

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	11 October 2017
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR	Maritime and Country Parks 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 Members' observations on matters relating to Porthmadog 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 period from March 2017 to October 2017 in order to receive feedback from the Members on Safety matters and the harbour's operational matters.

1.3 In 2014, the Council's Cabinet resolved that the Harbour Committees of Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli would include: -

- Up to 4 Gwynedd Council Local Members
- The Gwynedd Council Cabinet Member who holds the Harbour Authority Portfolio
- One Town/Community Council Member
- Up to seven other members to represent the various interests of harbour users

During the summer, the Member Support Officer corresponded with every harbour organisation representative named above, reminding them of the need for organisations to nominate a representative for the coming year, and send a copy of the constitution and minutes of the annual meeting of the relevant groups. It will be essential for the information to be submitted to the Council where relevant.

Porthmadog Harbour Committee is a statutory harbour committee, set-up in accordance with Section 6 (2) (a-j) of the Porthmadog Harbour Amendment Order. The Order provides that 15 Members serve on the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee. A comprehensive list of the groups and organisations represented on the Harbour Committee can be seen in the Harbour Order.

2. Porthmadog Moorings and Boat Registration

2.1 In 2017/18 figures for boats on moorings in the Harbour were as follows: -

2.2 133 boats on annual moorings in 2017. This compares with 129 in 2016 and 142 in 2015. It is encouraging to see a small increase in the numbers this year.

2.3 On the whole when comparing all Gwynedd Council harbours, a small increase was seen in the number of customers over the past year, including an increase at Hafan, Pwllheli. The only exception in terms of the consistency of boat numbers on moorings was at Victoria Dock in Caernarfon, where a reduction was seen in the number of boats on pontoon moorings due to mooring difficulties caused by an increase in silt, which had led to a lack of water depth in the Dock.

2.4 903 Power Boats were registered in Gwynedd in 2017, compared to 1001 registered in 2016. 37 boats were registered at Porthmadog harbour, with 30 boats also registered in 2016.

- 2.5 29 power boats were registered at Morfa Bychan, in comparison with 31 registered in 2016.
- 2.6 725 Personal Watercrafts were registered in Gwynedd in 2017. This compares with the 729 registered in 2016.

3. Ports Marine Safety Code

- 3.1.1 In November 2016, the Department for Transport published amendments to the Ports Safety Code. Copies of the new code have been circulated to all Members of the Consultative Committee and copies can also be obtained on the MCA's website. The Maritime and Country Parks Service reviews the Safety Code for the municipal harbours of Gwynedd on a regular basis to ensure that all safety systems at our harbours comply with the requirements of the code and the expectations of our customers, and in order to comply with the Health and Safety requirements.
- 3.1.2 The Government's Department for Transport has reviewed and published 'A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations' which is linked to the Marine Safety Code and a copy of the document is available to Members upon request from the Maritime and Country Parks service.
- 3.1.3 Between the 19th and 21st of September 2017, a thorough inspection was carried out by the Coastguard Agency's auditors on the current safety arrangements and systems of Gwynedd municipal harbours in order to ensure compliance with the Ports Safety Code. The initial opinion of the auditors was that the Council complied with the requirements in general but that some aspects relating to recording duties and noting the Duty Holder need to be amended. The auditors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Pwllheli during the audit.
- 3.1.4 A written report is expected from the auditors soon, outlining the matters requiring attention from the Council. Assurance is given that the Consultative Committees will receive a copy of the report. When the auditor's report will be received, the Council will have a specific period to alter its arrangements and the Coastguard Agency will revisit the service within 12 months of submitting the report when it will be expected for the recommendations submitted in the report to be actioned.
- 3.1.5 Following a discussion with the auditors, it was agreed in principle that it would be beneficial for the date of the second visit to coincide with the date of the Harbour Consultative Committee. It was suggested to the auditors that it could be beneficial for the auditors to attend a meeting of Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee and invite representatives from the Consultative Committees of Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli to the meeting. This would enable Members to receive information from the auditors regarding the main issues of the Safety Code and the expectation on the Council to comply with the Safety Code.
- 3.1.6 It is emphasised that no improvement notice was issued relating to serious safety issues or shortcomings at the harbour. They noted that there is an opportunity to tidy-up the area around Aberdyfi harbour quay as goods and ropes have been kept on the quay in a way that could pose a risk. No observations were submitted on the standard at Porthmadog.

- 3.1.7 Although the Ports Safety Code was regularly reviewed by the service, the Members of the Consultative Committee must be reminded of the duty on them to submit observations on the suitability of the Safety Code and receive observations on the work arrangements of the harbours so that the Safety Code can be reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to harbour operations, the propriety of the location of navigation aids, general safety and the day-to-day work of the harbour.
- 3.1.8 No issue or cause for concern has been submitted for the attention of the service from Members of the Harbour Committee in 2017 associated with the Harbour's statutory responsibilities and duties.

4. Navigation

- 4.1.1 A detailed inspection was conducted by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors on 2 August 2017. Compared with previous reports, the 2017 report confirmed a further improvement in the condition and locations of Porthmadog Harbour's Navigation Aids. A chart is attached displaying the current locations of the navigation aids.
- 4.1.2 The Harbour's Navigation Aids maintenance work programme has been completed in accordance with the permission and instruction of the Consultative Committee. An update of the current situation will be given to Members at the meeting.
- 4.1.3 One Mariners' Notice (Rh-15/2017) is in operation in Porthmadog harbour. The notice was released as buoy number 8 is not in its correct station. The buoy has moved in the direction of Buoy number 6 and it will be re-located at the first available opportunity.
- 4.1.4 Buoys number 1, number 3 and number 11 have been terminated. If needed, these buoys will be relocated at the appropriate locations. The service has informed Trinity House.

4.2 Maintenance

- 4.2.1 Arrangements and a work programme for maintaining key elements of Porthmadog harbour will be submitted by the Harbour Master at the meeting.
- 4.2.2 The Harbour Master will submit a maintenance work programme to be carried out at Porthmadog Harbour during the October - December period, along with an outline of the work programme to be carried out during the January - March 2017 period. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.

4.3 Staffing Matters

- 4.3.1 The employment period of the Porthmadog Harbour Assistant (seasonal) ended on 30 September 2017. In order to ensure support for and a continuation of the service across the county, the service is considering extending the employment period of the Harbour Assistants at Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Barmouth until the end of December 2017. Any extended employment period will be subject to the harbour's work programme and will of course depend on the outcome of the second quarter finance review 2017/18.

4.3.2 The three harbour assistants will be a part of the broader service team, and extending the period of employment will ensure that it will be possible to respond to coastal incidents and assist with the maintenance work programme targets at Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Barmouth harbours over the winter months.

4.4 **Other matters**

4.4.1 **Madog Sailing Club Plan.** Representatives of the Madog Sailing Club have already submitted a verbal report stating the Club's intention to submit an application to increase the number of pontoons in the Harbour. Thus far, the Sailing Club has not submitted further details. It is greatly hoped that an update on the proposed plan is submitted by the representative at the meeting.

4.4.2 **Borth y Gest Area.** The Harbour's staff are continuing to work to improve the appearance of the boat storage site at Borth y Gest.

4.4.3 **Parking Safety** - The service has undertaken an appropriate risk assessment in order to identify and reduce any risk relating to driving and parking vehicles on lands abutting the Harbour Master's office.

Due to the increase in the number of pedestrians walking from the highway along the quay to the direction of the office, the service's vehicles are not permitted to drive along this path. An alternative path has been identified which means that access can be gained to the workshop at the rear of the Hall building.

The number of journeys will be reduced and access to the building will not be permitted except at times when there will be a need to load or unload goods associated with the harbour's work.

No vehicles will be permitted to park on the plot running parallel with the Harbour Master's building. Alternative parking areas are available to visitors either at the Hall or at the pay and display car park to the rear of the harbour building.

5. **Financial Matters**

5.1 A summary of the Harbour's budgets and current financial situation up to the end of Quarter 2 will be presented at the meeting.

5.2 During this period, it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following: -

- Maintenance of Navigation Aids and Beacons
- Maintenance of Council moorings
- Harbour Management Boat - £20k investment
- Extending staff employment term
- Maintenance of lands and benches. Cutting grass and protecting trees
- Maintenance of CCTV system
- Y Dwyfor Boat. Investment to maintain the boat in order to meet the Code of Practice requirements. The work vessel is located permanently at Porthmadog Harbour to ensure that all navigation aids are in their required position all year round.

- 5.3 **Fees and Charges 2017/18** . The prospective fees spreadsheet for Porthmadog Harbour and the boat and Personal Water Craft launching fees for 2018 is attached. Inflation for harbours for 2018/19 is anticipated to be at 1.78%. In order to meet with the budget challenge and the service's income target it is suggested that Porthmadog harbour fees are increased by 2% on average for the 2018/19 financial year.
- 5.4 It is emphasised that only a draft has been submitted before Members and the fees are subject to receiving confirmation from the Portfolio Leader early in 2018 before they are published.
- 5.5 The inflation increase for 2018/19 is as follows: -

5.5.1	Beaches	- 3.1%
5.5.2	Hafan	- 1.73%
5.5.3	Harbours	- 1.78%
5.5.4	Victoria Dock	- 1.45%
5.5.5	Parc Padarn	- 3.25%
5.5.6	Parc Glynllifon	- 3.0%

6. Events

- 6.1 The following were held at Porthmadog Harbour in 2017: -
- Motor Bike Exhibition Event
 - Celtic Long Boat race event from Pwllheli to Porthmadog including a number of other Celtic Long Boat competitions arranged through the Madog Sailing Club. Due to the weather, the Pwllheli to Porthmadog race had to be finished at Black Rock Sands.
 - A number of film companies visited the area surrounding the harbour and Black Rock Sands.