

**Minutes of a meeting of the Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee  
held on 4 March, 2008 at Neuadd Dyfi, Aberdyfi**

**PRESENT**

**Councillor W. Bracewell – Chairman  
Councillor David Richardson – Vice-Chairman**

Councillors Robert J. Hughes, Anne Lloyd Jones, Morgan L. Vaughan, (Gwynedd Council), Cllr. Brian Bates, (Aberdyfi Community Council), Mr Desmond George (Dyfi Yacht Club), Mr Dylan Evans (Aberdyfi Rowing Club), Mr Nigel Willis (Aberdyfi Boat Club)

Observer: Cllr. Trevor Roberts (Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee)

**Officers**

Mr Barry Davies	-	Principal Maritime and Country Parks Officer
Mr Paul Edwards	-	Aberdyfi Harbour Master
Mrs Glynda O'Brien	-	Committee Officer
Mrs. Mererid Watt	-	Translator

**Apologies:** Councillors W. Roy Owen, Alun Wyn Evans (Gwynedd Council), Mr Alf Bowen (Aberdyfi Partnership), Mr Roger Lawson-Mole (Aberdyfi Chamber of Trade), Dr. Jones Morris (Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee).

1. **MINUTES**

**Submitted:** Minutes of a meeting of the Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee that was held on 30 October 2007.

**Resolved:** To receive and approve the minutes as a correct record, subject to amending the words “personal water craft” to “powerboats” in Item 6, Any Other Business, paragraph (c).

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Item 6 (a) - Membership**

**Reported:** By the Principal Maritime and Country Parks Officer that he had contacted Mr Fothergill to invite him to be a member of this Consultative Committee and he had verbally stated his wish to be a member, but thus far no official written confirmation had been received to send him an agenda.

**Resolved:** To receive and note the above.

### 3. THE MARITIME OFFICER'S REPORT

**Submitted:** The report of the Maritime Officer, Mr Barry Davies on activities in Aberdyfi harbour with specific reference to the following:-

- (i) Fees and Charges
- (ii) Ferry Licence
- (iii) Budgets
- (iv) Navigation
- (v) Staffing
- (vi) Beach Award
- (vii) Harbour Patrol Boat
- (viii) General Issues

**Reported:** (a) By the Maritime and Country Parks Officer

- (i) in the context of **fees and charges** that the decision was that charges for those residing permanently within Gwynedd would increase by 4% whilst the increase for those residing outside of Gwynedd be increased by 5%. It was noted that the fees and charges for the launching and registration of Powerboats and Personal Watercraft had been increased by an average of 7%. The overall increase in the income target for the Maritime Unit for 2008/09 was £62,040 increasing the Maritime Unit's overall income target to £2,070,880.

Several of the members were of the view that the authority should invest more in Aberdyfi Harbour and furthermore they felt that south Gwynedd was losing out as a result of other developments and therefore the area's economy was suffering and it was trusted that this would receive attention in future.

Members of the Aberdyfi Boat Club were disappointed in the increase once more in fees and they felt that the facilities did not reflect the price and especially the lack of convenient launching sites. In response, the Maritime Officer disagreed, bearing in mind that the fee had not increased that much in three years. Whilst accepting that difficulties had been experienced with Personal Watercraft in the past; it was felt that control on the water had improved significantly. Investment had been directed into this harbour over the years and perhaps the Community Council could investigate to see how much benefit the area had gained from Harbour activities. It was added that the Council's financial position was critical by having to find £4m financial savings this year and also over the following three years. The increase in fees was a very low price compared to the savings that were facing the Council, and it was felt that it was fair for boat owners to make a small contribution towards the area's economy and contribute to the running costs of the harbour and adjoining beaches.

The disappointment of members that Aberdyfi did not appear on the Council's priority list for attracting European funding was noted.

- (ii) In relation to the **ferry licence**, although the Maritime Unit had not received an application in respect of 'Proprietors Licences' for vessels operating within the Categorized Waters of Aberdyfi Harbour, members' attention was drawn to the requirements of these licences together with the safety equipment required.

- (iii) In the context of **budgets**, corporate cuts would have an impact on all Council services and therefore it was necessary to prioritise activities. Members' attention was drawn to the deficit of £4,413 in the Aberdyfi Harbour income target and 2008/09 would be a challenging year for the Maritime Unit and especially for the Harbours of Aberdyfi and Barmouth. It was emphasised that the over expenditure and shortfall in income would have to be overcome especially bearing in mind the current financial climate facing the Council.
- (iv) In the context of **navigation**, it was noted that the majority of aids to navigation had remained on station. Attention was drawn to the fact that the cost of replacing the Starboard buoy was approximately £3,700 excluding the cost of the chain, anchor and the positioning of the buoy on station. The maintenance costs of aids to navigation increased from year to year.
- (v) In the context of **beach awards**, disappointment was noted that the Maritime Unit would not be in a position to submit an application for a beach award for Aberdyfi beach in 2008 as the quality of the bathing water had not reached the required standard. Members expressed their disappointment regarding this and Welsh Water should investigate the broken water pipes in the Church Street area in case these contributed to bathing water quality. There was a tendency for sewage to be washed up by westerly winds and it may be beneficial to contact the Environment Agency and request they investigate the issue as well as to conduct agricultural sewage measurements.
- (vi) A **Harbour patrol boat** was recently purchased in the hope that it would be operational in the harbour before the first May Bank Holiday. This investment was 20K.
- (vii) In the context of **general issues**, that the footbridge leading to Picnic Island (Bryn Llestair) had been repaired, but further work was required. It was noted that it would not be possible to fund a new bridge from the Maritime Unit's revenue budget and it would be necessary to find other sources of funding.

In response to the above, a member noted that the bridge was a visitor attraction and fortunately no accident had occurred in the past due to its condition.

It was noted:

- It was trusted that the yacht tender racking system could be extended by the end of April 2008.
  - That the sand clearance work from the slipway and the jetty area would commence at the start of March this year.
  - That a new patrol vehicle had been purchased for Aberdyfi to ensure that the coast of south Meirionnydd was serviced and this investment in the harbour was 18K.
  - That a significant amount of drugs had been washed ashore in Tywyn and the public had been advised to be vigilant when walking along the beaches and to report any suspicious activity to the Police immediately.
- (viii) In the context of **the incident in Aberdyfi** on 22 August 2007, a report was submitted for information to members and they were requested to accept it and note the contents.

**Resolved:- To receive and note the report of the Principal Maritime and Country Parks Officer.**

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

**Reported:** By a member of the Aberdyfi Boat Club, the Club's wish for the Maritime Service to consider the following:

- (a) Improve the launching facilities at Church Bay
- (b) Designation of a specific area for powerboats separate to other facilities.
- (c) Provision of boat washing facilities.

In response, the Maritime Officer explained that it was difficult due to the lack of budget, but realistic projects could be considered in order to submit a bid for funding from other sources. It was noted that there was no water supply available in other harbours in the County due to the high costs of supply and maintenance. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for the Boat Club to provide an initial list of improvements they wish to see in the Harbour and to present these to the Maritime Unit for further consideration in the hope that bids could be submitted for grants.

**Resolved: To request that the member who represents the Boat Club discusses with his fellow members the possibility of drawing up a list of realistic improvements for further consideration by the Maritime Unit in order to submit bids for grants to realise possible improvements.**

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

That the next meeting of this Committee will take place on Tuesday, 21 October, 2008.

**Resolved To receive and note the above.**

**6. A WORD OF THANKS**

**Reported:** By the Vice-Chair that he understood that this would be the last meeting of the Chairman, namely Councillor Bill Bracewell, as a result of his decision not to stand in the local elections in May. The Vice-Chair paid him a tribute in his role as Chairman of this Consultative Committee, as an experienced mariner his extensive knowledge had been of tremendous benefit to this Committee throughout the years that he had served on it. This was supported by all members and he was thanked and best wishes were extended to him in the future.

Councillor Bracewell responded by saying that he had greatly enjoyed serving on this Committee and he thanked his fellow members and the officers for their kind words.

**CHAIRMAN**

