

MEETING	Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	6 March 2018
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR	Maritime and Country Parks Officer

1. Port Marine Safety Code

- 1.1 The Safety Code is a 'live document' and is regularly reviewed by Service's harbour staff. It is also necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of the Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Safety Code, as well as observations on its contents regularly, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to the activities, aids to navigation, safety and day to day general work at Barmouth Harbour.
- 1.2 Between the 19th and 21st of September 2017, a thorough inspection was carried out by the Coastguard Agency's inspectors on the current safety arrangements and systems at Gwynedd municipal harbours in order to ensure compliance with the Port Safety Code.
- 1.3 Following a review by the Coastguard Agency that took place in September 2017, the Service has received a report following the inspection by external experts. A copy of the report is appended and the Service will act on the inspectors' recommendations during the next few months. The Committee's observations are welcomed on the contents of the report.
- 1.4 As reported to this Consultative Committee in the Autumn, the inspectors' initial opinion was that the Council complied generally with the requirements, however, some aspects needed to be adapted relating to recording duties and noting the Duty Holder and the Designated Person.
- 1.5 During the inspection the inspectors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Pwllheli. They did not visit Barmouth due to time restrictions.
- 1.6 It is emphasised that no improvement notice was issued relating to serious safety issues or shortcomings in the harbours. The inspectors noted that there was an opportunity to tidy-up the area around Aberdyfi harbour quay as effects and ropes had been stored on the quay in a way that may pose a risk. These matters have been acted upon by Service staff during the winter months. Observations were submitted regarding the lack of width of the navigation channel in Pwllheli harbour. No observations were submitted on standards in Barmouth harbour.
- 1.7 Although the Port Marine Safety Code is regularly reviewed by the service, it is necessary to remind Members of the Consultative Committees of their duty to submit any observations on the suitability of the Safety Code and to receive observations on the work arrangements of the harbours so that the Code can be reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to harbour operations and is locally appropriate.
- 1.8 The Coastguard Agency inspectors will re-visit the Council next autumn. A review follow-up is proposed on a date when the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee is held where members of all the Gwynedd Harbour Consultative Committees will be invited to receive a presentation by the inspectors on matters linked to the Port Marine Safety Code. This will also be an opportunity for Members of the Consultative Committees to question experts on matters concerning the Port Marine Safety Code.

2. Operational Issues

2.1 Navigation

- 2.1.1 It is anticipated that a detailed inspection of Barmouth aids to navigation will be conducted by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors during August 2018.
- 2.1.2 Currently there are Two Mariners' Notices in operation in Barmouth harbour. Rh-01/18 reporting that the 'South Cardinal' Aid to Navigation lamp does not illuminate Q F1 5 15s. Position - 52° 42.822' N - 004° 03.729W. Notice Rh-02-18 reports that lamp 'No. 2' Aid to Navigation does not illuminate Fl R 2s Position 52°42.698'N - 004°04.187'W.
- 2.1.3 The Navigational Aids maintenance work programme has been completed in accordance with the agreement, instruction and guidance of the Consultative Committee. An update of the current situation will be given to Members by the Senior Harbours Officer at the meeting.
- 2.1.4 A new aid to navigation has been purchased to renew Buoy No. 4. The buoy will be on station before Easter. It is also proposed to purchase an additional buoy (Port) in the channel to guide mariners safely past the north strand. It is proposed to submit an application to Trinity House to ensure that the location of the buoy is recorded on the Lighthouse Authority's system.

2.2 Maintenance

- 2.2.1 The Senior Harbours Officer will submit a maintenance work programme undertaken at Barmouth Harbour during the October - December 2017 period, and will provide an outline of the work completed in January - February 2018. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.
- 2.2.2 It is proposed to install a safety handrail on the quay wall in March. A risk assessment has identified a risk as there is no handrail for protection from the steep side. The reason there was no handrail on this small section of the harbour was to enable goods to be lifted up from boats. During the last few years no use has been made of the quay to land and despatch goods. As the area is busy with pedestrians, especially during the summer season, the safety of this area needs to be improved and to reduce risk to pedestrians.
- 2.2.3 Two ladders on the quay have deteriorated and need renovation. The intention is to renew the two before the Whitsun holiday.

2.3 Staffing Matters

- 2.3.1 The employment period of the Barmouth Harbour Assistant (seasonal) ended officially on the 30th September 2017. In order to ensure assistance with harbour work over the winter months the employment contract was extended up until 31 December, 2017, when it ended. It is pleasing to report that the former officer has now been appointed by the Coastguard Agency in Holyhead.
- 2.3.2 The work contract of the seasonal harbour assistant (Aberdyfi) continues and will be part of the wider team within the Maritime and Country Parks Service, supporting and enabling the Service to respond to incidents and to complete the maintenance work programme in the harbours of Aberdyfi and Barmouth.
- 2.3.3 It is anticipated that the seasonal posts will return to full-time in the harbours of Barmouth, Aberdyfi and Porthmadog from the 1st of April 2018 up until 30 September 2018.

2.4 Operational Issues

- 2.4.1 **Safety Signs** The Service, jointly with the RNLI and a local representative from the Lifeboat, has completed a detailed review of the safety signage in Barmouth Harbour and the beach area. In response to the inspection and in consultation with the RLNI, the Service has ordered new signage that will be erected on several sites around the harbour and near the beach.
- 2.4.2 The total cost of the signs is £6,800 with design and preparatory work costs, namely preparing templates, at £500 (excluding VAT). The signs will be sent to the harbour on the 15th March 2018 and it is hoped that the main safety signs will be in their appropriate places before Easter. Due to the nature of Barmouth beach it is anticipated that it will be necessary to take the signs down from the site during the winter months to reduce any damage that may be caused to the signs by inclement weather. The expenditure was funded via the TAIS scheme, namely Welsh Government tourism fund.
- 2.4.3 **F.L.A.G -2018 (Fisheries Local Action Group)** The new F.L.A.G. period has commenced in Wales and an Officer has been appointed via an arrangement by Ceredigion Council, to lead the project. Subject to the Chair's permission, the Officer will attend the meeting to report to this committee on F.L.A.G. matters. No further details regarding the F.L.A.G programme have been received thus far.
- 2.4.4 **Three Peaks Race.** The Three Peaks Race will take place on 9th June 2018. Following the work undertaken in 2017, permission was given to the race Committee to place concrete blocks on the trot moorings in the area of the Harbour where there is constant deep water. We look forward to working with, and assisting the Race organisers once more in 2018.
- 2.4.5 **Motorcross Event, Barmouth Beach.** The event organisers have submitted an application seeking permission to hold the event on the 27th and 28th of October 2018. In response to a request sent to the organisers on 12th December 2017, it was confirmed that the date was acceptable to the Service. However, there were suggestions that the organisers should re-consider the dates so that they do not conflict with school half term holidays. Although this is not a 'harbour' issue the Committee's view is sought regarding the period when the event took place in order that the Service can inform the organisers for their event in 2019, if a change of date is required.
- 2.4.6 **Sand Clearance - 2018** It is envisaged that sand removal from the beach will commence at the start of March 2018. The work period will be dependent on the quantity of sand that has accumulated in the area. It is anticipated that the accumulated sand on the promenade, car park and the sea wall will also be cleared as part of the contract.
- 2.4.7 **Quay Wall Pontoon** Following local discussions we continue to give assistance to ensure that the ownership, responsibilities, maintenance procedures and the future management of the pontoon are transferred from being the responsibility of the Yacht Club to a local charity. Since the pontoon is not in the Council's ownership, the Council is in no position to continue to undertake the future maintenance and management of the pontoon. We intend to work with the local group to ensure that the pontoon is protected and harbour staff will assist by undertaking basic inspections and to ensure appropriate use of the pontoon on behalf of the local group.
- 2.4.8 The Council's Property Section are preparing a 'licence' that will confirm the owner's right to link the pontoon to the quay wall. This is required as the pontoon is not in the Council's ownership. It is not anticipated that this will impair any managerial arrangement or responsibility for the pontoon in the future.
- 2.4.9 **Owner's Licence and Boatman's Licence** Application forms, Information regarding Safety and Inspection forms for ferries will be distributed to current licence holders during March. It is anticipated that the ferries that operated in 2017 will re-apply for licences in 2018. No observations had been received regarding the quality of the ferry service in 2017 and therefore it is taken for granted that there is no requirement to adapt the current terms and conditions.

3. Financial Matters

- 3.1 A summary of the Harbour budget is attached, reporting on the current financial position. The financial position up to the end of February 2018 will be circulated at the meeting.
- 3.2 **Fees and Charges 2018/19.** The spreadsheet for the proposed fees in 2018 in Barmouth Harbour, has already been submitted to the Harbour Committee requesting comments. Although it was reported that the inflation rate of Gwynedd Harbours for 2018/19 would be 1.85% the inflation percentage has been reviewed following a number of factors that have an impact on inflation. It is confirmed that the inflation rate for Barmouth Harbour in 2018/19 will increase to 3.36% with the average inflation for Gwynedd harbours at 2.9%. This means that the harbour's income target will increase to £35,720 in 2018/19.
- 3.3 As the service has already corresponded with harbour customers it is proposed to suggest that the fees and charges continue to increase by 2% on average in the 2018/19 financial year. As there might be a deficit in the income it will be necessary to ensure that the Service identifies alternative income opportunities and reduce possible expenditure during the next financial year.
- 3.4 In 2017 the Council was required to add a fee for each mooring, in each Harbour under the Council's responsibility and management. The fee has been added by the Crown Estate who claim £25.00 from each individual with a mooring in the harbour. It is a requirement that the Council, as the Harbour Authority, charges and collects this fee on behalf of the Crown Estate. There is no VAT attached to the additional fee. The additional fee is also payable for visitor moorings and this payment will need to be funded via the Harbour budget.
- 3.5 As no agreement has been confirmed with the Crown Agent the fee was not payable in 2017/18. It is anticipated that a new lease will be confirmed by the Crown Agent during 2018 and therefore the additional fee will be payable by all mooring holders.