

CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Remote Meeting held on 2nd December, 2020.

Present: Mr. A. Parker (Chairman), Councillor L. Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan Council), Mrs. N. De Longhi (Natural Resources Wales), Councillor N. Humphrey (Penarth Town Council), Mr. S. Jones (Quay Marinas Ltd), Captain R. Lewis (Harbour Master), Mr. C. Michael (RSPB), Mr. K. Rogers (Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales), and Mr. M. Thomas (Clerk / Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer).

Also present: Mr. C. Cheesman (Vale of Glamorgan Council), Mr. A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), Mr. D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Mr. A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity) and Mr. A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from Mrs. C. Dimond (Cardiff Flood Action Committee), Mr. J. Maidment (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Councillor M. Michael (Cardiff Council), Mr. P. Stone (Canoe Wales) and Ms. N. Taylor (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(b) Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd September, 2020 –

The Chairman referred to the agenda item on Managing Biodiversity and Natural Environment, where there had been a request for the Vale of Glamorgan Ecology Officer, Colin Cheesman, to attend a future meeting of the Committee in order to introduce himself and discuss the environmental work being undertaken from a Vale perspective. The Chairman stated that Mr. Cheesman was in attendance today and introduced him to the Committee, asking that he explain his role and the work undertaken by him.

Mr. Cheesman explained to the Committee that he had been appointed to the role of Ecology Officer at the Vale of Glamorgan Council in August of this year and his job covered four key areas:

- To act as an advisor on ecology to residents within the Vale of Glamorgan and to the various departments and teams that comprised the Council;
- In terms of Planning, to act as an advisor on ecological issues and the implications on biodiversity when planning applications were made;
- Working to create a Local Nature Partnership – a network for biodiversity in the Vale – and to write a new Nature Recovery Action Plan;
- To enhance biodiversity in conjunction with partners;
- In addition to the above, he was also involved in securing additional funding and resources from external partners for ecological projects and to monitor and report on the progress and performance within this area.

No.

Mrs. De Longhi referred to the agenda item on Sea Gulls in Cardiff Bay and ways of managing them; she explained that she had contacted the attendee who raised this issue via email but had not received a reply. She sought clarification on what action – if any – the person in question required from Mrs. De Longhi and her team. The Clerk / Democratic Services Officer stated that he would contact the attendee who raised this issue to see if it still needed to be resolved.

There being no further questions, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Navigational Safety and Progress Report – Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) –

Mr. Vye-Parminter representing Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) provided an update on recent events, starting with navigational safety:

- Pont y Werin Timetabled Lift Pilot Scheme – Mr. Vye-Parminter told the Committee that since the implementation of the new timetable, there had been an improvement in the operation of the bridge, with no issues identified so far;
- Dredging the water bus stop areas on the Taff – the Committee were informed that tenders for this work would be submitted and then reviewed in 10-14 days' time, with the expectation that the successful tender would be awarded a contract prior to Christmas so that work could start on this in the 2nd or 3rd week of January 2021. Mr. Hall added that dredging required approval either under Schedule 3 the Cardiff Bay Barrage Act 1993, Marine Licence or a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP). Until the methodology was known then dredging would be in the position of being ready to go – subject to a successful tender;
- A large quantity of waste was collected from the waters of the Bay between July–September of this year, despite the current restrictions on working due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Vye-Parminter then went on to the general progress report, highlighting the following areas:

- Regarding the Barrage, the annual maintenance campaign was nearing completion shortly, with significant seal repair works in Sluice 5. In addition, spares were being ordered for planned hydraulic cylinder inspection and repair in the Spring of 2021;
- The status of the Cardiff Half Marathon was also raised, with the rescheduled date in March 2021 further cancelled, with the hope that the next Marathon would be back in October 2021.

Mr. Vye-Parminter's colleague, Mr. Hall, then informed the Committee of the environmental work that had been undertaken by the CHA:

No.

- The first Cardiff Rivers Group litter picking event of 2020 took place on the Barrage recently – in compliance with COVID-19 regulations;
- Work was due to start shortly in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy to plant a Tiny Forest near the Bay, funded by a grant from Welsh Government. It would be located near the Swift Tower and include an outdoor learning space, to provide an opportunity for school children to come down and learn about environmental management in Cardiff Bay;
- Finally, it was announced that the Barrage and Wetlands had been awarded the Green Flag status again.

There being no further questions, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the report be noted.

(d) Natural Resources Wales Update –

Mrs. De Longhi representing Natural Resources Wales (NRW) provided an update to the Committee focusing on the following areas:

- Concerning Dissolved Oxygen Levels, there had been no issues identified by CHA which was not unexpected due to the winter season;
- NRW had continued to investigate the source of an intermittent polluting discharge in Cardiff Bay (near the Watermark Building, Ferry Road), mentioned at previous meetings. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, attempts by Cardiff Council to take samples from the affected areas had been hampered. However, some sampling had been carried out by the Council in mid-October and NRW were currently waiting on the results of these. Further sampling and surveying of the relevant pipework would probably be required in order to identify the source of the leachate;
- There was an ongoing issue of oil entering the River Ely, potentially from the Llandough Trading Estate. Mrs. De Longhi stated that NRW would be appointing a contractor to survey the drainage network of Llandough Trading Estate and other nearby retail parks and industrial estates in order to identify any oil reservoirs, with the investigation to be completed in the New Year;
- With regard to the Cardiff Bay Dredging Operations, as reported previously, Storm Denis had caused large cobbles to fill the deepened area of the River Taff adjacent to Bute Park needed for the water taxi to turn, so CHA had approached NRW to seek permission under Schedule 3 of the Cardiff Bay Barrage Act 1993 to dredge the area affected. It was agreed with CHA that if the proposed works were covered within the Cardiff Bay Barrage Act, then it would not require a Marine Licence or a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP). However, no application had yet been received. CHA had originally intended to undertake the work in November, but, as outlined in Mr. Hall's update earlier, CHA have now said that it would take place in January 2021. Also, in September NRW received an application from Associated British Ports (ABP) for a FRAP to dredge accumulated gravel from the bed of the River Taff adjacent to the trash screen at the upstream extent of the Dock Feeder near Blackweir. The gravel was reducing flows

No.

through the penstock valves, so its removal was required to maintain discharge through the Feeder system. The FRAP was subsequently issued. However, ABP subsequently informed NRW that they would not be able to complete the dredging before the in-river embargo period (15th October to 15th May so as to not disturb migrating and spawning salmonid fish, nor to impede high flows in the river), so had delayed the work until after mid-May 2021;

- Referring to the Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station, NRW confirmed with EDF that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be required for the dredge disposal marine licence application. NRW were expecting the submission by EDF, in late December, of a marine licence application for dredge disposal in Welsh Waters. If an application was received, it would be subject to a full public consultation in early 2021 and a decision in the spring of the same year;
- Finally, Mrs. De Longhi highlighted that a slightly higher than usual number of 'Salmonids' (fish 55cm or longer, such as Atlantic Salmon and Sea Trout) had passed through the barrage, which were likely to be 143 salmon and 4 sea trout in total, with a further 3,148 fish shorter than 55cm also passing through the barrage so far this year.

On the last point, the Chairman asked if these were likely to be all 'wild' fish now, which was confirmed as being the case.

Captain R. Lewis (Harbour Master), wished to refer to the point concerning the dredging application from ABP, which would ensure better water flow in the Docks and good water quality be maintained, therefore preventing the formation of algae bloom(s). He was very keen to get the dredging completed but understood this would not be possible to complete yet due to the reasons set out by Mrs. De Longhi in her report earlier. He explained that ABP had gone through a lengthy process to gain a permit to dredge the accumulated gravel and had agreed a plan for monitoring on a three-year basis and to supply the information gained to NRW. ABP would look to deposit evenly the gravel in conjunction with CHA and had spoken to CHA about this. Mr. Hall added that CHA had spoken to NRW too regarding the disposal site for the dredged material and how this could be done evenly. Furthermore, CHA would continue to work with ABP around monitoring in order to have a regime where ABP and CHA monitored at different times thereby preventing duplication.

There being no further questions, it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the report be noted.

(e) Disposal of Land at Dumballs Road – Report to Cabinet: 17th September, 2020 (For Information) –

The report had been placed on the agenda for the Committee's information, it being noted that any queries Members had in relation to the report could be referred to the Clerk who would obtain a response and reply accordingly.

No.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

(f) One Planet Cardiff – A Response to the Climate Emergency – Report to Cabinet: 15th October, 2020 –

The report had been placed on the agenda for the Committee's information, it being noted that any queries Members had in relation to the report could be referred to the Clerk who would obtain a response and reply accordingly.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

(g) Any Other Business –

Councillor Humphrey (Penarth Town Council) queried the absence of a Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance this year at the Barrage and if it would be held in 2021. The Chairman replied that such services had either been cancelled or held in a very limited way due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Mr. S. Jones (Quay Marinas Ltd) wished to make the Committee aware of the appearance of a diesel leak or spillage over the previous few days within the Marina. Unfortunately, due to the very 'thin' layer of diesel formed, absorbent pads could not be used to absorb this. The automatic bilge pump had contained this leak within the Marina, however. The source of the diesel leak had not been found. The Chairman stated this was hopefully a one-off accidental spillage, as such instances were very rare for the Marina.

(h) Date of Next Meeting –

The Clerk would contact all Members regarding the arrangements for the next meeting due to be held in March 2021.