

CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of an in-person meeting held on 16th October, 2024.

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair); F. Hourahine (Natural Resources Wales), S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd.), C. Pooley (Natural Resources Wales), and M. Thomas (Clerk – Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, Vale of Glamorgan Council).

Also present: A.M. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority) and A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from C. Dimond (Cardiff Flood Action Committee), R. Irranca-Davies (Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales), C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners), C. Michael (RSPB) and P. Stone (Canoe Wales).

(b) Minutes of the Annual Meeting Held on 10th July, 2024 –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 10th July, 2024 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Navigational Safety and General Progress Report –

The Committee were informed by A. Vye-Parminter representing the Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) of the following on navigational safety:

- The latest Barrage Outer harbour and approach channel dredging had been completed successfully.
- Recent poor weather and high river flows had seen an increase in debris coming down the rivers and therefore the CHA was back into winter operations.

The Chair queried the nature of the debris being encountered in the river flows. It was explained that these largely consisted of pieces of tree and branching, as well as other forms of vegetation which had died off.

Subsequently, D. Hall also representing the CHA, informed the Committee about the CHA's general progress in a number of areas, including:

- Officers from Cardiff Harbour Authority took part in a Radio Wales programme celebrating the 30th anniversary of the start of Barrage construction. Interviews were also undertaken with other interest groups involved with the Barrage as well. The 25th anniversary of the completion of the Barrage and

harbour would also be coming up in the relatively near future, with plans being put into the place to commemorate and celebrate this milestone.

- In terms of the Barrage and the Locks, the CHA was currently looking to schedule in the annual maintenance for Lock 2.
- In terms of the Fish Pass, it was explained that the Sluice maintenance campaign was now complete, with works continuing on repairing two Sluice hydraulic cylinders. Spares were being procured for the failed joints and valves in the saltwater shaft. Despite the low river flows during the summer CHA had managed to control salinity effectively using the sluices. Moving into autumn and wintertime, flows were sufficient to allow normal bay level regulation.

On the query raised by S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd.) concerning the above point about Sluices and the issues around the saltwater flushing pipe, it was explained that the spare parts were in the process of being manufactured and supplied, but with no definitive timeframe when this would be finished as yet. In the meantime, the current workaround (as described above) would continue, with the expectation being that this issue would be rectified sometime during the Winter period.

Regarding A.M. Ernest's (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association) query on the cost of sourcing and producing the parts for the Sluices, it was explained that these were expensive due to their specialist nature. Also, there was a cost in getting these parts subsequently fitted and the labour involved, with the requirement to have this done by employing divers who would re fit these parts under potentially hazardous conditions.

On the 30th anniversary of the start of Barrage construction, the Chair referred to the massive and positive changes that this had brought to the local area. Both he and A.M. Ernest also suggested that the services of some of the local historians could be employed in helping to commemorate this event.

There being no further comments or questions on this item, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T that this item be noted.

(d) Natural Resources Wales Update –

The update was presented to the Committee by F. Hourahine, representative from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), who highlighted the following areas of interest:

- Overall, NRW were making good progress in a number of areas, with no major issues to report.
- On Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels, these remained above the 5 mg/L threshold within the Bay. Where issues had been encountered with this (i.e. in relation to the saline sump drain on the Bay side of the Barrage locks), the CHA had been taking the necessary steps to mitigate this issue, with NRW remaining in contact and working with the CHA on this.
- On the Ferry Road Landfill site, there had been no further incidents regarding leachate to Cardiff Bay since the last meeting. Investigations had revealed an

input to the leachate drainage system from outside the site, which required further investigation. NRW were working with Cardiff Council on this. Leachate levels were being measured more accurately across a series of observation wells throughout the site.

- There had been no pollution incidents reported since the last meeting.
- Regarding Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station, there were no further updates since the last meeting.
- Also outlined was the current status on the Barrage fish pass, with a cumulative total of 11 salmonids having been recorded through the pass this year. This data had yet to be extrapolated (adjusted to include fish that the fish counter might have missed), so the estimated number was likely to be similar to 2023 at approximately 22 salmonids. A more detailed update for 2024 would be made available for the next meeting.
- Finally, on the Blackweir docks feeder canal, NRW were currently reviewing an abstraction point intake screening feasibility report that Associated British Ports provided in September. NRW were also working with Cardiff Council's Highway Department to address a potential barrier to silver eels that was identified in the Stilling Basin south of Bute East Dock. This provided water to extinguish any fires in the A4232 tunnels. Improvements to the 30-metre weir would ensure that there were no barriers for silver eels throughout the feeder and dock network.

Following the update, A.M. Ernest asked for more detail on the Stilling Basin referred to in the update. C. Pooley (NRW) explained that it consisted of a small reservoir which held water for use in the event of extinguishing a fire.

There being no further comments or questions on this item, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T this item be noted.

(e) Any other Business –

The Clerk to the Committee shared an update from C. Kingston (Waterfront Partners) on the recent activities led and delivered by the Waterfront Partners within Cardiff Bay, as well as detailing the current membership of this body. It was explained that CHA had helped to get this partnership started and it was noted that this appeared to be a very successful, large-scale enterprise that would be beneficial in helping with events, etc. around the Bay area.

A.M. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association) asked whether the recent Cardiff Half Marathon (which involved the Cardiff Bay area) had been a success. It was explained by representatives of the CHA that all the participants had gone through the Bay area without issue and the navigation of the Bay had been maintained throughout this time. S. Jones stated that despite some disruption to local businesses due to these events, there was a considerable amount of support available to help manage these events and local businesses, etc. were given ample forewarning of when these would occur, backed up by signage and other notices being put up. There were also the positive impacts from these events on the Cardiff Bay and Marina, with television coverage and other publicity for these areas. The

Chair also referred to the money raised for charity from such events and that these were well organised, in conjunction with Cardiff Council, with various support in place, such as First Aid facilities. The Vice-Chair stated that it would be useful to hear from local businesses on the Cardiff Half Marathon route on the impact of such events on their trade, which would probably give them a significant boost. The popularity and reach of these events were noted, with such events being booked and sold out very quickly.

(f) Date of Next Meeting –

AGREED – T H A T the next meeting would take place on Wednesday, 22nd January, 2025 at 5.00 p.m.