

MEETING	Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	16 March 2021
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
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Introduction.

As a reminder, the Committees main function is to consider, discuss and advise on matters relating to the management, safety and development of the Harbour and to receive Member's observations on matters relating to Pwllheli Harbour which includes all aspects on navigation and harbour safety.

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update for the attention of the Committee on harbour matters for the yearly period ending March 2021, and also in order to receive feedback from the members on safety matters and the operational matters of the Harbour. It is regrettable that the March and October 2020 meetings had to be postponed as a consequence of the Coronavirus epidemic.

Port Marine Safety Code.

The Port Marine Safety Code ('PMSC') sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the port marine environment. It applies to all Statutory Harbour Authorities.

The Code represents good practice as recognised by a wide range of industry stakeholders and Gwynedd Council understands that a failure to adhere to good practice may be indicative of a harbour authority being in breach of certain legal duties. It is necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Port Marine Safety Code and to regularly receive observations on its contents, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to the harbour activities, navigational aids, suitability of by-laws, safety matters and general day to day work at Pwllheli Harbour.

Following a thorough inspection of the Gwynedd Harbours Port Marine Safety Code and its associated safety management system by examiners from the Maritime and Coastguard agency last year, the Service intend to send a letter of compliance with the code to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. This will be completed after an annual external audit of the safety management system has been undertaken by the Designated Person.

Dredging

The combined dredging contract which includes the dredging of the east basin at Doc Fictoria in Caernarfon and the dredging work for the approach channel at Pwllheli harbour has been awarded to Royal Smalls. The company was also involved in the previous dredging campaign at Pwllheli.

The contract was due to commence in January 2021 but due to the current International C-19 emergency, restrictions imposed on movements and travelling has impacted on the work programme significantly. The Maritime Unit is in regular contact with the Consultants and with the contractors in order to gauge what can likely be achieved in 2021. At present, the possibilities are that work may be able to commence at Caernarfon during April and at Pwllheli towards the end of April to early May. We will advise all stakeholders of developments as travelling restrictions are amended.

With regards to Pwllheli, the existing original Stilling Lagoon has a remaining capacity of 4,000 m³. The aim is to remove 10,000 m³ from the approach channel. Some siltation will be able to settle in the adjoining lagoon on route to the exiting dewatering pipeline.

Material dredged by cutter suction from nearer to the harbour entrance will be deposited on land which is used to store material dredged from the harbour entrance. A separate stilling lagoon will be created by using existing material and water will discharge into the harbour from the temporary lagoon.

It has been assessed that this material will be suitable for dewatering in this area due to size and weight of particles.

Additional work on removing sand and heavier material from the harbour entrance will be undertaken in April using land based machinery.

Financial Matters.

A brief summary of the Hafan and harbour budget and current financial situation will be presented at the meeting. The Coronavirus epidemic has had major impact on the income gained from the harbour. In accordance with the instructions of the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council, a reduction in the mooring fee was applied for a period within the 2020-2021 financial year.

During 2020/21 it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following;

Maintenance of navigational aids and beacons

Inspection and maintenance of pontoon and mooring facilities

Maintenance and operation of the of machinery and boats

Maintenance of land, structures and street furniture

Maintenance and purchase of tools and equipment including PPE safety equipment

Fees and Charges. 2021/22.

The Service currently awaits confirmation with regard to the prospective fees and charges for Hafan and Pwllheli Harbour together with the Powerboat and Personal Watercraft launching fees for 2021/22 season. It is anticipated that the Hafan fees will remain at standstill with 0% increase but with electricity charges rising by 4%. Harbour fees will rise by inflation at 2%. Launching and registration fees will remain standstill following 100% increase in 2020/21. There will be increases in land storage, visiting boats and winter berthing as noted in the draft list of fees and charges. The Park and Launch permit will be subject to review in 2021 and charges will possibly amended to reflect the use of the facility and the need to contribute towards harbour maintenance.

Operational Items

All Aids to Navigation within Pwllheli Harbour are working and are all on station. Trinity House recently inspected all Aids to Navigation and confirmed that all was in accordance with their requirements.

The Pwllheli Fairway Buoy will be changed for the summer Fairway Buoy during the next month; this buoy is of a larger diameter to the winter buoy. During the summer months the winter buoy will be serviced ready for deployment in October. Seasonal Speed Limit marker buoys will be in position by the inner harbour entrance in preparation for the 1st May 2021.

There are no 'Notice to Mariners' currently in operation in Pwllheli Harbour.

Fuel Quay

Self Service Unit/Red Diesel - Since the last Harbour Consultative meeting in October 2019 we still await guidance from HMRC regarding the sale of Red Diesel to 'pleasure craft'. Therefore we will continue with the HMRC recommended 60/40 split until we receive further direction from the HMRC on this issue.

Maintenance

Winter maintenance work has continued with power washing of the pontoons, landscape maintenance together with other essential works to ensure that the harbour and marina are to the required and expected standard.

Staffing

After over thirty years of valued service the Assistant Manager for Hafan Pwllheli retired in January. The Maritime Unit we would like to take this opportunity to wish Mr Keith Williams and his wife Margaret well for the future and to thank Mr Keith Williams for his dedication to Hafan and Pwllheli harbour during the last thirty years.

There are currently two vacant posts at Pwllheli, and it is anticipated that two new appointments will be confirmed in the coming weeks in preparation for the summer season. Two staff members remain on long term absence due to health reasons. Both have been absent for over six months.

Annual Harbour/Hafan Statistics

Details of the Hafan and Harbour statistics for 2020/21 are attached to the report.

Berth renewals – We expect to have a clearer indication of the take up for annual Pontoon berths by mid-April.

Boat hoist/storage ashore – The Hafan boat hoist utilisation seems to be steady but as reported at the last Harbour meeting, land space for the storing of vessels ashore is at capacity.

The storage area will remain at capacity until late April early May when boats will hopefully be returning to the water. This year we have introduced an additional fee whereby any vessel laying ashore for more than a two-year continuous period will see their storage ashore fee increase.

It is hoped that this will encourage owners of vessels to prepare their boats for the water or make alternative arrangements for long term storage. This we hope will release much needed space ashore for current annual berth holders.

Other matters

New Weather station - The weather station is now functioning and operational and is available on the Hafan Pwllheli website for those intending to observe the weather live at Hafan Pwllheli. This can also be downloaded as a phone app.

Web Cam – Due to the pandemic there has been a delay in the installation of the web cams at Hafan. Once installed and operational the three cameras will eventually be linked to the Hafan website and will enable viewing of live images of the Hafan/Harbour and the channel entrance via internet browser.

Powerboat/jet ski registrations - all registrations should be available on-line and boat owners will be required to register their vessels and make payment using the on line facility.

Lifeboat Station – the new Pwllheli Lifeboat Station building has been completed and the new tractor and carriage have been installed. We understand that the new Lifeboat is due to arrive in April and will shortly commence sea trials and crew training.

Covid- 19

The year of 2020 has been a very difficult year for everyone and there is still some uncertainty as to what 2021 may bring. The Maritime Unit is striving to ensure protection to customers and staff during these very difficult and trying times. The Harbour as a whole has been open throughout the winter and continues to function in accordance with Wales Government guidelines.

Boat Keys – in previous years boat keys have been stored at the marina office if requested by boat owners. This facility would enable contactors to collect the owners' keys from the Hafan reception. This has been operationally difficult as this required for the marina office to be available at all times.

In order to reduce the staffing requirement and as a further measure to protect the marina staff and customers it has been decided that customers' keys can no longer be retained at the marina office.

The Maritime Unit will be ensuring that local contractors are made aware of this change which will come into force on the 1st April 2021.