PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, 10 MARCH 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Cyngor Gwynedd: Councillors John Brynmor Hughes (Chair) and Hefin Underwood.

Co-opted Members: Barry Simmons and Gillian Parry-Jones (Pwllheli Marina Berth Holders' Association), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club), Andy Vowell (RNLI, Pwllheli), Councillor Mike Parry (Pwllheli Town Council) and Wil Partington (Pwllheli Maritime Traders' Association).

Officers: Sarah Hattle (Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager), Llyr Beaumont Jones (Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Elin Hywel.
- Alwyn Roberts (RNLI, Pwllheli) with Andy Vowell deputising.
- Councillor Gwilym Jones (Observer from Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

3. URGENT ITEMS

A request to discuss a dingy-rack device had been submitted by a representative of the Pwllheli Maritime Traders' Association. Concern was expressed that this situation was leading to economic problems for the business of Partington Marine Ltd. It was explained that the device had been installed outside the former Harbourmaster office, with plans to move it to a gap between the former RNLI building on the outer harbour and Partington Marine Ltd. Attention was drawn that this road provided access to the front of Partington Marine's business as well as their slipway and shop. There were concerns that the company could not transport a hoist around that area, as it was already a challenge to do so, and was also causing problems for large vehicles delivering boats there, although cars and other vehicles could drive by. It was stressed that although the RNLI no longer used this area, keeping the device between the buildings threatened the future of Partington Marine Ltd.

It was expressed that keeping the device in its current location would cause challenges if emergency service vehicles would need access to the outer harbour on any occasion.

This situation was considered to interfere with rights of way that had been on the site for some time and that legal advice could be sought if anyone believed that it was appropriate to do so.

It was noted that all members were not aware of this situation prior to this meeting and had not had time to prepare for the discussion. A summary of the challenges of the current situation was given by the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager, noting that hopefully moving the device to its current location from its previous location beyond a slipway adjacent to the former Harbourmaster office would resolve the conflict that had arisen there recently. It was emphasised that the outer harbour area was very busy as people used that area to launch boats themselves, and pedestrians and several other individuals used the slipway. It was believed that keeping the device in its previous location created health and safety issues, fearing harbour users would be hit by passing vehicles,

and that a solution should be sought as soon as possible. It was also noted that moving the device created more parking spaces for the harbour users. It was stressed that there was no intention to affect the entrance to Partington Marine Ltd.

Photographs of the device were shown to highlight the current situation and the potential challenges arising from its use and location.

In response to the discussion, the Assistant Head of the Economy and Community Department confirmed that a few comments and concerns had been raised regarding the current situation. It was assured that work was underway to identify alternatives to resolve the situation.

At the end of the discussion, it was confirmed that Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager and a representative of Pwllheli Maritime Traders' Association would write reports on this matter, to be presented at the next meeting.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 07 October 2025, as a true record.

5. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

An update on harbour management matters was received from the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager.

The harbour performance data was detailed, confirming that the numbers of Mooring Contracts had remained relatively consistent with recent years. It was explained that some moorings had been lost at the beginning of the current financial year due to a build-up of mud and silt in the harbour, confirming that it was likely that some moorings would be lost soon. It was noted that the plan was to open different areas for moorings to respond to this emerging situation, and to ensure that officers continued to monitor the situation.

Mooring customers were thanked for completing a satisfaction questionnaire recently. It was pointed out that officers were aware that there were difficulties at present with the depth of the channel and the need to plan and carry out dredging work in the harbour, noting that this satisfaction questionnaire reflected the need for that due to the level of satisfaction being lower than in recent years. It was also noted that the level of satisfaction of mooring customers with the pontoons had also fallen this year. An update was given that new external pontoons had been installed since the submission of this report. It was explained that some aspects of the questionnaire falling under the responsibilities of the officers such as staff factors, were on the rise, with pride taken in the fact that the customers were satisfied with the work being carried out by the harbour staff.

It was reported that the harbour had undergone an inspection by Trinity House to inspect navigational aids and records. Pride was expressed that the audit had showed that the harbour arrangements were satisfactory and efficient.

It was noted that a written update had been submitted within the report on harbour dredging issues, and it was agreed to discuss those issues at an informal meeting of this Consultative Committee, scheduled for the afternoon of 18 March 2026.

An update was given that work was being carried out to refurbish Ystafell Erch at Hafan to transform it into a lounge for those with a mooring on the harbour. It was acknowledged that the work was more extensive than anticipated but it was confirmed that work was being carried out quickly to install central heating, install new doors and windows as well as new floors to modernise the building.

It was confirmed that tenders had recently been invited for the cleaning provision, in line with the procurement requirements. It was shared that Mynydd Cleaning & Maintenance Ltd of Porthmadog had been appointed in the hope that they would take over the cleaning provision from 23 March. It was elaborated that officers had recently had an initial meeting with the company and were proud that the arrangement was a very positive one.

Staffing issues were detailed and it was explained that a review of Hafan staffing structure had recently been undertaken in consultation with the HR service and the trade unions. It was emphasised that no individual had lost their job, that a pay rise had been identified for some roles and that some team members had moved internally to new roles. It was pointed out that the hope was to appoint to two additional posts very soon, namely Project Manager and Operations Assistant. It was noted that current staff had been informed of these posts and been considered to fulfil the roles when undertaking the review of the staffing structure.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

It was noted that the fact that more officers were being employed to assist with harbour matters was a matter of gratification. It was elaborated that harbour services were maintained 7 days a week and that it was essential that sufficient staff were available to assist to ensure that the best service was always provided.

It was highlighted that the Hafan postal address took visitors to the nearby industrial estate, rather than to the maritime area. It was hoped that the responsibilities of the new Project Manager would enable us to build on the feeling of welcome to the Hafan area and inform visitors earlier that they were in a maritime area. The possibility of adjusting the Hafan postcode to be different to guide visitors to the correct place was discussed and the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager noted that initial steps were being taken by the Planning service to adjust the postcode.

In response to an enquiry regarding who was allowed to use the new lounge in Ystafell Erch, the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager confirmed that it could only be used in the short term by individuals with moorings. However, it was noted that officers were aware of comments that the harbour was not doing enough to engage with the town and it was considered that the use of this lounge could help towards improving that relationship. In response to a further enquiry, the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Manager confirmed that the budget for refurbishing the lounge was funded from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). Observations were received that opening the room for public use could lead to difficulties, but it was agreed that not enough potential barriers had been raised to justify not going ahead with arrangements.

Resolved:

To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion, except for the Harbour dredging matters, as those matters would be discussed at an informal meeting on 18 March 2026.

6. PLAS HELI

A verbal update on Plas Heli matters was received from a representative of Pwllheli Sailing Club. Attention was drawn to the following matters:

There was anticipation for a busy season in the harbour with eight major events taking place at Plas Heli. Great pride was taken in having groups warming up for those events on weekends at Plas Heli, noting that it was pleasing to see the site busy every day.

It was confirmed that preparation and maintenance work was ongoing, noting that the site had been the subject of an inspection and report by Walcon Marine on the condition of the moorings. It was noted that the audit had resulted in a list of recommendations that would be carried out by Walcon

Marine. It was elaborated that the costs of some of these operations were in the region of £5,000. Similarly, it was explained that an electrical certificate had been issued for each pontoon, at a cost of around £5,000.

Reference was made to community events noting that a request had been received to use the site for the 'She Ultra' registration sessions and as a starting and finish point. It was explained that this event was being held in April with around 3,500 people expected to be involved on the site. Similarly, it was noted that the site was being used for the start and finish of the Llŷn Rally at Plas Heli in March, confirming the expectation for the site to be vacated and cleared by 8am following the event. Reference was also made to an event being held for commercial fishermen on site, where meetings would be held and educational and medical stands available. It was pointed out that various other meetings were being held on site and pride was expressed that the staff at Plas Heli had had the time to refurbish some rooms and convert an office into an additional meeting room for public use.

It was reported that the plan was to install a new parapet on the balconies of the building. It was noted that this work was essential because of rotten timber. It was elaborated that work was being carried out to raise the balcony to replace its foundations to match the rest of the building, while this work was being completed. It was confirmed that this work was nearing completion.

Assurance was given that landscaping work was ongoing to ensure that the appearance of the site improved year on year.

Concern was expressed that tractors were transporting boats to the beach past the main entrance and car park of the site creating health and safety problems, in case people would be using the same route for launching personal boats and the use of motorised trailers in the same way. It was confirmed that a large stone had been placed near this entrance to the beach to deal with this.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

It was explained that a trial had recently been carried out with motor trailers, where they were remotely controlled, by a company that had been in contact with the Beaches Team for permission. It was recognised that Plas Heli should be included in similar consultations and schemes in the future. In response to these observations, a representative from Pwllheli Sailing Club confirmed that this trial would have been carried out by using the service road for safety, and to save the grass landscaping from being destroyed. However, it was evidenced that people were constantly passing the main entrance of the building and the car park resulting in the stone being placed at the beach entrance to stop them.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 03 November 2026.

Members were reminded that an informal meeting would be held on 18 March 2026 to discuss issues relating to the dredging of the Harbour.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.05 pm.

CHAIR.