
PWLLHELI HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

08 OCTOBER 2024

ATTENDANCE:

Cyngor Gwynedd: Councillor Hefin Underwood

Co-opted Members: Barry Simmons (Representing Pwllheli Marina Mooring and Berth Holders Association), Michael Sol Owen (Plas Heli), Stephen Tudor (Pwllheli Sailing Club), Alwyn Roberts (Lifeboat Institution, Pwllheli), Wil Partington (Pwllheli Maritime Traders Association) and Councillor Mike Parry (Pwllheli Town Council).

Officers: Gerwyn Owen (Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Commercial Manager), Llyr Beaumont Jones (Assistant Head, Economy and Community Department) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

Others Present as Observers: Desmond George (Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Hefin Underwood as Chair for 2024/25.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to Elect Councillor Elin Hywel as Vice-chair for 2024/25.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Elin Hywel, Richard Glyn Roberts, Gwilym Jones (Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee) and Nia Wyn Jeffreys (Cabinet Member, Economy and Community).

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

5. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 5 March 2024, as a true record.

7. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

The report was submitted by the Commercial Manager of Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour and attention was drawn to the following main points:

Condolences were extended to the family and friends of Ruth James, a prominent member of the Mooring and Berth Holders Association (PMBHA) following her unexpected death earlier this year.

It was noted that the police were still investigating the fatal incident and that the Coroner's final report was expected shortly.

It was reminded that officers received the views of Members of the Harbour Committee on the suitability of the Port Marine Safety Code. It was confirmed that the Code was regularly reviewed and was currently being updated by the Senior Harbour Officer and Maritime Services Manager. It was confirmed that Trinity House had recently visited the harbour and would report on this matter in due course.

Pwllheli Harbour Long-term Strategy

Pwllheli Harbour's Long-term Strategy was highlighted. The Strategy was said to identify a vision for the Pwllheli harbour area and offered a development framework for future investments. Members and all individuals who had provided input into the strategy to date were thanked. It was elaborated that the Strategy identified key aspects for future success, i.e.

- A sustainable long-term programme for the main dredging challenges
- Renovating the necessary structures of pontoons and posts
- Delivering long-term investment by earmarking internal budgets to address certain elements of improvements, by preparing business cases and targeting financial sources to attract investment
- Implementing the following decisions in conjunction with wider plans for the town of Pwllheli.

It was confirmed that work was already underway to develop these aspects through work streams and an investment programme for Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour. It was acknowledged that the current financial situation was challenging but it was noted that there were several positive developments to date, such as:

- The decision made by the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet to earmark up to £5.4m to contribute towards the costs of dredging and renovating the infrastructure within the harbour (pontoons and posts), as part of Cyngor Gwynedd's Asset Management Plan 2024-2034. There was assurance that this money was in addition to existing harbour funds. The Assistant Head of the Economy and Community Department confirmed that this funding had been committed to the harbour following a review of the assets requiring priority investment over the next 10 years. The need to develop business cases and financial bids for additional funding was anticipated.
- Assurance that funds had been earmarked for the completion of improvements to the North Quay area.
- An opportunity to strengthen links between Pwllheli town centre and the harbour had been highlighted through the town's Placemaking Plan.
- Close collaboration with Cyngor Gwynedd's Environment Department and the Hen Ynys Management and Development Plan to create a nature, recreation and well-being area.

It was emphasised that a partnership with public bodies, businesses and communities was key to ensuring that the area reached its full potential.

An enquiry was received on the proposal within the report to develop a landscaped open performance area on the Hen Ynys and Inner Harbour area, and to consider how the harbour would work with the Town Council on this development. Furthermore, the need for a Water Taxi development to assist the connection with the town centre, was considered as presented in the Strategy, as the Harbour was already quite central to the town and using the taxi would be a very short journey, but would be useful for visitors staying in the caravan park at the edge of the harbour. In response, the Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour Commercial Manager confirmed that these developments were ideas from the consultants for the future of the harbour, and there was no commitment to them at present. However, it was noted that there was a plan in the Hen Ynys area to develop the nature and wildlife found there.

Assurance was given that the former Sailing Club had recently been converted into a learning and childcare setting following a huge community campaign. It was emphasised that this could not be changed in the future. It was elaborated that a planning application would be submitted shortly to develop the shower facilities available at Plas Heli and remove the showers at the former Sailing Club, as the current situation was inadequate.

Dredging

Members were reminded of the recent £500,000 investment to empty the distilling lagoon. An update was given that the work of dredging designated areas around the pontoons, fuel dock and channel near the outer harbour had begun. It was emphasised that only around 10,000m³ of the silt was being cleared, which was a third of all the silt present there. It was explained that £1.4m of the £5.4m provided by the Asset Management Plan discussed earlier would be used for dredging purposes (with £4m used on pontoon issues). It was explained that two elements of the dredging work were currently being considered, namely reclaiming land near Hen Ynys using harbour silt and pumping silt out into the bay (subject to receiving a marine permit).

Financial Matters

It was reported that additional financial resources had been committed from the funds to complete works around the harbour. This was confirmed to include: emptying the distilling lagoon, dredging, investing in CCTV camera system upgrades and installing a webcam. Pride was expressed that there were over 64,000 webcam visits via the harbour's website during August, with high numbers of visitors to the site throughout the summer months. It was elaborated that a request had been received from the police for the harbour's assistance to install additional CCTV near the entrance to Glandon beach to assist when issues arise, noting that discussions about funding these were ongoing.

Operational Items

All harbour Aids to Navigation were confirmed to be working and were stationed correctly. It was noted that one Notice to Mariners was currently in operation to highlight the dredging work currently taking place. It was explained that Trinity House had recently visited the harbour and it was noted that they were preparing a report on the need to update the harbour's Aids to Navigation to the future.

The need to review the total numbers of moorings in the harbour was recognised. It was explained that several of the moorings were not in use and therefore officers were negotiating with the Crown Estate to confirm the final numbers that could be used. It was noted that it was important to confirm these numbers so that the success of the harbour could be assessed when reporting the numbers of moorings in use at Economy and Community Department performance challenge meetings.

Reference was made to the Customer Satisfaction Survey provided by the Mooring and Berth Holders Association. It was pointed out that customer satisfaction with the visual impression of the harbour had begun to decline for some years now and therefore work was ongoing to invest in work streams to respond to these comments.

Sarah Hattle was congratulated on her recent appointment as new Harbour Master and Deputy Manager for Hafan Pwllheli and Harbour. It was noted that she would be shadowing current Harbourmaster Wil Williams in the run-up to his retirement in early 2025. It was confirmed that the harbour had appointed a Seasonal Harbour Assistant over the summer. It was also explained that the Assistant Boatswain would be ending his permanent role to take up University studies, but would continue to work in the harbour occasionally.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was stated that the next meeting would be held on 11 March 2025.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm.

CHAIR.