

PORTHMADOG HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 11/10/17

PRESENT:

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd (Chair)
Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Vice-chair)

David Eastwood (Harbour Interests Representative), Dr John Jones-Morris (Leisure Interests Representative) and Robert Owen (Commercial Interests Representative).

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor Selwyn Griffiths (Gwynedd Council), Jason Humphreys (Porthmadog Town Council Representative) and Peter L. Williams (RNLI Representative).

1. CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd as Chair of this Committee for 2017/18.

2. VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Nia Jeffreys as Vice-chair of this Committee for 2017/18.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee, held on 8 March 2017, 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 the Consultative Committee was statutory and that the membership was in accordance with Section 6(2) (a-j) of the Porthmadog Harbour Revision Order. A request had been received by Porthmadog Rowing Club to have representation on the Consultative Committee. It was noted that it had been explained to them that Dr John Jones-Morris represented leisure interests on the Consultative Committee and matters could be referred to him to be considered.
- There were 135 boats on annual moorings in Porthmadog Harbour in 2017 compared with 129 in 2016. It was encouraging to see a small increase in the numbers this year.
- That the Government's Department for Transport had published modifications to the Ports' Safety Code in November 2016. Copies of the new code had been circulated to all Members of the Consultative Committee and copies could also be obtained on the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's website.

- Between 19 and 21 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 needed to be amended. The auditors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Pwllheli during the audit. In regards to Porthmadog Harbour, the observations received were excellent and no problems had become apparent. The Harbour Master and the Senior Harbours Officer were thanked for their work in ensuring that the appropriate documentation was in place.
- A written report had been received by the auditors on the day of the meeting outlining matters requiring attention from the Council. It was explained that the Council had a specific period to revise its arrangements and the Coastguard Agency would revisit the service within 12 months of submitting the report when recommendations submitted in the report would be expected to be actioned. It was noted that copies of the report would be circulated to members.
- 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 the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee and invite representatives from the Consultative Committees of Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli to the meeting in October 2018.
- No observations had been received relating to the Marine Safety Code since the previous meeting.
- 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 displaying the current locations of the navigation aids was shared in the meeting.
- One Mariners' Notice (Rh-15/2017) was in operation in Porthmadog Harbour. The notice had been released as buoy number 8 was not in its correct station. It was explained that the buoy had moved to the direction of Buoy number 6 and it would be re-located at the first available opportunity.
- Buoys number 1, number 3 and number 11 had been terminated. If needed, these buoys would be relocated in the appropriate locations. It was noted that the service had informed Trinity House.
- The employment period of the Porthmadog Harbour Assistant (seasonal) had been extended to the end of December 2017 in addition to the Harbour Assistants of Aberdyfi and Barmouth. Extending the employment period would ensure support and continuation of the service across the County over the winter months.
- Thanks was given to the Harbour staff for the quality of their work and their dedication to the service which was praiseworthy.
- The users of small boat moorings in the area of Borth y Gest would be charged a nominal fee from April 2018 onwards.
- In order to meet with the budget challenge and the service's income target, it was suggested to increase Porthmadog harbour fees by 2% on average for the 2018/19 financial year. It was emphasised that only a draft had been submitted in the agenda, and that the fees were subject to receiving confirmation from the Cabinet Member - Economic Development, and they would be confirmed in the next meeting.
- That there was now a provision in the Harbour to pay with a card, which was a significant improvement that facilitates payment arrangements for customers.

The Harbour Master provided details on the maintenance work programme and members were asked to inform the service of any other work that should be considered. The Leisure Interests Representative noted that the area of Pencei looked tidier and he shared his

appreciation that the Harbour Master had cut the grass. The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the Service was eager to assist Y Ganolfan to maintain their green area.

The Leisure Interests Representative gave an update on the Madog Sailing Club's intention to submit an application to increase the number of pontoons in the Harbour. It was noted that two estimates had recently been received to realise the plan. It would be necessary to assess the need for the provision in addition to how the plan would be funded. He confirmed that he would contact the Maritime Service to confirm the situation.

In response to a question by a member in regards to the sea stairs, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the stairs were made of slate and that a handrail had been installed as many people had slipped on the stairs. He added that they had been out of use since the installation of the pontoons and that the public could gain access via the pontoons. He noted that there was no lock on the gate, therefore there was no restriction to the public's use.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer reported that the service had undertaken a risk assessment in order to identify and reduce any risks relating to driving and parking vehicles on lands abutting the Harbour Master's office. He explained that 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 were not permitted to drive along this path. He noted that an alternative route had been identified which would mean that access could be gained to the workshop along the rear of Y Ganolfan building.

He added that access to the building would not be permitted except for times when there would be a need to load or unload goods associated with the harbour's work. No vehicles were permitted to park on the plot running parallel with the Harbour Master's building. Alternative parking areas were available to visitors either at Y Ganolfan or in the pay and display car park to the rear of the harbour building.

The Leisure Interests Representative noted that he had no objection to the intention.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer explained that the Property Service were holding discussions with Y Ganolfan, and that he would contact the Service to receive an update on the discussions.

A member noted that it should be possible for a matter to be referred higher in the Department rather than having conflicts between Y Ganolfan and officers. In response, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the communication between the Council and Y Ganolfan could have been better, but that he was hopeful that it could be possible to reach an understanding that would be acceptable to Y Ganolfan.

A copy of the final budget summary for 2016-17 and an update on the 2017-18 budget up to the end of September 2017 was shared in the meeting. Attention was drawn to the fact that there was a deficiency against the target income for 2016-17, but that there was an underspend of £2,168 in the 2016-17 budget. The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that he was proud of the staff's dedication who worked efficiently within the scarce resources. The 2017-18 financial situation up to the end of September 2017 was referred to, and it was noted that the investment of a new boat for the Harbour had been necessary in order to carry out the work and due to this, an overspend was predicted for the financial year. It was noted that it would be sought to fund the expenditure from funds and as a result the financial situation would be better than the previous year.

In response to an enquiry from a member in regards to the Black Rock Sands Beach budget, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the beaches' budget was not within the remit of the Consultative Committee. He noted that he would send the beaches' budgetary information to the members.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to the events held at Porthmadog Harbour during 2017, which included a Celtic Longboats Race from Pwllheli to Porthmadog and an RNLI activity day.

The Commercial Interests Representative noted that a Personal Watercraft event had also been held which raised £4,237 for the Wales Air Ambulance charity. He added that it was anticipated to hold the event again next year.

A member noted that the Caru Port group had received funding from TESCO to hold an event such as Fun at the Harbour as there was a local desire to increase community use of the Harbour area. The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that he welcomed discussions with the group.

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community Department highlighted that Visit Wales were to conduct a year of the sea campaign in 2018, and most activities would be held in Cardiff Bay but consideration was being given to holding some community events and Porthmadog should be kept in mind.

RESOLVED to note and accept the report.

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 Dr John Jones-Morris to serve as an observer on the Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committees.

7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 7 March, 2018.

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm and concluded at 6.40pm.

CHAIRMAN