

PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 17/10/17

Present: Councillor Hefin Underwood (Chair)
Councillor Peter Read (Vice-chair)

Councillor Dylan Bullard (Gwynedd Council); along with David Bayly (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association), Ifor Hughes (Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association), Councillor Mici Plwm (Pwllheli Town Council), Alwyn Roberts (RNLI) and Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club and Plas Heli).

Also in attendance: Barry Davies (Maritime and Country Parks Officer), Llŷr B. Jones (Senior Economy and Community Manager), Wil Williams (Pwllheli Harbour Manager) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Others invited: Alan Williams (Coastal Engineering UK Ltd)

Apologies: David Dewsbury (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association), W. A. Partington (Association of Maritime Traders) and Councillor Ioan Thomas (Cabinet Member - Economy Development).

1. CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Hefin Underwood as Chair of this Committee for 2017/18.

2. VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Peter Read 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. URGENT ITEM

A member referred to the need to hold a meeting to discuss the condition of the site of the former Sailing Club. In response, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that there was a need to look at the Glandon Headland in its entirety, however it should be considered whether or not the Glandon Headland was within the remit of this Committee. The Senior Economy and Community Manager noted that the service would be happy to hold a meeting to discuss the matter.

The Pwllheli Sailing Club and Plas Heli representative noted that no complaints had been referred to Plas Heli regarding the condition of the site of the former Sailing Club. He noted a concern about the condition of the Glandon car park and that Plas Heli was prepared to take part in discussions regarding improving the site.

5. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee, held on 21 March 2017, as a true record.

6. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

The Senior Manager – Economy and Community referred to the Dredging Strategy and noted that Alan Williams (Coastal Engineering UK Ltd) had been commissioned together with

Gwynedd Consultancy to look at the options in terms of strengthening the Crib Groyne and reducing the sediment.

A presentation was given by Alun Williams providing details about his work in assessing and reviewing the Crib Groyne. He drew attention to four possible options and an estimate of the cost involved, namely:

1. Minimum maintenance of the existing structure (£10-15,000);
2. Higher level maintenance and reinstatement of the existing structure (£35-40,000);
3. Vertical extension/encasement of the existing structure using a combination of (a) crib steelwork or (b) sheet piling and rock armour (£125-135,000 (a) or £225-240,000 (b));
or
4. Encasement of the existing structure in rock armour (£140-150,000).

The following considerations were highlighted in terms of the options:

- Both options 1 and 2 require minimal intervention and will provide some but little in the way of improved performance compared to existing conditions;
- Options 3 and 4 by virtue of both increased elevation and improved robustness and integrity will reduce both transmission through and movement over the structure; however
- Over a ten year period, the present value of costs of these options was likely to be higher than continued practice of dredging and removal; and
- Options 1, 2 and 4 were the most flexible in terms of adaptability in future arrangements.

Members were given an opportunity to provide observations and ask questions to the consultant, and he responded to them as follows:

- In regards to increasing the length of the Crib Groyne, increasing the length of the Crib Groyne had not been included in his brief and more detailed work in term of modelling, assessing the impact and environmental considerations would need to be done. He noted that work needed to be done in the short term;
- Could possibly consider moving the trailing arm more to the left when assessing long term options;
- That using heavy rock armour or pre-fab concrete structures to reinforce, rather than a steel structure and moving the trailing arm so that it can enter deep water, was something to consider.
- Agreed that option 3 would only prevent the situation from deteriorating for a period, but was presented as not to rule it out as a possible option;
- Annual maintenance was a financial burden and therefore a study of the long term options was needed in regards of the Crib Groyne and to also consider moving the direction of the other arm.

The Senior Manager Economy and Community noted that the service was eager to implement a short term solution in the coming months. He added that a long term solution would be a 2-3 year process, therefore, it was necessary to implement a short term solution that would not restrict the possible long term options.

The Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association Representative noted that it should be considered to increase the length of the Crib Groyne gradually in order to see to what length it could be extended to without complicating the process to assess if it was effective.

The Chair noted that something needed to be done in the short term before considering the long term options.

It was suggested to ask Gwynedd Council to progress with Option 4 to strengthen the current structure by encasing the structure with a rock armour. The proposal was seconded.

RESOLVED to ask Gwynedd Council to progress with Option 4 which is to strengthen the current structure by encasing it in rock armour.

The Senior Economy and Community Manager noted that a copy of the report would be circulated to the members in order for them to provide observations within three weeks. He confirmed that the service would progress in accordance with the wishes of the Committee.

The Chair thanked the consultant for his presentation.

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

- That the Members Support Officer had corresponded with every harbour organisation representative to remind them of the need to nominate a representative for the coming year and to also send a copy of the constitution and minutes of the annual meeting of the relevant groups. It was noted that the necessary information had been received from the Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association, Pwllheli Town Council and the RNLI. Those who were yet to respond were asked to send the information to the Members Support Officer in the coming weeks.
- That there were 60 boats on annual moorings in the outer Harbour in 2017 compared with 58 in 2016.
- It was confirmed that 306 boats were on annual pontoon moorings in the Hafan in 2017, compared with 287, which were on pontoon moorings in 2016. The increase was encouraging and it was assumed that the change to charge fees on a Length Overall (LOA) arrangement had helped, and it was hoped that there would be an increase in numbers from year to 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 MCA'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 identifying the Duty Holder needed to be amended. The inspectors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog and Pwllheli during the inspection. In terms of Pwllheli, an observation was made by the auditor that the Channel was narrow when the tide was out.
- The draft written report was awaited in the following week. 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 final report would be circulated to members.
- Following a discussion with the auditors, it had been agreed in principle that it would be beneficial for the date of the second visit to coincide with the date of a 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 to invite representatives from the Consultative Committees of Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Pwllheli to the meeting in October 2018.
- A detailed inspection had been conducted by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors on 2 August 2017, and no matters had arisen.
- Thus far, three reports had been submitted to the attention of the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) reporting on events relating to boats in Gwynedd. One event reported on was a boat which capsized within an authorised area of Pwllheli Harbour. A power boat was travelling from the direction of Abersoch to Pwllheli at a

safe and reasonable speed when the boat was capsized by a wave. The sailors suffered no injuries and the boat was retrieved by the Lifeboat crew.

- That the service was considering improvements to the equipment and fuel service. The possibility for customers to receive and pay for fuel through self-service machines was being investigated. If it would be possible to introduce the service, customers would then be able to obtain fuel by using the self-service equipment outside the hours of 09.00 - 17.00. Before it could be possible to confirm the self-service arrangements, the Service needed to consider how they would be able to ensure that users complied with the requirements of submitting red diesel statements. This was related to processing and collecting additional toll payments in regards to selling red diesel used by boats for the purpose of travelling by boat. It was hoped that there would be no administrative barriers to improving customer service.
- The work of dredging the harbour entrance had been completed during the spring and following the dredging work, further work had been completed to level the surface of the channel to try to ensure consistency in the navigation channel bed levels.
- In order to meet with the budget challenge and the service's income target, it was suggested to increase Hafan and Pwllheli 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 that they would be confirmed at the next meeting.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer emphasised the importance of ensuring that every power boat and Personal Watercraft which used the Hafan's slipway was registered and that it displayed the registration permit on the boat. No boat should be launched in the harbour without displaying the registration permit. It should be ensured that Park and Launch companies complied with these requirements.

The Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association representative noted that some individuals used the slipways early in the morning and returned late in the evening to avoid paying and registering. He added that moving the Harbourmaster's office had had an impact and that businesses could not be there at all times.

In response to a question by a member, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the CCTV facilities had been improved. It was impractical for officers to watch hours of video footage, therefore individuals were asked to contact the service as soon as possible following a specific incident.

A member noted that individuals also launched boats where they were not permitted to do so. In response, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that there was a new boat in the harbour that would be of assistance to carry-out more patrolling work. He added that there were more staffing resources with the addition of the Hafan staff, and staff's job descriptions were currently being reviewed, and it was anticipated that the situation would improve in 2018.

In response to a comment by the Pwllheli and District Boat Owners Association Representative, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the service would provide him with ropes and a fender and that he should contact the Harbour Manager to arrange this.

The Pwllheli Sailing Club and Plas Heli representative noted that there was a need to look at dredging within the Hafan. In response, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that a hydrography survey had been conducted on the basin, and that there was an intention to assess the survey before deciding on which steps to take. He added that emptying the stilling lagoon was being considered. In response to an observation by the RNLI representative in

regards to locally disposing of the material, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that no location in the bay had the appropriate licence.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to extreme weather during the previous night as a result of former storm Ophelia. The Pwllheli Harbour Manager noted that considering the extreme weather, the only damage was that one sail had blown out.

The Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders Association Representative noted that the Maritime and Country Parks staff had worked hard during that day/night and asked that the gratitude of the boat owners be conveyed to the staff. He added that no significant complaints had been submitted by members of the association this year.

A copy of the Harbour and Hafan's 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. Their content was expanded upon and it was noted that the financial situation was better in the current year and it was hoped that the targets would be reached.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer referred to the Glandon beach car park and noted that the surface of the car park would be addressed before the end of October. The potholes that had appeared on the car park's surface by the entrance were filled at the beginning of the season. He explained that due to the busyness of the site and number of vehicles which used the car park, the service would be considering alternative arrangements to try to reduce the damage caused to the surface of the site.

The representative for Pwllheli Town Council noted that the condition of the car park needed to be addressed as the potholes on the surface were dangerous for older people.

The Pwllheli Sailing Club and Plas Heli representative noted that matter was discussed daily by staff at Plas Heli and that it made them feel disheartened.

In response to the comments, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that a long term solution would be sought for the situation.

An update was received by the Pwllheli Sailing Club and Plas Heli representative about events in Plas Heli. He noted that one World championship and one British competition had been held during 2017. He added that an Optimus competition would be held in 2018 and preparations for a competition in 2021 were progressing.

RESOLVED to note and accept the report.

7. ELECTING 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 Councillor Peter Read to serve as an observer on the Aberdyfi, Barmouth and Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committees.

8. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 20 March, 2018.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.55pm.