

**Minutes of a meeting of the Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee that took place on
23 November 2017 at Neuadd Dyfi, Aberdyfi**

PRESENT

Cllr. Dewi Owen, Anne Lloyd Jones, (Gwynedd Council), Cllr. Bob Tyrrell (Aberdyfi Community Council), Mr Brian Bates (RNLI), Mr Dave Williams (Aberdyfi Advertising and Improvements Committee), Mr Desmond George (Dyfi Yacht Club), Al Crisp (Outward Bound).

Observers: Mr Neil Storkey (Clerk/Observer on behalf of Aberdyfi Community Council)
Cllr. Rob Triggs (Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee)

Also in attendance:

Officers

Barry Davies - Maritime and Country Parks Officer
William Stockford - Aberdyfi Harbour Master
Glynda O'Brien - Member Support Officer
Mererid Watt - Translator

Apologies: Councillor Ioan Ceredig Thomas (Cabinet Member - Economy), Cllr. Mike Stevens (Gwynedd Council), Mr Nick Dawson (Outward Bound), Mr Llŷr B Jones (Senior Manager Economy and Community)

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Resolved: To elect Councillor Dewi Owen as Chair of this Committee for 2017/18.

2. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Resolved: To elect Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones as Vice-chair of this Committee for 2017/18.

3. **DECLARATION OF PERSONAL CONNECTION**

No declarations of personal connection were received from any member present.

4. **MINUTES**

Submitted: Minutes of a meeting of the Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee that took place on 28 February 2017.

Resolved: To accept and approve the minutes as a true record.

4.1 Matters arising from the minutes - Item 4 (d) (i) Quay Wall

The Chair noted his disappointment that an officer from Gwynedd Consultancy could not attend the meeting to give an engineering update on the developments with the quay wall work. The Chair had attended a meeting recently with officers from the Gwynedd Consultancy Unit and he reported that from his understanding the latest position was that the estimate for the revised plans to re-develop the quay wall was £2.2m. At present, approximately 75% of this cost could

be found via grants and European funding, however there was a deficit of 25% that was equivalent to £500,000. At the previous meetings the possibility of attracting a third party to contribute to the costs was discussed and it would be possible to discuss this further at the next meeting of this Consultative Committee. It was suggested that all Committee Members considered asking for possible financial support and that this information was highlighted to members of all the organisations represented on the Harbour Committee. It was understood that concern had been highlighted by Natural Resources Wales regarding the intention to extend the existing structure out by approximately a metre seawards and this would have an impact on habitats, but it was understood that they were now satisfied with the amended plans. It was further understood that the application would be presented and considered soon by the National Park Authority, namely the Planning Authority for Aberdyfi.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer added that he would arrange for copies of the plans to be available for inspection at the Harbour Master's office and he would circulate notes updating on the process in the last few weeks. It was noted that it would be challenging to find £500,000 and it was intended to look at every possible financial source.

In terms of the time-schedule, it was trusted that the work could commence in April 2019.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

- In terms of attracting a local contribution, it was felt that £500,000 was challenging and would it be possible for the Council to consider sources from tourism streams.
- That 2018 had been designated the Year of the Sea and there might be financial sources available from the Welsh Government.
- It had been agreed in the past that the quay was an important resource for Aberdyfi and especially to support businesses, RNLI etc.
- That Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas had recently been appointed as the Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport and it would be beneficial to have a discussion with him regarding any assistance that he could suggest.
- Doing nothing to renovate the quay wall was not an option, as it would fall into the sea, however the path to reach this aim was difficult.

Resolved: (a) To accept and note the above and to look forward to discuss the matter further at the next Consultative Committee in March 2018.

(b) That the amended plans and the latest report were available in the Harbour Master's office for further inspection by members of this Consultative Committee and members of the public.

4.2 Item 4 (d) (ff) - Common Land / Storage, waste

It was reported that the above land continued to be problematic with the public disposing all types of illegal waste on the land, including fridges, freezers, asbestos etc.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer explained that there was asbestos on the land and this had to be disposed by specialists and in accordance with strict guidance. It was noted that the Services had earmarked approximately £10,000 for the clearance work with approximately £8,000 in addition to erect a secure fence in order that no one could dispose of litter or any illegal use of the land in the future. It was trusted that the site would be cleared by the start of April 2018. By the end of summer, it was hoped that there would be a tidy space available in the area to store pots and tackle for the fishermen who work regularly from Aberdyfi harbour. The Service was in discussion with a waste disposal company from Caernarfon to get an estimate to dispose the waste.

The representative from the Yacht Club noted they had a lease for a small section of the land and the Club would be willing to contribute financially and practically to dispose of illegal waste. The representative was asked to circulate a copy of the lease to officers at the first opportunity.

A Member noted that once the land had been cleared, it would be a valuable and safe resource to store official equipment and in an ideal location.

The Maritime Officer emphasised that fishermen needed to ensure that all their property, including fishing tackle of any type, had been stored in a safe way. Any equipment identified as not being used or maintained for some time would be disposed.

A Member suggested that it could be possible to find out who had illegally dumped material by investigating the serial numbers of the materials.

It was noted as a matter of information that Clarach Waste Services in Aberystwyth undertook a weekly service for Tywyn and it might be worthwhile contacting them for a price to dispose waste.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

5. THE MARITIME OFFICER'S REPORT

Submitted: The report of the Maritime and Country Parks Officer, Mr Barry Davies, updating the committee on Harbour management matters with specific reference to the following:-

(a) Members were reminded that they needed to submit the constitution and minutes of the annual meeting of the organisations/institutions they represent on the Harbour Consultative Committee in order to ensure eligible membership of the Committee in accordance with the resolution of Gwynedd Council Cabinet in 2014. The organisations who had not sent the relevant documents were as follows:

- Aberdyfi Improvements Committee
- Cardigan Bay Sea Fisheries Association
- Aberdyfi Boat Club
- Dyfi Yacht Club
- Aberdyfi Rowing Club

It was understood that Aberdyfi Partnership and Aberdyfi Chamber of Trade did not now exist.

Resolved: To accept and note the above and these organisations were expected to forward the relevant documents to the Member Support Officer.

(b) In terms of the numbers of moorings in the Harbour there had been a reduction of one compared to 2016 with an increase in the number of personal water-craft. The weather had been disappointing and this had had an impact on the harbours across the County, however, it was pleasing to note that boats from Conwy had visited Aberdyfi harbour and it was trusted that they would visit again in the future.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(c) **Marine Safety Code**

An inspection had been conducted by the Coastguard's Agency and stemming from their report reference was made to minor elements that needed to be addressed in Aberdyfi Harbour such as tidying up around the quay as effects and ropes had been stored on the quay in a way that may pose a risk. The inspectors will visit the service in a year's time and the intention was to invite members of the Harbour Committees to one central meeting in order to receive information from the inspectors regarding the main issues of the Safety Code. It was anticipated that the meeting would take place in Porthmadog.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

- That Outward Bound collaborated well with Harbour staff with all activities.
- A wish to see moorings in the places where they were 15 years ago
- In terms of safety, it was asked if there was any problem stemming from the use of personal water-craft.

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer and the Harbour Master responded to the above as follows:

- (i) Whilst sympathising with the Yacht Club regarding a space in the estuary as a result of the installation of the moorings, it was explained that the channel was narrowing and the Harbour Master always did his best not to take too much space and the willing cooperation of the Yacht Club was appreciated at all times.
- (ii) There had been an improvement in terms of problems with personal water-craft and once a national arrangement was accepted, a message could be sent out to all mariners

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(ch) **Navigation**

It was reported that the Harbour Master did his best to keep the aids to navigation on station and an assurance was given that Buoy Number 2 would be on station before Easter.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(d) **Maintenance**

The Harbour Master outlined his work programme over the winter period as follows:

- Repair work at Picnic Island
- Work on Buoy Number 2
- Repair of boat
- Work from now until Christmas placing timber on the wharf

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the Service had six vehicles, however, there was no vehicle in Aberdyfi or Barmouth. It was trusted that a vehicle would be available before Christmas and one in Barmouth by the New Year. The Harbour Master had been using his own vehicle to remove animals such as sheep, porpoises etc, from the beach.

With regards to the board-walk across the golf course, there was a need to contact relevant bodies for financial contributions for its repair. The path had been closed, however it was trusted that work could be done at the start of the New Year.

The Chair noted that it was difficult to understand why it had taken so long to get a vehicle for Aberdyfi and particularly when it was needed in rough weather. Another Member added that the Harbour Master's responsibilities extended as far as Fairbourne and it was essential for him to have a vehicle to undertake his duties. It was suggested that the matter should be brought to the attention of the Cabinet Member - Economy and to stress the fact that there was a real need for a vehicle for the Harbour Master in Aberdyfi.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(dd) Staffing Matters

It was reported that the partnership with the Aberdyfi Harbour Assistant worked excellently and the employment period had been extended to the end of December.

The Chair took the opportunity, on behalf of the Consultative Committee, to thank the Harbour Master and the staff for their praiseworthy work.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(e) Harbour and Grounds Matters

(i) It was reported that pots were stored on the quay and it was stressed that there was a need for fishermen's cooperation to keep the area tidy for public protection. In future it was trusted that it would be possible to have a safe space on the common land for storage. It was also emphasised that commercial users should not park vehicles at the side of the quay for long periods, again because of the safety risk to the public, except for loading and unloading goods or fish. Arrangements would have to change in 2018 and there might be an arrangement to have a parking permit for them to park in the car park.

During the ensuing discussion the following was noted:

- that pots and fishing tackle were a feature of a working harbour
- the importance of having representation from the fishermen's society at this Consultative Committee's meetings. It was suggested that a representative from the Fishermen's Society should be contacted on behalf of the Committee to ask if it would be possible to nominate an alternate member from amongst local fishermen to attend on his/her behalf if required
- that safety issues were vitally important and a number of schemes over the years had borne fruit to try and improve public safety, such as suitable life jackets etc. It was understood that the Scottish Government supplied life jackets free of charge and it was trusted that the Welsh Government would follow.

Resolved: To accept and note the above and to contact a representative from the Fishermen's Society on behalf of the Consultative Committee, to ascertain if it would be possible to nominate a representative from amongst local fishermen to attend the Committee on his behalf when he could not attend the meeting.

(ii) **Bathing Waters**

It was reported that the bathing waters results had improved in comparison with last year, with Cemetery Beach also continuing to be tested by Natural Resources Wales.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(iii) **Safety Signs**

It was reported that Maritime Service officers had held discussions with Josh Cooper from the RNLI, together with the two local members. Locations had been agreed to erect the safety signage and it was trusted that there would be a final report before Christmas with the signs in place by 1 April 2018. In terms of signs in Barmouth, it was trusted that these would be in place by August.

In response to a member's enquiry regarding a post that holds the lifesaving buoy in Penhelyg Harbour, the Harbour Master confirmed that it would be replaced.

An RLNI representative noted that they publicised the dangers of the sea and the importance of posting signs between Tywyn and Aberdyfi was noted and in particular raising awareness of rip tides.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(f) **Financial Matters**

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer guided Members through the financial balance-sheet and noted as follows:

- there was an underspend of £3,264 in staff costs
- there was an underspend of £11,640 in grounds and buildings costs
- there was an overspend of £32 in boat and vehicle costs
- there was an overspend of £1,296 in tools and equipment costs
- the income target was £5,594 short

For the end of September 2017 it was noted that the income was £2,283 short.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(ff) **Fees and Charges 2017/18**

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that fees would increase by 2% on average for the 2017/18 financial year to meet with the service's budgetary challenge and income target.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

(g) **Events**

The Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that it was pleasing to see so many varied activities in the community. Specific reference was made to a journey in personal water-craft from Morfa Bychan to Aberdyfi during the summer and the arrangements on the day were applauded. It was trusted that the activities would continue and would take place again next year. However, it was noted that activities needed to be reviewed as part of the Dyfi Fest and

specifically health and safety elements on the quay (bouncy castle). If Dyfi Fest takes place next year, it was suggested that the operator of the bouncy castle could have an electricity supply from the harbour rather than use a generator.

In response to a request to re-locate the weather station as it was situated in the incorrect place on the quay, the Maritime and County Parks Officer suggested that Mr Des George discusses and agrees on a location with the Harbour Master at the first possible opportunity.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Bryn Llestair (Picnic Island)

The Chair expressed his concern regarding the condition of the bridge that crosses to Picnic Island and they had to be ready to renovate the bridge. It was understood that Network Rail were aware of the condition of the bridge and it would be an opportunity to ask the company if they were willing to contribute towards the renovation costs. The Chair together with Cllr. Anne Lloyd Jones, intended to attend a joint meeting of the Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth Railway Committee and the Cambrian Coast Railway Conference on 24 November 2017 and they were more than willing to raise the matter there.

In response, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer noted that the service had inspected the bridge and were aware of its importance to the community. The matter of a financial contribution from Outward Bound was discussed approximately three years ago. An application for capital had been submitted to the Council and it was trusted that the matter could be dealt with this year.

The Harbour Master added that it was difficult to work on the bridge as the railway line was live and in terms of safety it was necessary to get inspectors at either side of the railway at a cost of approximately £2,000 a time.

Resolved: To request that the Maritime and Country Parks Officer submits an update to the next Consultative Committee meeting.

(b) Sand Removal

In response to an enquiry regarding sand clearance, the Maritime and Country Parks Officer confirmed that this had been programmed for March.

Resolved: To accept and note the above.

7. ELECTION OF OBSERVERS

Resolved: To elect Mr Dave Williams as an observer to represent Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee on the following:

- **Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee**
- **Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee**
- **Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee**

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: It was noted that the next meeting of this Consultative Committee would take place on 22 March 2018.

The meeting commenced at 10.30am and concluded at 12.20pm.

CHAIRMAN.