
**PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
23-10-12**

Present: Councillor Michael Sol Owen (Chairman)

Councillor Robert J. Wright (Gwynedd Council), Councillor Mici Plwm (Pwllheli Town Council), W.A. Partington and Robert Riddell (Maritime Traders Association), Andrew Picken, (Pwllheli Chamber of Commerce), David Dewsbury and Brian Edmonds (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association)

Also present: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Wil Williams (Pwllheli Harbour Manager), Llyr B. Jones (Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department) and Gwyn Parry Williams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillor Peter Read

1. CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Michael Sol Owen as Chairman of the Committee for 2012/13.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

Resolved to elect Mr David Dewsbury as Vice-chairman of the Committee for 2012/13.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Consultative Committee held on 13 March 2012, subject to changing the words “inner harbour” to “outer harbour” in the second paragraph under the heading “Navigation/Moorings/Dredging”.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Item 4 - Matters to be Considered at the Request of the Consultative Committee Members
c) Pwllheli Wakeboarding Wire

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer informed the committee, following the previous meeting of this committee in March 2012, that correspondence had been sent to the individual who had submitted the idea, drawing attention to the decision by the committee to hold a meeting with him and the local members to discuss alternative options for undertaking the venture. No response had been received from the individual, and it had therefore been assumed that he no longer intended to proceed with the venture.

A member referred to the fact that the individual in question had contacted him about the possibility of using the part between the old island and the North Quay to locate the venture.

RESOLVED that the Maritime and Country Parks Officer, in consultation with the local members, considers the possibility of using this location to undertake the venture.

5. MARITIME SERVICE REPORT

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer presented his report which addressed the following matters specifically:

- Navigation, Moorings, Dredging
- Harbour Budgets
- Events
- The Sailing Academy
- Maritime Statistics
- Harbour Staff
- Security of Marine Equipment

Navigation, Moorings, Dredging

i) The Maritime and Rural Parks Officer referred to the Harbour Safety Code published in 2002. He outlined the main points and explained that it would be reviewed during the next few weeks. He noted the intention to submit the revised code to this committee for adoption in the meeting to be held on 19 March 2013.

A member asked whether the Safety Code was on the Council's Website. In response, the officer stated that the majority of matters relating to the maritime service were not on the internet site, and that he had discussed this with the Information Technology Unit. It was agreed that the Information Technology Unit should be asked again about this.

ii) Regarding the aids to navigation, the officer noted that Trinity House held an annual inspection of the aids, and that those in Pwllheli were the easiest to maintain. He thanked the hafan and harbour staff for the work undertaken on these aids, and he noted that the standard of the harbour buoys in general was high.

Regarding the light on the buoy outside Gimblet Rock, a member asked who was responsible for its maintenance. In response, the officer informed that Welsh Water was responsible for this buoy and that they had been asked whether there was any purpose in retaining it. Welsh Water noted that they had recently invested significantly in purchasing navigation aids throughout Wales.

iii) The number of moorings in the harbour had decreased as a number of them were always vacant, and the section between the North Quay and the old island had been cleared, but the main mooring chain on the seabed had been retained in case use would be made of them again in future. He did not anticipate that the maintenance costs of the moorings would be very high this winter. Some inspection work might be required as this had not been undertaken last year. This work would be linked to similar work in Porthmadog harbour. It was noted that approximately £1000 had been earmarked for this work. No work was necessary on the piles.

Regarding the silt monitoring buoy, the officer stated that an application had been received from Bangor University to install two buoys on the channel bed, opposite the Harbourmaster's office, for a period of a fortnight, to monitor the silt entering and leaving the harbour.

iv) Regarding the dredging work, the officer noted that a number of improvements had been completed, including the removal of a number of piles, and that this had been of great assistance to vessels navigating the harbour. The hydrographic survey had

recently been completed. The situation in the channel appeared positive although there was still some dredging work to be done there.

Harbour Budgets

In relation to Pwllheli harbour, the officer noted that there had been an overspend of just over £2,000 in the harbour during 2011/12 on supplies and services costs. The majority of harbour staff costs had been cut as part of the savings approximately four years ago. He noted that the income from the moorings in the outer harbour was challenging. Last year's target was £118,000 and the target for permanent moorings was just under £100,000, but due to the vacant moorings in the harbour, there had been a reduction of £31,000 in the income and therefore the total overspend was £33,000.

In response to a member's question regarding rents from land, buildings etc., the officer noted that consideration was being given to advertise empty units with a view to marketing these units, including the former harbourmaster's office which was currently vacant. There was an intention to advertise vacant units over the following months.

Regarding the budget for Hafan Pwllheli, the officer stated that there was a little over £22,000 underspend in the staffing costs. He noted that the target income was £1.5m and that £1.4m had been secured, which was around £104,000 short of the target. Therefore, there was an overspend of approximately £91,000 in the Hafan during the last financial year.

The officer drew attention to the reduction in the number of moorings in all harbours throughout Gwynedd, mainly due to the country's vulnerable economic situation.

The officer noted that he was very concerned about the situation in the outer harbour as there had been significant investment there to remove 18 piles that in principle meant 36 moorings. Consideration would be given to installing pontoons between the other piles with the potential to provide more moorings in future years. It was anticipated that by the end of the current financial year the target income in the outer harbour would be £46,000 short of the target, with £119,000 overspend in the Hafan.

In relation to the fees and charges for 2013/14, the officer informed the committee that he anticipated a recommendation not to increase them, and that this would be a positive way forward.

The Senior Officer – Economy and Community Department stated that consideration was currently being given to the fees and charges for the next financial year. He noted that, if local businesses felt that a discount would be beneficial for the next financial year, he would welcome any correspondence or information that would form part of the business case when considering next year's budgets.

The officer noted that the new hoist had been installed in the Hafan at a cost of £150,000 and that the old hoist would be sold in the next few weeks.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department noted that part of the agreed long-term action plan referred to the commitment to invest in the Hafan, and that the hoist was one of these aspects.

Events

The officer informed the committee that the Wakestock Festival had been very successful again this year, and that it would return again next year, with competitions being held in the inner harbour on 5/6 July 2013.

No confirmation had been received by the Food Festival's organisers, but it was presumed that they would hold discussions with Pwllheli Sailing Club.

He noted that Pwllheli Sailing Club had had a successful year again this year, and he thanked the club's members and staff for securing these successes.

In response to an observation by a member regarding the lack of lighting in the vicinity of the Sailing Club, the officer stated that he had already discussed the issue with the site engineer.

In relation to the consultation on the Dog Control Orders, the officer noted that this affected the harbour's boundaries, namely Glandon Beach and Marian y De Beach. It was suggested that at Glandon Beach the zone could be moved to the other side as it would then be possible to walk from Glandon to Abererch without any restriction. He encouraged the members to respond to the consultation by 5 November 2012, and that all the comments would then be assessed. He noted that it had been necessary to reconsider a number of beaches in Gwynedd because the route of the coastal path passed through beaches where dog restrictions were already in force. Maritime service staff did not currently possess the power to fine dog owners who committed a crime, but if this order came into force, they would have the right to issue fines.

The Sailing Academy

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department provided an update on the academy plan.

He referred to the three aspects of the plan, namely –

- a) Redirection of the hafan road and the work of connecting the gas supply which had already been completed.
- b) Construction of a new building. He noted that the tender process for the building was ongoing and that tenders had been invited. It was intended to commence the construction of the building in January 2013, and that the academy's plan would be implemented by 2014.
- c) Development of resources within the harbour in terms of pontoons to the north of the Hafan for academy events, and also the associated dredging work. As part of the Hafan's action plan, there was a commitment to make best use of the equipment and dredging machinery programmed for the following year so that the maintenance work could also be completed. He was aware of some of the current restrictions in the channel and the basin and that the aim was to finish the maintenance work for the 2013 season.

He gave details and information on the scheme that had been received by an Engineer from the Council's Consultative Department who was working on the scheme.

A member referred to the fact that care was needed in determining where silt dredged from the harbour was disposed of. The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department suggested that a meeting should be held with local members and the contractor to discuss this. There was agreement to this suggestion.

The officer referred to a newsletter produced for the Hafan, and it was expected that it would be available soon. He also drew attention to the fact that more publicity was needed to be given to matters/events relating to the harbour, and he promised to discuss the matter with the Council's Press Department.

Maritime Statistics

The officer provided details about the statistics of harbour moorings, Hafan and other harbours as well as general statistics.

In relation to statistics for Hafan, the officer noted that it was expected that boats would come into Hafan during the winter also.

A member expressed concern that that the number of local boatpeople in the harbour was reducing compared with the rest of the boatpeople and asked whether it would be appropriate to consider giving them a discount. In response, the officer noted that there was a difference between the fees of local boatpeople and the rest of the boatpeople. He was of the opinion that a discount should not be given as vacant moorings were available for them in the outer harbour and in Porthmadog harbour.

Harbour Staff

The officer noted that steps had been taken to restructure the harbour and Hafan staff with the Hafan Manager now responsible for the management of the Harbour also.

He noted that a new tractor had been bought for the Hafan which would also be used to clear the sand in Marian y De.

The harbourmaster had been relocated to the Hafan side where the majority of activities occurred.

It was intended to advertise the management of the public slipway and also the former harbourmaster's office in order to put them out to tender and to have better control of the launching next year.

Security of Marine Equipment

The officer noted that the police had been concerned due to the number of cases of theft from boats in particular the area between Abersoch and Aberdyfi and that they had re-launched the Marine Watch Scheme. He asked members of the committee to notify boat owners in the area.

RESOLVED to accept the report of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer.

6. ELECTION OF OBSERVERS

It was reported that observer(s) needed to be elected to serve on the Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committees.

RESOLVED to elect Councillor R.J. Wright to serve as an observer on the Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committees.

7. FUTURE START TIME OF THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to stick to 6.00pm as the start time of the committee in the future.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 19 March 2013.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.50pm.