

PORTHMADOG HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 12/10/16

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd (Chairman)  
Councillor Selwyn Griffiths (Vice-chairman)

Councillors: Jason Humphreys (Gwynedd Council), along with Gavin Buckley (Porthmadog Town Council Representative), Dr John Jones-Morris (Leisure Interests Representative), Robert Owen (Commercial Interests Representative) and Peter L. Williams (RNLI Representative).

**ALSO PRESENT:** Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Llŷr B. Jones (Senior Manager Economy and Community Department), Arthur Jones (Senior Harbours Officer), Malcolm Humphreys (Porthmadog Harbour Master) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Mandy Williams-Davies (Cabinet Member for Economy), David Eastwood (Harbour Interests Representative) and David McLean (Landowner Interests Representative).

**1. CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED to re-elect Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd as chairman of this Committee for the year 2016/17.**

**2. VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED to re-elect Councillor Selwyn Griffiths as vice-chairman of this Committee for the year 2016/17.**

**3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

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

**4. MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee, held on 9 March 2016, as a true record.

**5. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS**

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer guided the members through the report, drawing attention to the following main points:

- That there had been a small reduction in the number of boats on the annual moorings with 129 compared with 142 boats in 2015. It was noted that boats tended to be larger. 21 boats had left in 2016 with 17 new boats moored in the Harbour in 2016.
- It was noted that 37 power boats had been registered in the Harbour in 2016 compared to 30 that were registered in 2015. It was confirmed that 31 power boats had been registered at Morfa Bychan compared to the 14 registered in 2015.
- No observations had been received relating to the Marine Safety Code since the previous meeting.
- That the Senior Harbours Officer was reviewing the safety code and it was hoped that the Senior Coastguard Inspector would be visiting the Council early in 2017 to inspect and give feedback on the code.

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- The Harbour By-laws would be considered in the Spring with the intention of presenting and putting them in force to aid in dealing with the speeding problem. Reference was made to the Neifion campaign launched in the summer in order to make it easier for people to contact the authorities if they believed that someone was disturbing marine life and breaching the Marine Safety Code.
- Trinity House had conducted an inspection on 26 July 2016. The report confirmed an improvement in the condition and location of the navigation aids compared with previous reports.
- Substantial investment had been made in Cwch y Dwyfor and it was confirmed that it would be located in Porthmadog to assist with the maintenance of navigation aids in the Harbour.
- There was no mariners' notice in force in Porthmadog harbour.
- That the employment period of the Porthmadog Harbour Assistant (seasonal) ended on 30 September 2016. In order to ensure support for and a continuation of the service across the County, it was noted that the employment period of the Barmouth and Aberdyfi Harbour Assistants has been extended until the end of December 2016. It was explained that the Barmouth Harbour Assistant would be relocated to Porthmadog for the initial period in order to secure additional assistance in Porthmadog over the winter months.
- That the Harbour Master's secondment period would be periodically reviewed.
- An enquiry had been received from a merchant shipping company as to the possibility of importing heavy cargo on board merchant ships to Porthmadog for the purpose of supplying a nearby power station. It was noted that the company's attention had been drawn to the complexities and it was confirmed that should it be decided to import, the company would be responsible for any costs associated with the proposal.
- The budgetary situation up to the end of September 2016, and it was noted that it was not anticipated that the income target would be met for the financial year.
- That the CCTV system invested into in order to protect Harbour property and users had assisted the Police in their investigation into three cases.
- It was recommended to increase the Porthmadog Harbour fees for the 2017-18 financial year, 2% on average in order to meet the service's budgetary challenge and income target. It was noted that it was believed that the fees remained reasonable, considering the facilities in the Harbour and the investment made. It was explained that the Cabinet Member - Economy would confirm the fees early in 2017.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to cases where members of the public who accessed Banc y Gogledd on low tide had got into difficulties when the tide was coming in. It was noted that efforts had been made to raise awareness of the matter and leaflets had been shared out around the caravan parks. It was explained that there was a sign in the entrance and signage in Ffordd Gwydryn, explaining the danger, and when Council staff were present, they could report to the emergency services. It was noted that a review would be undertaken of the situation to ensure that the current provision was sufficient. It was reported that a letter of gratitude had been received from an individual who had received assistance from the staff of the Council, the Coastguard and the RNLI.

The RNLI Representative was given an opportunity to submit a report on the issue. He noted that Cricieth Lifeboat had saved 11 individuals in this area over the current year and that he was terribly concerned about the situation. He drew attention to the fact that the RNLI had undertaken a safety survey in the Portmeirion area a few years ago and that the improvements introduced showed their value as only one call had been received from this area this year and there had been no incident during 2015. He emphasised concern that the signage in the Banc y Gogledd area was not uniform or standard. He suggested that the

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RNLI should be asked to undertake a safety survey in the Glaslyn estuary area and Black Rock Sands.

Members expressed their support to holding a safety survey and having a subsequent conversation to consider how the situation could be improved within the resources available.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community noted that a substantial challenge was becoming apparent on the coastline in terms of achieving the statutory duties within the budget. In light of the financial challenge, there was a need to collaborate with other agencies to ensure provision and the assistance of the RNLI was welcomed in order to add to the expertise of the Council's staff in dealing with the issue. It was noted that the signage in this area was in keeping with signage on the rest of Gwynedd's coastline in order to ensure consistency across the County. It was added that consideration should be given to local solutions to situations and to look at the role of other entities.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer confirmed that he would contact the RNLI in relation to the safety survey.

The Chairman took advantage of the opportunity to thank the staff of the Coastguard, RNLI and the Council for their work.

The Harbour Master provided details on the maintenance work programme and members were asked to inform the service of any other work that needed to be done. Members noted their gratitude to the staff for responding as soon as possible when they were informed of work that needed to be done.

An update was received from the Leisure Interests Representative on the Porthmadog Sailing Club scheme to install pontoons on the Harbour wall. He noted that feasibility studies were continuing and it was hoped that the situation could be confirmed by the next meeting of the Consultative Committee. In response to a question by a member, the representative noted that there was work to be completed before a consultation could be undertaken with other Harbour users.

### **5. NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 8 March, 2017.

The meeting commenced at 5.35pm and concluded at 6.50pm

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**CHAIRMAN**