
PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
13-10-09

Present: Councillors: Robert J. Wright, Sion Selwyn Roberts (Gwynedd Council), Michael Sol Owen (Pwllheli Town Council), David Dewsbury and G.Williams (Marina Berth Holders Association), Michael Parry (Llyn Fishermen Association), John Morris (Pwllheli Marine Traders Association), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club), David Hughes (Pwllheli Chamber of Trade), Dr.J.L.Jones Morris (Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee)

Also present: Barry Davies (Maritime and Rural Parks Officer), Huw Davies (Group Engineer), Wil Williams, (Manager, Hafan Pwllheli), Dafydd Phillips, (Harbour Master) and Ioan Hughes, (Committee Officer).

1. CHAIRMAN

It was resolved to re-elect Councillor Michael Parry as Chairman for the 2009/10 year. The member gave thanks for the honour.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

In his absence, it was resolved to elect Councillor Peter Read as Vice-chairman of the committee for the 2009/10 year.

3. APOLOGIES: Councillor Peter Read, Rod Green (Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association), Huw Davies, (Group Engineer), Neil Garton Jones, (Chief Engineer – Engineering and Building Control) and Ken Fitzpatrick (Assistant Maritime and Harbours Officer).

4. RESIGNATION

It was noted that Mr Rod Green had decided to resign as the representative of the Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association on this committee. Condolences were conveyed to Mr Green in his recent bereavement and the Chairman referred to the conscientious work achieved by Mr Green as a member of this Committee for a long period of time.

It was confirmed that Mr Richard Williams would be the representative of the Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association in future

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

5. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Consultative Committee held on 24 March 2009, as a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Reference was made to a request made at the meeting in March 2009 for a representative from the Treasurer's Department to be present at this meeting to discuss budgets. The Maritime and Rural Parks Officer noted that he had discussed the details of the budget in detail with the Accountant. Although expressing dissatisfaction because the representative was not present, the officer was of the opinion that additional information would not have been submitted if the accountant had been present.

The officer emphasised that detailed information was available to be submitted to the Committee. He also encouraged members to contact the Unit at any time should they be eager to discuss specific issues.

The representative of the Marina Berth Holders Association noted that he had had an opportunity to discuss the budget with the officer and the meeting had been very useful. He thanked the officer for the assistance.

- ii) The officer confirmed that he had submitted members' opinion regarding legislation associated with drinking alcohol on pleasure boats. He also referred to some of the contents of proposed legislation, noting that it was proposed to include Personal Water Craft and other craft within the Merchant Shipping Legislation.

The new legislation would ensure that Personal Water Craft were required to conform with the Col Regs and harbour by-laws, whereas currently following the case of Regina v Goodwin, they were not included in legislation.

- iii) As a consequence of the decision made to distribute computer disks of reports prepared by consultative engineers in relation to dredging the harbour, it was noted that disks were available to be distributed at the meeting.

- iv) Reference was made to the boat abandoned at the far end of the harbour near Partington Marine/ Pwllheli Seafoods. The Chairman was concerned because the condition of the boat was deteriorating and was creating an additional hazard.

The officer confirmed that the Unit had contacted the owner of the boat and that he had stated that he intended to hand over the boat to another person but written confirmation of this had not been received.

The officer added that the work of dealing with the boat had been added to the harbour work programme that would be completed before the end of the year. He reported that the only option available was to demolish and remove the boat from the site. He confirmed that there were assets on the boat and he suggested that these could be sold in order to reduce the Council's costs.

7. REPORT OF THE MARITIME UNIT

Submitted - the report of the Maritime and Rural Parks Officer, providing details of individual matters:

Navigation

It was reported that an officer from Trinity House had inspected all the navigation aids in Pwllheli harbour in August this year and had completed a computerised audit in September. The officer was satisfied with the situation, although some of the aids required maintenance work.

The Officer confirmed that it was proposed to programme the work during the next few months and there was a need to ensure that work already programmed for the winter months of 2008/09 was completed before Christmas this year.

The Officer referred to the dredging operations in the area around the entrance to the harbour that had been completed in September 2009. The Officer was glad of the improvement seen and this was endorsed by the Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders Association's representative. However, the member added that it would be more beneficial if the work had been undertaken earlier in the year. The representative of the Pwllheli Marine Traders Association noted that the dredging had not widened the mouth of the harbour.

The officer explained further that it was likely that annual dredging work would have to be undertaken in the harbour mouth annually and around £20,000 to £25,000 would have to be allocated for this work.

Harbour /Marina Management

The Officer drew attention to financial cuts that had to be faced, noting that the funding for half the post of the Pwllheli Harbour Master had already been identified as a financial saving. Funding would still be available to appoint a Harbour Master for six months per annum and it was foreseen that the next period would extend from 1 April 2010 to 30 September 2010.

As a consequence of the changes, the officer emphasised that collaboration was required to ensure that Pwllheli harbour and the Marina were served effectively.

It was noted that two officers that had been responsible for night time security at the Marina (between 19.00 and 7.30 hours) had resigned after a long period of service with the Council. To overcome this change, a local security company had been appointed to assist with the security work on a temporary basis. The Officer accepted, after a member had expressed his opinion, that this was an example of valuable experience being lost. However, the officer added that initial training had been provided and the current contract was on a temporary basis until a decision had been reached on the most effective way of providing the service.

Hoist

The officer reported on the work currently underway on the proposal to purchase a new hoist to serve customers of Pwllheli Harbour.

It was explained that the Unit had had considerable difficulties but had succeeded in getting a suitable pump for the existing hoist. The pump had been purchased from Italy and the hoist was working satisfactorily. The officer added that further work had to be undertaken before a new hoist could be purchased but it was anticipated that it would be installed within a year.

Events

The Officer referred to the all important collaboration that had taken place between the Sailing Club and the Unit and he congratulated the Club on the success of numerous events throughout the summer. He noted that this success benefited the whole town.

The representative of the Sailing Club thanked the officer for the observations and added that the importance of the events for the economy of Pwllheli and the area was acknowledged. The representative also thanked the Mayor of the town for extending a special welcome to competitors at opening ceremonies.

He added that already 11 events had been arranged for 2010 and further events were in the diary for 2011 up until 2014.

The representative referred to a positive meeting held with Pwllheli Town Council, the Chamber of Trade and Gwynedd Council with the aim of working jointly to market the town as the Heart of Sailing in Wales. He was of the opinion that these meetings would create a means of sharing information about future events.

Statistics

The officer reported in detail on the number of boats that were moored in the Marina and the outer harbour.

There were 151 boats on moorings in the outer harbour which represented a small increase compared with the number in 2008. It was noted that 407 boats were on pontoon moorings in the Marina which was six fewer boats than the maximum capacity. This meant that pontoon moorings were available for visitors' boats.

The officer noted that it was heartening to see 302 boats on the waiting list for the Marina despite the recession. In line with the Council's regulations, every individual on the waiting list had paid £50 to ensure that the application was genuine. Nevertheless, concern was expressed by some members who were uncertain about the accuracy of the waiting list. Some were concerned that many people had put their names on the waiting list although they had no definite plans to have a boat in the marina because they considered having a boat as a long-term plan.

The officer emphasised that the waiting list did exist and individuals were willing to pay £50 to remain on the list. He was of the opinion that there was room to be proud of the success seen in Pwllheli despite the recession.

After the members had reached a decision, the Senior Manager – Economy and Community noted that the Marina was a special resource and any change should not mean that it would be considered as a penalizing marina.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a comprehensive review is undertaken of the waiting list;**
- ii) That the cost of remaining on the waiting list increases to £100 per annum;**
- iii) That anyone refusing an offer of a mooring in the marina is taken off the waiting list for two years.**

Budgets

Submitted, for information, the final budget report of Pwllheli Harbour and Hafan Pwllheli for the 2008/09 financial year. Also submitted were the expenditure budget and income targets for all the harbours and beaches for the 2009/10 financial year.

The officer emphasised the need to be very careful in order to ensure that the service did not commit funding beyond the budget in the current financial year. Consequently, it was noted that a comprehensive work programme was being prepared for the autumn and winter in order to identify priorities in Pwllheli harbour.

In response to an enquiry, it was noted that approximately £200,000 had been reserved as expenditure for dredging the harbour.

Increasing Fees

The Maritime and Country Parks Unit would be reviewing existing fees and charges and would undertake a review of harbours, marinas and beaches for the financial year prior to recommending changes.

The officer emphasised that there was a need to consider every recommendation and confirmation would have to be received from the Statutory Officers and the Portfolio Leader before the new fees could be announced. It was expected that customers would be informed before Christmas.

He greatly hoped that the fees and charges of the Hafan and the Outer Harbour would not increase more than inflation in the 2010/11 financial year. Also, consideration would be given to the possibility of reducing some fees in the outer harbour as the depth of water under the keels of boats was reducing.

A member referred to the substantial increase in electricity charges and the officer noted that the matter would be addressed, although no assurance of any change could be given.

Dredging the Harbour

The officer referred to the work completed recently and the work that needed to be undertaken. He noted that dredging the navigation channel and the Hafan basin was essential work and the work was expected to commence in January/February 2010.

The information was welcomed and members were eager for detailed information regarding the proposed dredging work to be released.

A member called for the deposits collected as a result of dredging the harbour to be used for the benefit of places in Pwllheli and not to be used on any other part of the Gwynedd coastline.

RESOLVED to accept the report and to note the observations of members.

Pwllheli Sailing Academy and Event Centre Project

A presentation was provided by the Senior Manager – Economy and Community, providing details on the work undertaken thus far and what needed to be achieved regarding establishing the Pwllheli Sailing Academy and Event Centre Project.

The officer referred specifically to the Vision and Aims produced for the scheme. Within the Vision, the following had been identified:

The project vision is to create a Welsh National Sailing Academy and Events Centre that maximises the potential afforded by the natural location and world class sailing waters around Pwllheli.

As a Centre of Excellence for sail training, it will provide state of the art facilities for sailors of all levels of competence and abilities. In addition to providing for the hosting of dinghy events of national and international standard, the facilities provided will also cater for keelboat events, yachting regattas and other water sport activities.

The facility will exhibit a distinct identity by promoting the Welsh language and culture. Furthermore, through joint participation the facility will be sustainable and bring long-term economic benefit to the local area and its multi-purpose function will provide for use by local communities, businesses, schools and other training providers.

The Centre will make a significant contribution to the development of Pwllheli Harbour and complement Hafan Pwllheli by providing new visitor berths and on-shore facilities for visiting yachtsmen.

The officer elaborated on the Vision and the various aims. However, he emphasised that only concept proposals had been prepared thus far, which meant that preparatory work would have to be undertaken along with detailed designs.

As further development, a work programme had been produced, listing the following steps that had to be taken:

- i) Establish a not for profit organisation; establish a steering group; confirm design brief; discuss lease; running arrangements
- ii) Design the Scheme
- iii) Undertake preparatory work for submitting an application for planning permission
- iv) Implement the tender
- v) Commence work on the site.

It was explained further that the Council would lead on the work but a range of bodies and agencies would have an important input in the development of the plan.

The proposal and the work achieved thus far were supported by members but concern was expressed regarding the difficulties that could be encountered in respect of funding the plan.

It was acknowledged that the Council was not in a position to commit substantial resources into the plan. Consequently, there would be a need to target funding sources.

RESOLVED to accept the report and note its contents.

Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders Association

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer reported on issues at the request of the Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders Association.

Special attention was given to the 'Port Marine Safety Code' and the representative of the Association underlined the need to be aware of the contents of the Safety Code.

The officer emphasised the need to adhere to the wide range of laws and regulations and the Unit's workforce was aware of their responsibilities and that Trinity House was satisfied with the situation.

Date of the Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting of this Committee would be held at 18.00 on 23 March 2010.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 8.45pm.

CHAIRMAN