

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

04 Mawrth / March 2008

Adroddiad yr Uned Morwrol – Maritime Unit Report

1 – Ffioedd a Thaliadau / Fees and Charges

- 1.1*** The fees and charges relating to the next financial year, 008/09, has been forwarded to the Statutory Officers and the Portfolio Leader of the Life Long Learning Service for approval.
- 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 be increased by 4%, whilst the increase for those residing outside of Gwynedd be increased by 5%.
- 1.3*** The inflation for the harbours of Gwynedd for 2008/09 is forecast to be 3.97%. This equates to a required increase of £11,270 in our income target for 2008/09. Members will be aware that the income target at Aberdyfi does not reach its target, and therefore further measures will need to be taken in order to ensure that the overall expenditure, and income targets achieve their targets in 2008.
- 1.4*** The fees and charges relating to the launching and registration of Powerboats and Personal Watercraft have been increased by an average of 7%. Whilst some fees remain unchanged, there is a small increase in postal registration charges and the annual launching permit fee is also increased. A copy of the recommended fees and charges is appended.
- 1.5*** The overall increase in the income target for the Maritime Unit for 2008/09 is £62,040, increasing the overall income target of the Maritime Unit to £2,070,880.

2 – Ferry Licence

- 2.1*** For the past two years, the Maritime Unit has not received an application in respect of a 'Proprietors Licences' for vessels operating within the Categorized Waters of Aberdyfi harbour (Category C waters.) By virtue of the Public Health Acts Amendments Act, the licence can commence from seven days before Easter to the end of October. The embarkation and disembarkation points should be identified on the Licence, and the vessel will only be authorised to carry a maximum of twelve persons (defined as over one year of age.)
- 2.2*** In 2008, Easter is relatively early, and technically, the license to operate a ferry within the Categorized Water can be issued to commence from the 14th of March 2008, provided that the vessel has been surveyed both ashore and afloat by a certified Yacht Surveyor. In defining a 'Yacht Surveyor', the individual shall be a member of the YDSA.

- 2.3 Members are requested to provide comment on the requirements listed in 3.4 to 3.7. The list is not extensive or exhaustive. Additional vessel inspection forms and the equipment list for proprietors is appended. This will ensure that similar requirements apply for all Categorised Waters within Gwynedd.
- 2.4 It is essential that equipment recommended as minimal by the Council, is available on board the vessel at all times. The list and recommendations is derived from the Inland Small Passenger Boat Code.
- 2.5 In order to be a Master of a vessel duly authorised to carry passengers within the Categorised Waters, the Master of the vessel is required to be duly Licensed by the Council. Such Licences are issued by virtue of the Public Health Acts Amendments Act, and is issued subject to the applicant being suitably qualified or/and experienced.
- 2.6 Prior to being issued with a Licence, the applicant is required to apply to the issuing Authority for a Licence, and a short proficiency test afloat will be undertaken by the Harbourmaster or other suitably qualified and experienced officer from within the Maritime Unit. Only upon successful completion of the short test afloat will the License be issued.
- 2.7 The Proprietors Licence and the Boatman's Licence shall specify that the vessel, if used for the carrying of passengers for reward, shall only be used during the hours of daylight and in good weather. To operate during the hours of darkness, a separate application and assessment of the Boatman undertaken afloat shall be required.

4 - Cyllidebau / Budgets

- 4.1 The financial position of Aberdyfi and Abermaw harbours as of the 31st January 2008 are appended. Members will note that the income target relating to the harbour of Aberdyfi for 2007/08 is £38,380, and that the total income generated to the end of January 2008 has reached £33,967, a deficit of £4,413. It is not anticipated that a significant amount of income can be generated during February and March, and it is therefore anticipated that the income target will be slightly short of the target.

In comparison, the income target at Abermaw for 2007/08 is £48,940, and the income to date is £35,167, a shortfall of £13,773.

- 4.2 The expenditure to date has exceeded the budget on a number of headings and this is causing concern as additional expenditure is anticipated during February and March. The financial report to the end of December 2007 is also appended. The budget heading of NT 55 12 01 (£12,740) was established for other minor improvements such as the recently completed diesel facility. The budget was included from a general budget within the Maritime Unit and can be used within other harbours and on beaches.
- 4.3 2008/09 will be a challenging year for the Maritime Unit and especially for the harbour of Aberdyfi and Abermaw. It is emphasised that the over expenditure and the deficit in income will need to be overcome, especially given the current financial climate facing the Authority.

5 Mordwyo / Navigation

- 5.1** Most 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 £4,500, whereby the available budget is zero. Funding from within the existing budget, will need to be identified in order to meet the cost of maintaining Aids to Navigation for the future. The aforementioned cost does not include the cost of materials such as chains and anchors.
- 5.2** The Port and Starboard navigation markers have been off station for the winter period. Whilst the Port buoy is seasonal (May to October) the Starboard buoy is required to be permanently on station. The starboard buoy was damaged during the latter part of the Autumn season and has been taken to Porthmadog for assessment and possible repair.
- 5.3** The cost of replacing the Starboard buoy will be in the region of £3,700 excluding the cost of chain, anchor and the positioning of the buoy on station.

6 - Staff – Staffing

- 6.1** Given that a number of officers from within the Maritime Unit are on secondment in other areas of the service, there will be a requirement to appoint a seasonal and temporary officer to the post of Harbour Assistant for Aberdyfi for the forthcoming season. In order to ensure that there is adequate service at Aberdyfi, it is anticipated that a seasonal officer will be in post prior to the start of the Easter festival.
- 6.2** For the main part of the summer season, one beach officer for Aberdyfi and one additional Harbour Assistant will be appointed in June. In addition, two seasonal beach Officers will be appointed for Tywyn. The appointment of seasonal staff will ensure that there is adequate assistance at Aberdyfi and Tywyn in order to oversee activities within the harbour during the summer months.

7 – Gwobr Traeth – Beach Award

- 7.1** It is disappointing to report that the Maritime Unit will not be in a position to submit a beach award application in respect of Aberdyfi beach in 2008. The bathing water quality did not reach the mandatory standard, and therefore, no application can be submitted for a Bleu Flag or a Seaside Award.
- 7.2** It is understood that the Environment Agency is investigating the reason behind the bathing water quality failure. Whilst such a result is disappointing, it must be emphasised that this has no reflection on the quality of service being provided by Cyngor Gwynedd, and, given that the water quality will prove to be of the required standard in 2008, the Council will be in a position to submit a Beach Award application to the issuing authority in 2009.

8 - Cwch Rheoli Harbwr – Harbour Patrol Boat

- 8.1** The present Harbour Patrol vessel has been servicing the harbour of Aberdyfi since 1996 and has been beneficial in ensuring that activities within the estuary is reasonably controlled. Of recent, a new 'Powercat' model of boat has been purchased and should be available at the harbour before the first bank Holiday in May. The overall cost of ensuring that the new vessel is operational will be in the region of £21,000.

9 - Materion Cyffredinol – General Issues

- 9.1** The footbridge leading to Picnic Island from the highway and which crosses a 'live' railway will be inspected by the Consultancy Unit of Cyngor Gwynedd in the very near future. Whilst the footbridge does not serve a maritime function, the Maritime and Country Parks Unit is responsible for maintaining the bridge and for maintaining Picnic Island. Of recent, it was noted that two of the wooden upright spindles had become dislodged from the main frame, and there was a potential for a small person to fall through the gap. The footbridge has been repaired, and it is envisaged that further repairs will be required in the very near future. The bridge has been constructed from softwood, and it is envisaged that the bridge, as a complete structure, will also need to be replaced in the near future. The funding of a new bridge will not be possible from within the Maritime Unit's revenue budget and therefore possible sources of grant funding will need to be identified.
- 9.2** The yacht tender racking system that was installed during the early part of 2007 has proved to be of benefit to the mariner. Additional racking has been ordered, and the extension to the present system should be completed before the end of April 2008. In order to reduce the congestion caused by small sailing dinghies in the Yacht Club area, Clwb Hwyllo Dyfi have also been approached with a view to racking small sailing dinghies such as Toppers and Lasers.
- 9.3** The annual movement of sand from the slipway and jetty areas will be undertaken by the Coast Protection Unit of Cyngor Gwynedd during the early part of March, and the promenade and surrounding area will also be cleared. In order to assist with the work, additional staffing resources will be required.
- 9.4** During the latter part of 2007, a new Patrol Vehicle was delivered to Aberdyfi. The cost of the new vehicle was approximately £18,000. The vehicle is an essential requirement in order to ensure that the coastline of south Meirionnydd is serviced by the Maritime Unit.
- 9.5** During January 2008, it was reported that a significant amount of narcotics were washed ashore at Tywyn. It is understood that the parcel washed ashore contained Heroin, and the street value was in the region of 1.6 million. The general public have been advised to be vigilant when walking on the beaches and to report any suspicious activity to the Police Authority immediately.