



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

BARMOUTH HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

2.00 pm, TUESDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2022

Location

Cyfarfod Rhithiol / Virtual Meeting

(i gael mynediad cyhoeddus, cysylltwch â ni)

Contact Point

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(DISTRIBUTED 15/03/22)

MEMBERSHIP:

Gwynedd Council:

Louise Hughes
Eryl Jones-Williams
Gethin Glyn Williams

Co-Opted Members:

Councillor Matthew Harris
Councillor Rob Triggs
Councillor Brian Woolley
Dr John Smith
Wendy Ponsford
John Johnson

Mark James
Martin Parouty
Peter Appleton

Ian Sadler

Barmouth Resort Improvement Group
Barmouth Town Council
Arthog Community Council
Barmouth Viaduct Access Group
Merioneth Yacht Club
Barmouth and Cardigan Bay Sea Fisheries
Association
Royal National Lifeboat Institution
Barmouth Harbour & Estuary Users Group
Cardigan Bay FLAG committee
representative
Three Peaks Yacht Race

Observers:

Peter Read
Gareth Thomas
Dr John Jones-Morris

Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee
Cabinet Member of Economic Development
Porthmadog Consultative Harbour
Committee

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. MINUTES

4 - 7

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting of the Barmouth Consultative Committee held on the 19th of October 2021.

4. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

8 - 13

To submit

- a) a report by the Senior Harbours Officer
- b) a report by the Harbourmaster
- c) a Dredging Feasibility Study

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

To consider matters at the request of the Members.

- Matters raised by Barmouth Town Council (email dated 4th of March 2022)

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee will be held on the 8th of November 2022.

Agenda Item 3

BARMOUTH HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 19/10/21

Present:

Members: Councillor Gethin Glyn Williams, Councillor Rob Triggs (Barmouth Town Council), Dr John Smith (Barmouth Viaduct Access Group), Peter Appleton (Cardigan Bay Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG))

Officers: Barry Davies (Maritime Manager), Arthur Francis Jones (Senior Harbours Officer), Bergitte Evans (Barmouth Harbour Assistant) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Gareth Thomas (Cabinet Member - Economic Development), Councillor Louise Hughes, Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams, Councillor Brian Woolley (Arthog Community Council), Mr John Johnson (Barmouth and Cardigan Bay Sea Fisheries Association), Councillor Matthew Harris (Barmouth Destinations Improvement Group), Mark James (RNLI) and Llŷr B Jones (Assistant Head Economy and Community Department)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None to note

3. MINUTES

The Chair accepted the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee that took place on 23 March 2021

Matters arising from the minutes:

- **Feasibility Study** - the Maritime Officer highlighted that the result of the feasibility study into proposed dredging works in the Harbour would give a clear picture of what will be possible in the future.
- **Legislation requirements in the context of the Harbour Development Plan** - the Maritime Officer highlighted that Barmouth Harbour was established as a Municipal Harbour under the Council following the requirements of the Pier and Harbour Confirmation Act (1930). It was noted that the legislation did not force the Authority to develop the harbour, only to maintain it. The development of the Harbour was a discretionary matter. In addition, it was highlighted that the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009 confers further requirements on the Harbour Authority and compliance was required with this act prior to the consideration of further developments.

4. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

The following reports were presented, and members were invited to give feedback on their content and to ask questions.

- a) **The Senior Harbour Officer's report, giving a brief update to the committee on harbour matters for the period from March 2021 to October 2021.**

The Senior Harbours Officer noted that it was pleasing to announce that it had been a successful year with an increase in the number of visitors and customers reflecting the gradual relaxation of Covid restrictions and barriers to overseas travel.

Attention was drawn to the following matters:

Moorings

There had been 54 boats on annual moorings in Barmouth Harbour in 2021

Staffing Matters

All the staff (harbour and beach) were praised for their service during a busy and very challenging time. It was reported that they had a proactive attitude and it was pleasing to see good cooperation and safe supervision over the summer. No complaints had been received. It was added that the staffing situation in the harbour had received detailed consideration and it was proposed that the Assistant Harbourmaster and the Harbour Assistant would be offered a secondment to stay with the intention of advertising the Harbourmaster's vacant post early in 2022.

Following a very recent review it had been resolved that the Assistant Harbour Master would be promoted to the Harbour Master's post on secondment until 30 September 2022 and the employment period and post of the Harbour Assistant would also be extended until 30 September 2022 with a promotion based on secondment.

Financial Matters

In response to a question regarding the Harbour's finance, the Maritime Officer highlighted that a brief summary of the Harbour budget and the current financial position would be shared with members in the next few weeks. It was added that approximately a further £6k was to be spent on maintenance matters, however, the income level this year had achieved the target. In relation to Barmouth Harbour's proposed fees and charges and the Powerboats and Personal Watercraft launch fees for the 2022/23 season, it was noted that the Service intended to amend the fees in line with the rate of inflation. It was also noted that there was a need to consider energy costs. The Service had not received confirmation of the rates that should be implemented - it was suggested that the information would be available before Christmas. **The Maritime Officer to circulate a brief summary of the Harbour budget and the current financial position to members**

Feasibility Study - Dredging

It was reported that there would be a need to dredge a volume of 70,000m³ if it was desired to have an appropriate depth within a small area opposite the harbour quay. Members were reminded that a financial bid, with the support of the Cardigan Bay Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG), had enabled the Council to commission a feasibility study with an additional £10k to the £35k for a scheme to sample the nature of the mud. It was reported that an analysis and results of the scheme would determine the possible options with a draft report to be released at the end of November. Peter Appleton was thanked as well as FLAG for their support. **Maritime Officer to circulate the draft report to Members. Members to consider the draft report and to present feedback / comments / questions to the Maritime Officer to give to the experts, in order to report back on the matter at the March 2022 meeting.**

Registration Issues:

To facilitate the registration process, powerboat and personal watercraft owners could register their vessels on-line via Gwynedd Council's website. It was reported that the process was

effective and had reduced the administrative work considerably. It was added that an e-mail would be sent to owners in February 2022 to re-register on-line. It was noted that the service continued to work jointly with the Information Technology Unit to try and ensure that a scheme to pay for moorings would also be available for spring 2022. **It was suggested that the Senior Harbours Officer and the Harbour master communicated with local forums to raise awareness of the on-line registration scheme.**

In response to an observation that there had been registration difficulties with some launching personal watercraft from leisure sites / holiday parks along the coast, it was noted that officers had communicated with the managers of these locations to ask them to encourage owners to register their vessels prior to launching. In response to a follow-on question, it was noted that the response had been weak, but officers were continuing with the venture. It was accepted that it had been a difficult year and there had been 'new visitors' in the area - the hope was that the situation would improve. **It was suggested that Councillor Mathew Harris should contact the leisure sites/holiday parks again and for Councillor Rob Triggs to raise the matter at the Town Council.**

The Department of Transport's Consultation Paper

Reference was made to the consultation relating to altering legislation to bring recreational and personal watercraft within the scope of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, to ensure safe practices. The Maritime Officer highlighted that Gwynedd arrangements for this matter were tight enough, with the exception of some private sites. Members were encouraged to submit their individual responses by the closing date of 1 November 2021, however, reference was made to the responses of the Harbour Committees of Pwllheli and Porthmadog to the consultation.

The main elements of the consultation were outlined and it was noted that some amendments were complex and long-winded. It was proposed to support option 3, namely creating legislation under section 112 of the Railways and Transportation Safety Act 2003 to extend the relevant provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, and relevant regulations, to include recreational and personal watercraft emphasising the importance of ensuring training for users and a call to increase the age limit to drive recreational and personal watercraft

(b) The Senior Harbours Officer report, summarising the navigational and operational matters that had arisen between March 2021 and October 2021, including maintenance matters.

The Maritime Officer thanked Barmouth Harbour staff for their work during the season - Members added their gratitude and reported that it was pleasing to have staff stability and support for the community.

It was reported that the Service had received its annual inspection of navigational aids in Barmouth and the channel approach by Trinity House staff on 28 September 2021. A report on their findings would follow.

Currently, no Local Notice to Mariners was in operation regarding the navigational marks in the channel.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note and accept the reports.**
- 2. To respond as follows to the Department of Transport's Consultation Paper, "Strengthening enforcement of the dangerous use of recreational and personal watercraft":-**

- That this committee supports option 3, namely creating legislation under section 112 of the Railways and Transportation Safety Act 2003 to extend the relevant provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, and relevant regulations, to include recreational and personal watercraft.
- To emphasise the importance of ensuring training for users and a call to increase the age limit for driving recreational and personal watercraft.

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

Merioneth Yacht Club

It was highlighted that the Club's representative, Mrs Wendy Ponsford would be leaving the area and therefore the Yacht Club needed to nominate someone in her place. It was reported that Mrs Ponsford had been a member of the Committee for years and her contributions were always enthusiastic and appreciative. Best wishes were extended to her in her new home. **The Maritime Officer to send a message on behalf of the Committee to thank Mrs Wendy Ponsford for her service.**

Mr John Smith noted that he would be reporting on the Club's activities until a representative had been formally confirmed.

Beach buoys

It was reported that it was not practical to install buoys to prevent powerboats to come close to the beach as the buoys themselves would move with the tide and come ashore. It was noted that in the past up to 40 buoys had been installed and a number had been lost. It could be argued that it would be possible to install stronger / heavier buoys, however, a specialist boat would be required to undertake this work.

It was suggested that as owners register they could be encouraged to stay approximately 100m from the beach. If there was no compliance then the registration number should be noted and followed up.

Outdoor Swimming

There had been an increase in interest to have an open air swimming resource in the Harbour - a suggestion by the Yacht Club to create a watercraft prevention zone in order to create an all year round swimming area. **It was proposed to hold local discussions to seek to trial the venture emphasising** that if buoys were used, they would have to be installed without prejudice and swimmers should take responsibility and dress appropriately.

Motor Cross 2021

It was reported that the event had been successful but a comment was made regarding the timing. **The Maritime Officer to write to the organisers and suggest a date for 2022.** The date to then be circulated to Members of the Committee and Barmouth Town Council for observations prior to confirmation.

Sand near the compound

A request to consider a price for the work - **it was suggested that a local discussion should take place to discuss this**

6. NEXT MEETING

22 March 2022.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 2.55pm.

Agenda Item 4

MEETING	Abermaw Harbour Consultative Committee.
DATE	22nd March 2022
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR	Senior Harbour Officer

1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Committee's main function is to consider, discuss and advise on matters relating to the management, safety and development of the Harbour and to receive Member's observations on matters relating to Abermaw Harbour.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update for the attention of the Committee on harbour matters for the yearly period ending March 2022, in order to receive feedback from the members on safety matters and the operational matters of the Harbour.

2. Abermaw Moorings and Boat Registration.

- 2.1 In accordance with previous years, it is anticipated that an inspection of the Visitors' moorings within the harbour will take place before the Easter period, subject to the commitments of the mooring contractor and the existing weather conditions at the time.
- 2.2 Last year, the Gwynedd Council Powerboat and Personal Watercraft registration system was introduced through an online arrangement, allowing customers to choose the most suitable location to collect registration and launch permits. Following the success of the arrangement, customers will be required to register via the Gwynedd Council website, with the online registration and payment system open on the 31 March 2022.

3. Port Marine Safety Code.

- 3.1 The Port Marine Safety Code ('PMSC') sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the port marine environment. It applies to all Statutory Harbour Authorities.
 - 3.1.1 The Code represents good practice as recognised by a wide range of industry stakeholders and Gwynedd Council understands that a failure to adhere to good practice may be indicative of a harbour authority being in breach of certain legal duties. It is necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Port Marine Safety Code and to regularly receive observations on its contents, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to the harbour activities, navigational aids, suitability of by-laws, safety matters and general day to day work at Abermaw Harbour.
 - 3.1.2 The Service itself continually reviews the Port Marine Safety Code to ensure safety standards within the harbours of Gwynedd are maintained and an annual external audit of the code is also undertaken by the defined designated person who is independent of Cyngor Gwynedd.

4. Staffing Matters.

- 4.1 Harbour staff have continued to work from the harbour office throughout the latest Omicron Coronavirus epidemic to ensure the safety of the harbour and compliance with the prevailing Welsh Government Coronavirus Regulations. Adaptations within the harbour office remain in place,

including a Perspex screen at the public counter to ensure staff safety during enquiries conducted by members of the public.

4.2 The Harbourmaster and the harbour assistant have undertaken a winter maintenance work programme at the harbour, in addition to providing assistance with required work at the harbours of Aberdyfi and Porthmadog. Further work is to be carried out particularly in relation to the harbour ladders and navigation marks before the busy summer period commences.

4.3 It is sad to report that the present Harbourmaster will be leaving her post on the 1st April 2022. The Maritime Unit is in the process of advertising the post. We wish the Harbourmaster every success in her future career and convey our sincere thanks for the energy, enthusiasm and professional manner in which the role of the Harbourmaster has been undertaken by the present Harbourmaster since her appointment.

5. **Financial Matters.**

5.1 A brief summary of the harbour budget and current financial situation will be discussed at the meeting by the Principal Maritime Officer.

5.2 During this period it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following;

- Maintenance of navigational aids and beacons
- Inspection and maintenance of Council moorings
- Maintenance and operation of the of Harbour patrol vessel
- Maintenance of land and street furniture
- Tools and equipment including safety equipment

5.3 **Fees and Charges. 2022/23.** The Service currently awaits confirmation with regard to the draft fees and charges for Abermaw Harbour, together with the Powerboat and Personal watercraft launching fees for 2022/23 season. It has presently been indicated that fees and charges are to rise in line with the rate of inflation. A copy of the proposed fees is available for information. These have not been confirmed.

6. **Harbourmasters Report.** The Harbourmaster at Abermaw has provided a brief summary of the Navigational and Operational matters undertaken and encountered during the period October 2021 - March 2022 inclusive, including maintenance issues. A copy of her report is attached.

7. **Dredging Study.** A copy of the final dredging feasibility study undertaken by 'Haskoning Ltd' on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd has been circulated to all Committee Members.

MEETING	Abermaw Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	22nd March 2022
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
AUTHOR	Harbourmaster Abermaw

1. Navigational Issues

- 1.1. The navigable channel on the approach to Abermaw Harbour has remained relatively constant over the winter period. In consequence it has not been necessary to move any of the navigational marks from their existing positions.
- 1.2. The Service regularly inspects the navigable channel at low tide in order to try to ensure that the navigational aids are in the most suitable location.
- 1.3. There are currently two Local Notice to Mariners in force at Barmouth Harbour.
- 1.3.1 Local Notice to Mariners No 9/2021: The No 1 'Bar buoy' Starboard aid to navigation located at position 52°42.717N 004°04.261'W is currently off station.
- 1.3.2 Local Notice to Mariners No 1/2022: The No 4 Port hand aid to navigation located at position 52°42.738'N - 004° 04.009'W is currently off station.
- 1.4. The Service advise that the above two navigational marks will be on station and fully functional as soon as possible subject to the commitments of the mooring contractor in association with weather and tidal implications.

2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 The Coronavirus epidemic affecting the human population remains in circulation, with the Omicron variant being the more prevalent strain of the disease. In accordance with current Welsh Government Coronavirus legislation and guidance, staff will continue to ensure the harbour environment remains a safe place for all persons to enjoy, in what is expected to be a busy forthcoming season.
- 2.2 **Port Marine Safety Code:** In accordance with the provisions of the Port Marine Safety Code and in order to ensure safe working practices, the Service continue to undertake a review of fishing and ferry operations within the harbour of Barmouth. The focus of the review covers the vessels utilised, together with the tasks and specific risks associated with those activities within the harbour environment, including the stowage of fishing gear on the harbour front.
- 2.3 **Harbour Moorings:** The Council owned line of 'trot' moorings in the harbour located adjacent to the harbour office underwent a complete renewal last year, during which the ground chain, associated anchors, riser chains and shackles were replaced. Prior to the forthcoming busy season, the Harbourmaster and her assistant will conduct an

inspection of the smaller Council owned, line of 'trot' moorings, located to the north east of the pontoon structure. The mooring contractor will also be requested to conduct an annual inspection of the visitors' moorings located in the main channel.

- 2.4 The Service emphasise that owners of all vessels occupying private moorings within the harbour are required to return the relevant mooring confirmation form together with the mooring inspection form to the Harbourmasters office at the earliest opportunity in preparation for next season. This will allow administration procedures to be progressed and for the mooring to be inspected. The Service remains committed to removing from the harbour any derelict and unused mooring that is unfit for purpose or any mooring that has not been allocated to a vessel and dues paid.
- 2.5 **Vessel Tenders:** The Service would also like to remind mooring holders of the need to register any tender vessel utilised and associated with their mooring at the harbour office. Each tender vessel should be marked and readily identifiable with the vessel it is serving as a tender.

3 Maintenance

- 3.1 During the period in question, harbour staff have undertaken maintenance of the aids to navigation. This includes refurbishment of the replacement 'Fairway Buoy' which will be ready for deployment for the start of the busy season. The two navigation marks currently off station have been refurbished and are prepared for return to the navigable channel.
- 3.2 Harbour staff have undertaken maintenance of the harbour patrol vessel and the vessel engines and steering mechanism have recently undergone a service in preparation for the forthcoming season
- 3.3 Harbour and promenade notice boards have been maintained with some requiring new timber and joinery work. Damaged fender wood has also been removed from the sides of harbour ladders with replacement timber awaiting fitment.
- 3.4 In addition to general maintenance around the harbour which includes sand and debris removal, painting, and power washing, staff have also undertaken administration processes including the updating of harbour risk assessments.

4. Other Matters

- 4.1 **Harbour Subsidence:** On the 27th January 2022, subsidence damage to the quay wall beneath the viaduct gardens and around the harbour was inspected by Gwynedd Consultancy staff accompanied by personnel from the design, architecture, planning and engineering company of ARUP. Subject to confirmation of funding for the project, it is hoped that work to replace the damaged structures will be commenced soon, under the auspices of the Gwynedd Consultancy department.
- 4.2 **Harbour Dredging:** The result of a feasibility study concerning harbour dredging options and the issues that relate to obtaining any necessary consent for dredging activity is expected shortly. Once received, the documentation will be distributed to Consultative Committee members for consideration.

- 4.3 **Seasonal Storms:** The effects of the named Storm 'Eunice' were felt in the harbour on the 18 February 2022. The storm which caused widespread travel disruption, school closures and left thousands of homes without power around the country, caused flooding around the harbour area at high tide. However, no significant damage occurred to the harbour infrastructure or to any vessel.
- 4.4 **Fisherman's Compound:** The Service will continue to review the allocated spaces within the Fisherman's Compound to ensure that all unwanted materials are removed from the site. For health and safety reasons, the Service would like to remind all Compound plot holders of the need keep individual plots clean and tidy in appearance.
- 4.5 **Harbour Parking:** Parking bays on Compound Road have been marked to facilitate ease of parking for water based Commercial Operators, in order to allow them to continue their activities in a busy harbour environment, particularly during the summer period. The Service is currently reviewing the possibility of charging a fee for parking in the area and renewing the lifting arm barrier at the bottom of the road, to replace the existing worn structure.
- 4.5.1 The Service advise that assistance will continue to be sought from Gwynedd Council enforcement officers as and when required, to facilitate free and unobstructed access to the slipway for harbour users in respect of the road markings located by the 'SS Dora' building.
- 4.6 **Harbour Pontoon.** Following closure of the Barmouth Community Trust Group, the Harbour Authority assumed temporary custodianship of the pontoon structure in the harbour. The Service wish to thank the Trust members for their tireless work in promoting the harbour for the benefit of all harbour users.
- 4.6.1 Following an inspection of the pontoon structure by Service personnel, it was deemed necessary to temporarily close the facility on safety grounds until a more thorough inspection of the structure could be conducted by an approved pontoon manufacturer, and a decision made on its future.
- 4.6.2 In consultation with the Town Council, the firm of 'Intermarine' were requested to conduct a safety inspection of the pontoon and thereafter provide a structural report on their findings. The report from the company of 'Intermarine' is currently awaited.
- 4.7 **New Slipway:** The Service wish to bring to the attention of the committee members a proposal received from Meirionnydd Yacht Club, to construct a new slipway that would provide an access point onto the 'Bath House' beach, from a point on the promenade directly opposite to the entrance gates of Yacht Club storage compound. The Service understands that the Yacht Club intend to seek funding for the project through the 'Small Scale Coastal Infrastructure Scheme' (SSCIS).
- 4.8 **Barmouth Rail Bridge:** Repair work to the structure of the historic rail bridge crossing the Mawddach estuary within harbour limits will continue throughout the year. The Service have been advised that movement of materials to and from the bridge within the harbour will be taking place throughout the spring/summer season of 2022.

- 4.8.1 During September 2022, 4m x 12m steel pontoons will be used to renew metal and timber sections for the bridge. The structures will be built in an allocated compound on the promenade and moved by lorry to Aberamffra harbour where they will be placed onto pontoons and transported to the bridge. Public access to Aberamffra harbour will be managed by the contractor.
- 4.8.2 The Service will continue to liaise with the construction team management involved in the project and advise harbour users accordingly of any potential disruption to normal harbour operations.

5. **Events**

- 5.1 To date, the Service have received advanced notification of a dinghy sailing event on the 3rd June 2022, a Kite festival proposed to be held on the beach on the 2nd and 3rd of July 2022, and a Motorcross event proposed to be held on the weekend of the 15/16th November 2022. It is anticipated that the annual Three Peaks Yacht Race will also take place in the harbour this year on the 9th July 2022. The service currently await confirmation from the organisers.
- 5.2 The Service would like to remind event organisers of the need to provide early notification of any proposed event and submission for approval. In considering the approval of any event, the Service will give due regard to the prevailing Coronavirus situation and any restrictions, impositions or limitations thereby necessary to ensure public and staff safety.