), Cllr. David Richardson (Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee), Cllr. R.A. Williams (BRIG), Mr Llŷr Jones, Senior Manager Economy and Community.

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL CONNECTION

The following members declared a personal interest in the following items for the reasons noted:

- (i) Councillor Gethin Glyn Williams as he was a member of the Yacht Club
- (ii) Councillor Julian Kirkham as he was related to one of the ferry operators

2. MINUTES

Submitted: Minutes of a meeting of the Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee held on 15 October 2015.

Resolved: To accept and approve the minutes as a true record.

2.1 Matters arising from the minutes:

(a) Wintering Boats

In response to an enquiry regarding wintering boats on a section of the car park, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that following a discussion with Mr Colin Jones, Parking and Road Safety Manager, that the principle was acceptable, however, discussions were required on how to administer the arrangements, responsibility for the boats etc. There had been discussions regarding the cost which could be in a form of a bond between £300-£500 as a deposit for any cleaning required once the boats had been moved. As a way forward, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer suggested that Members could ask their clubs if they were interested in the above

provision and to record their interest with the Harbour Master and then a scheme could be undertaken by next winter.

Resolved: To request that the clubs/associations contact the Harbour Master if there is any interest to winter boats on a section of the car park, in order to further complete the required arrangements.

(b) Wheelchair Access to the Promenade

Stemming from the discussion regarding the submission of an application for a grant to the Lottery Fund to provide more access locations for wheelchair access to the promenade, an update was given by Cllr. Eryl Jones-Williams and he stated that the Meirionnydd Access Group did not submit applications themselves but in conjunction with other organisations. In addition, the Meirionnydd Access Group did not currently have a Secretary or Treasurer. It was also felt that if the Town Council established a Barmouth Access Group then this would fragment the Meirionnydd Access Group. To add to the problem the Council had deleted the post of Disability Officer. It was understood that approximately 4 sections from the Black Patch to the Arbour Hotel were inaccessible to wheelchairs.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(c) Launching from Penrhyn Point

In response to concern regarding supervising launching from Penrhyn Point, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer explained that the Service did not have the capacity to send staff to Penrhyn Point and signs had been erected in the area in cooperation with the local community. In terms of the potential to get volunteers to assist, it was not anticipated that there would be any problem if 3 / 4 individuals were willing to assist under the Harbour Master's wing, dependent on insurance terms. It would also be useful if ferry operators could inform the Harbour Master if they see any unregistered boats launching.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer stressed that there was a formal system to follow namely that it was necessary for individuals to complete forms PG1 (details of individuals) and PG2 (risk assessment).

Resolved: To request that Members make enquiries with their clubs/associations to find volunteers to assist the Harbour Master with unregistered launching from Penrhyn Point and for them to contact the Harbour Master if there is any interest.

3. THE MARITIME OFFICER'S REPORT

Submitted: The report of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer, Mr Barry Davies, on activities in Barmouth Harbour with specific reference to the following:-

(A) Port Marine Safety Code

Members were reminded that the Safety Code was not statutory and any observations from Members on health and safety issues would be appreciated.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(B) Navigation and Moorings

Reported:

- (i) That the service had invested substantially in aids to navigation and this included lamps, chains etc. and as a result each aid was currently on station.
- (ii) It was necessary to install lights on some of the aids, however, the service was not too concerned as the Easter holiday was early this year and there might not be many boats on the water. However, an assurance was given that the Senior Harbours Officer and the Harbour Master would install these as soon as possible.
- (iii) That an investment would be considered next year to install a starboard buoy near the seawall for visiting boats to navigate easily into the harbour.
- (iv) Trinity House had conducted an inspection and a thorough audit and as a result it was stressed that the administrative arrangements were up to standard.
- (v) It was agreed not to invest in beach buoys apart from the gateway near the railway footbridge.
- (vi) The service had contacted mooring owners and of the existing customers 60 applications had been received thus far and this was a reduction compared to previous years. However, it was noted that the trend in every harbour was a reduced number.
- (vii) It was stressed that boats would not be allowed to moor in the harbour unless the written administrative paperwork was complete and correct which included insurance documentation, mooring certificate etc.
- (viii) The local contractor would be requested to take out the moorings that are not in use and individuals could not claim specific locations.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(C) Harbour Matters

Reported:

- (i) That approximately £8,000 had been invested to repair the pontoon last year and by now it was part of the responsibility of the Harbour Service and it was not known for how long it could be maintained considering the current financial climate with so little income received. It was emphasised that the purpose of the pontoon was for visitor use only and the Harbour Master would monitor its use. It was further noted that arrangements would be made to re-install the fingers on the pontoon soon.

In response to enquiries from individual members, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted:

- That they had to have control over local boats that moor on the pontoon
 - Regarding the Harbour boat moored on the pontoon, that there was a great deal of repair work to be undertaken on the boat and alternative ways would have to be considered to reach the boat such as the arrangements that exist in Aberdyfi whereby the boat is moored with a tender available to reach it.
 - It was not the responsibility of the Harbour Master to respond to an emergency in the Harbour but rather for the Emergency Services and the Lifeboat but of course the Maritime Service would be there to assist if required.
- (ii) That approximately 47 metres cubed of concrete was used to refurbish the gardens, 1,000 litres of resin with 16 metres cubed for the quay wall and this was not sufficient to fill in the gaps.

- (iii) It was trusted that the ferry would be operational by Easter, however, an appeal was made to the operators to submit applications for a licence in good time as a day or two of notice was insufficient for the Maritime Service to process them.

A Member noted that they had to be strict with receiving applications in good time for processing and it should be noted that no licence would be processed unless the appropriate documentation had been submitted by the specified date.

- (iv) That arrangements were in place for beach concessions in order to have better control of seaside activities. The concessions were advertised in the local papers and any business was invited to submit an application. The applications would then be assessed to ensure that every concession complies with the appropriate requirements. One full application had been received for trampoline activities /swings /donkeys.
- (v) Regarding the movement of sand, it was noted that Gwynedd Consultancy had not removed sand this year, however, they will try to keep the paths clear over the summer months. It was added that significant work had been achieved in the past, however there was no budget available to hire machinery for the removal of sand but the Harbour Master would monitor the situation.

The Chairman reported that approximately 15-20 tonnes of sand had been removed in the past and discussions were on-going with the Town Council, Shoreline Management Plan and others to resolve the long term problem and consideration would be given to the dunes, marram grass and activities etc.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(CH) Harbour Budgets

Information was submitted to Members giving a summary of the budgets and they were guided through the headings and attention was drawn to the Harbour income target of £45,100 and £43,637.69 had already been spent with a shortfall of £9,296.91 at the end of February 2016.

Reference was made to the fees and charges that would increase by 1% in 2016/17. Attention was drawn to the fact that Moorings at Trwyn y Gwaith had been reduced to justify that there was no provision in specific areas of the creek.

The total income target for Harbours was approximately £2m with inflation and the income was 0.70%.

It was stressed that the Service was facing a challenging year in terms of budgets / cuts and that only the responsibility for those beaches awarded the Blue Flag Award would fall to the Harbour Service.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(D) Harbour Staff

Reported:

- that the Harbour Assistant post had been advertised and the interviews would be conducted soon.
- That the Harbour Master and the Senior Harbours Officer would be on duty over the Easter holidays.

- It was trusted that 4 Beach Officers would be appointed for the season.
- An appeal was made to Members to contact the Harbour Master if there was any anticipated work to be completed or if they had any concern regarding any matter.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(E) Natural Resources Wales Consultation

Submitted for information, a letter received from Natural Resources Wales regarding a consultation on Special Areas of Conservation for harbour porpoise and proposed new and extended Special Protection Areas for seabirds

It was noted as a response to an enquiry that the Service would not be submitting a response.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(F) Remembrance Service - The Prince of Wales Ferry Boat

It was understood that it was proposed to conduct a Remembrance Service for the above tragedy that took place on 22 June 1966 with Dolgellau Town Council leading on this. The Chair and Vice-Chair of this Consultative Committee had met with Dolgellau Town Council. It was felt that the remembrance plaque should be erected on National Park land. Concern was expressed regarding the delay in contacting people.

In addition, it was felt that two persons namely Mr Ron Davies from Bontddu and Mr Williams from Brithdir who worked for the Council at the time, should be recognised for their bravery in saving the life of a 7 year old boy from the tragedy.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

4. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(a) Navigational Marks

It was reported that the above had been discussed as part of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer's report.

(b) To consider having signs to warn the public of the change in the depth of the Channel near the Yacht Club.

Reference was made to the two photographs attached to the agenda indicating a drop of 5-6 foot in the channel and concern was noted regarding public safety as a result of this.

Resolved: To request that the Harbour Master erects 'Steep Banks' signs as well as notifying mariners of safe areas to launch boats.

- (c) **A request was made to circulate minutes earlier in order that representatives can brief the groups they represent.**

The Members' Support Officer reported that they sought to place the minutes on the Council's website within 15 working days of the meeting date, however this was dependent on workload. In the meantime she had sent a link to the site where agendas/minutes were placed to Cllr. Rob Triggs in order that he could send the link on to relevant persons.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(ch) Dangerous pole at bottom of slipway in Aberamffra Harbour

A representative of the Yacht Club made a request to remove the dangerous pole at Aberamffra Harbour.

It was understood that this was the remains of an old ship and it would be necessary to get four members of staff to cut it. There was a difference of opinion amongst the Members if it should be removed or not, as it did not cause a hazard in terms of navigation, however as a compromise a buoy could be placed at the site.

Following a vote on this matter:

Resolved: Not to remove the pole at Aberamffra Harbour.

- (d) **Sand - what could be done?**

A representative of the Yacht Club reported that there was a substantial amount of sand up the northern side of the compound and so much sand had not been seen there before and it would cause difficulties to get boats out.

The Chair explained that they had to be proactive by contacting Mr Colin Jones, Parking and Road Safety Manager who was responsible for the car park. However, it was trusted that the problem could be resolved in the long term.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: It was noted that the next meeting of this Consultative Committee would take place on 8 November 2016.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 a.m. and concluded at 12.10 p.m.

CHAIRMAN.