
PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 04-11-08

Present: Councillor Michael Parry (Chairman)

Councillors Robert J. Wright, Sion Selwyn Roberts, Peter Read, (Gwynedd Council), Dewi Owen Jones, (Pwllheli Town Council), Brian Edmunds and David Dewsbury, (Hafan Pwllheli Berth Holders Association), John Morris (Pwllheli Maritime Traders Association), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Yacht Club), David Hughes, (Pwllheli Chamber of Trade), Dr. J.L. Morris Jones, (Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee)

Also present: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Huw Davies (Group Engineer), Neil Garton Jones, (Chief Engineer – Engineering and Building Control), Wil Williams, (Hafan Pwllheli Manager), Mike Ward, (Marina Projects) and Ioan Hughes, (Committee Officer).

Apologies: Dafydd Phillips (Pwllheli Harbour Master), Mr Rod Green, (Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association).

1. CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Mike Parry as Chairman for the year 2008-09.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Peter Read as Vice-chairman for the year 2008-09.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None of the members present declared a personal interest.

4. CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME

The Chairman took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Robert Wright for receiving an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List earlier this year for his service with the Lifeboat. Welcome was extended to the new members, who were attending this meeting for the first time.

5. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 25 March, 2008, as a true record.

6. MARITIME SERVICE REPORT

Submitted – the report of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer, referring to the work carried out at the harbour during the past few months, along with plans for the future:

Navigation:

Attention was drawn to observations made by an officer from Trinity House regarding the condition of navigational aids.

Following the inspection, it was reported that most of the aids were in an acceptable condition. The Maritime and Country Parks Officer was happy to note the observations, bearing in mind the critical report which had been received from Trinity House following the inspection in 2007.

The special marker buoy for the sewerage discharge pipe of Hafan y Môr and the Welsh Water special navigational aid opposite South Beach would require maintenance. Further reference was made to maintenance plans for the winter months.

In response to enquiries, it was confirmed that navigational aids by the harbour entrance would be moved as required. It was also noted, in terms of the safety of children in the vicinity of the Penrhyn Glandon beach, that the special aids (boat zone) should be moved further into the bay.

It appeared that currently, there was sufficient water depth in the harbour channel and that the obstruction opposite the harbour office had been reduced. It was added that entrance to the inner harbour had narrowed since the previous dredging campaign, however, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer did not consider that this caused an obstruction.

Management

Members were reminded that the management of Hafan Pwllheli had been directly internalised to Gwynedd Council since April 2008, and that the Hafan was directly managed by Gwynedd Council. The officer emphasised that the same workers were employed following the change-over, and he thanked them for their co-operation. A member confirmed that the change had not affected the quality of the service.

During the next few months, it was intended to consider possible improvements to the management of the whole harbour and it was foreseen that it would be possible to implement any changes in October 2009. The officer noted that merging the Hafan service and the outer harbour would be one step.

Hoist

There was now a need for a new hoist in the Hafan, and the estimates received had varied from £108,000 to £134,000. The officer emphasised that funding needed to be secured in order to have a new hoist for 2009.

The officer explained that the hoist secured an annual income of between £100,000 and £110,000 and that it would not be possible to maintain the Hafan without a good quality hoist. He added that funding would have to come from the maritime budget, and that this was possible.

Events

Reference was made to the various activities held in Pwllheli in 2008, and the work carried out to ensure success. The Sailing Club was thanked for its co-operation.

One of the highlights was the national Optimist class competition, which attracted over 400 young competitors.

References were also made to the successes of the Wakestock Festival and the Food Festival, which would return to Pwllheli in 2009.

Pwllheli beach and Hafan Pwllheli once again won the European Blue Flag Award in 2008, with Hafan Pwllheli winning the Five Anchors Award. In addition to this, Glandon beach won the Green Coast award, and the application for the Rural Beach Award was also successful.

Statistics

There had been a reduction in the number of boats in the outer harbour moorings. There were 148 there in comparison to 164 in 2007. This was a cause of concern, in particular bearing in mind the large number of customers on the waiting list for the Hafan.

In response, a member noted that a lack of basic facilities was the reason for this, and he wanted to encourage more boat owners to stay. The officer confirmed that improvements to the landing pontoon would be considered in 2009, however, funding would not be available to complete the work then.

There were 412 boats on the pontoon moorings in Pwllheli, and there were no vacant pontoon moorings in the Hafan. There were currently 377 on the waiting list for a mooring in the marina, with each individual on the list having paid £50 to ensure that the application was genuine.

The registration scheme, which ensured that boats were clearly numbered, had been successful, but the officer called for the park and launch companies to take more advantage of the scheme.

Members referred to difficulties which existed in the vicinity of the park and launch. A call was made for inquiries to be made into the possibility of securing parking spaces on nearby land. The officer accepted that improvement was required, but on an encouraging note, he said that it all highlighted the popularity of Pwllheli Harbour.

Information regarding enforcement to claim additional tax when selling red diesel was presented. This increased costs to boat owners.

Detailed information was submitted regarding the financial position, and it was noted that the income target of the outer harbour for 2008/09 was £118,250. £104,201 had been reached by the end of September 2008, which was £14,049 lower than the target.

The Hafan income target this year was £1,497,850, and in the end of August report, it was noted that the income was £1,373,774, which was £124,076 short of the target.

Inflation was considered within the 2009-10 income targets and it was noted that the Maritime Unit would have to face the following increases:

- Hafan - £74,290
- Victoria Dock - £5,180
- Beaches - £6,330
- Harbours - £11,180.

Members expressed concern upon hearing of the increase. However, in response to enquiries, the officer emphasised that this would not be funding to deal with losses in other areas or departments. He added that the inflation was associated with unavoidable things such as gas and electricity.

RESVOLVED to accept the report.

7. SAILING ACADEMY SCHEME

Submitted – the written report of the Head of Economy and Regeneration Service, on the work carried out to date in relation to establishing a Sailing Academy and Events Centre in Pwllheli. The Council Board had already supported the scheme in principle.

Reference was made to the features of Pwllheli as a sailing centre and the fact that some of the main championships had been held there. Despite the success, it was noted that limitations on the land and water facilities were becoming apparent. It was added that that investments in

other important UK sailing centres made it increasingly difficult to attract major, high standard competitions to Pwllheli.

In response, the possibility of establishing an international sailing centre with facilities was considered. It was explained that the scheme would include capital elements, such as dredging work and the provision of moorings and associated facilities in the harbour, along with a proposed building for the Academy.

Details of the work carried out to date were presented, and the officer believed that there was an opportunity to build upon the success of sailing events which had already been attracted to Pwllheli, and that there was potential to endorse Pwllheli as a venue for events of an international status.

It was explained that further studies needed to be completed prior to applying for financial support from grant sources.

RESOLVED to accept the report

8. HARBOUR DREDGING STRATEGY

Submitted – a report by Mike Ward, a representative from 'Marina Projects', which was the company that had been appointed by Gwynedd Council to prepare the Pwllheli Harbour Dredging Strategy over the next ten to fifteen years.

It was explained that there were three distinct zones within the harbour, namely the Harbour Entrance, the Access Channel and Marina Basin. Reference was made to these individually, focusing on their existing conditions and the work which could be carried out.

Reference was made to the key matters which formed the strategy, and following this, the importance of reducing the dredging burden as much as possible was noted. In addition to this, it was considered to be appropriate for any future strategy to focus on ensuring that the harbour entrance and access channel would be maintained in order to ensure that their use could be optimised by all harbour users.

Further along in the report, a summary of 23 recommendations were presented, for the members' consideration.

If dredging would be carried out each winter, the annual cost would be approximately £180,000. Nevertheless, it may be possible to dredge every two years, but this would in large part be dependent upon ensuring that sufficient capacity could be created within the stilling lagoon.

With respect to timing, it was envisaged that the strategy would be established for the winter 2009-2010 dredging.

A budget for the 2008/09 dredging related works had been prepared and this amounted to some £90,000, assuming that it would be necessary to conduct limited dredging works in the harbour entrance.

Members had the opportunity to voice their opinion on the strategy, and a full discussion ensued. Particular attention was given to the disposal of material following the dredging. It was emphasised that it could be beneficial for local beaches and it was accepted that consideration should be given to using it within the construction industry. It was confirmed that every possible option would be considered.

RESOLVED to accept the information.

9. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEMBERS' REQUEST

a) Charges for 2009-10

A request had been made by the Hafan Pwllheli Berth Holders Association for any increase in the berthing and ancillary charges for 2009-10 to be limited to 2%. Also, a request had been made by the Association for the local residents discount for the harbour berths to be extended to local residents who were Hafan berth holders.

The Association representative emphasised that every effort should be made to ensure that local residents who were berth holders at the harbour and Hafan did not leave. It was added that many of the people were elderly, and the increasing costs caused concern for many.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer explained that a report on the Fees and Charges would be considered by the Council Board, and that it would be possible to further consider the suggestions.

It was noted that Councillor Robert Wright did not participate in this discussion.

RESOLVED to note the observations and accept the information.

b) A request was made by the Llŷn Fishermen's Association for the Consultative Committee to consider the problems caused by scallop fishing vessels visiting Pwllheli Harbour.

Their representative elaborated that an increasing number of large vessels, such as scallop fishing vessels visited the harbour, and were getting into difficulties due to their unsuitable size.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer confirmed that several members of the Llŷn Fishermen's Association had drawn attention to these problems.

It was suggested that there could be better arrangements to ensure that these vessels don't arrive without notice.

RESOLVED to note the observations, and for the Maritime and Country Parks Officer to further consider the matter.

CHAIRMAN