

## **CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

Present: Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chair), A. Parker (Vice Chair), C. Michael (RSPB), Councillor N. Thomas (Penarth Town Council) and M. Thomas (Clerk / Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer Vale of Glamorgan Council),

Also present: A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), T. Gifford, D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority) Councillor M. Lewis (Cardiff County Council) and A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from C. Dimond (Cardiff Flood Action Committee), S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd) and A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority).

(b) Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 26th October, 2022 –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 26th October, 2022, be approved as a correct record.

(c) Update on the Timetable of Meetings.

The report was presented by the Clerk / Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, its purpose being to address the queries etc. raised by the Committee at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 concerning the previous version of the report, which suggested dates for future meetings and locations of the Committee. The Committee was informed of the progress being made in looking at the use of remote / face to face / hybrid means in order to hold meetings of the Committee, as well as scoping potential locations to hold meetings physically. It was explained that further updates would follow, pending clarification on the availability of proposed venues, such as the Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) and Associated British Port (ABP) offices, the Cardiff International White-Water Centre, etc.

Following the update, Members suggested additional venues that could potentially be used to hold in person / hybrid meetings going forward, i.e. Penarth Town Council buildings, the Norwegian Church and Cardiff Yacht Club.

It was also suggested that the next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2023, should be held remotely, with the subsequent meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2023 to be held in person at a chosen location near to Cardiff Bay as part of the proposed site visit and boat trip, it being noted that due to the time of year this would be an opportune moment to see those areas within the Bay that came under the remit of the Committee.

No.

On the availability of boats to be used for the boat trip, the ABP did not have vessels that could enter the relevant areas of the Bay, and the CHA boat(s) could only accommodate five passengers at a time. A suggestion was made to look at chartering an adequately sized boat to undertake the site visit, and to look at inviting the Executive Leaders of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils (or their deputies) to also attend.

The Chair requested a further update on future in person and hybrid venue options, ideally near to the Cardiff Bay area, to be provided to the Committee at its meeting in March.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T a further update on potential locations to hold in person and hybrid meetings of the Committee be provided at the next meeting of the Committee, currently scheduled for 22nd March, 2023.

(d) Navigational Safety and General Progress Report(s) – Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) –

D. Hall and T. Gifford, representing Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA), updated the Committee on the Navigational Safety and general information, including the Barrage.

The Committee was told that there was nothing currently to report on navigation, with no issues currently around water levels, the Barrage etc, nor any major works or projects currently being undertaken, which was normal for this time of year.

Regarding general progress and matters concerning the Barrage, there had been several filming productions at the Barrage, namely the 'Alex Rider' television programme and a BBC production in November / December. Sluice maintenance was complete, with further works due to start in the New Year on the Fish Pass and annual lock maintenance.

On the query raised by A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association) around fish movements, it was explained that this was monitored by Natural Resources Wales, and these details would be provided via their annual report, which was to be published in due course.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the above reports be noted.

(e) Natural Resources Wales Update –

An update had been provided to the Committee from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) which highlighted the following areas of interest:

No.

### **Dissolved Oxygen (DO) Levels**

As the colder period of the year had been moved into, with naturally higher flows in the River Taff and River Ely, NRW had not had any recent notifications from Cardiff Harbour Authority (CHA) regarding low DO levels within the Bay. Furthermore, CHA had also not reported any other issues.

### **Pollution Incidents and Investigations**

NRW had recently received several reports of oil in the low River Ely part of the Bay, which came in over the space of a couple of days. NRW had not found the source of this oil pollution at this time, however, NRW suspected that it was linked to activities at Llandough Industrial Estate. NRW had previously undertaken a campaign in the area about pollution awareness and the impact of oil pollution. NRW intended to carry out a similar campaign in the near future.

No other pollution incidents had been reported.

### **Water Budget Requirements**

NRW had hoped to meet CHA to discuss water budget requirements and learn lessons from the low flows over the summer. However, this was not possible and it was hoped that a meeting in the New Year could be arranged. The meeting was to discuss the request for a reduction in flows down the fish pass, which had been received from CHA by NRW when the flow in the dock's feeder had not been reduced. It had been previously agreed that flows would be reduced in the dock's feeder before any flow reduction in the fishpass.

In addition, NRW would need to discuss any impact on the operation of the barrage due to a newly issued abstraction permit to Associated British Ports (ABP) related to the dock's feeder at Blackweir. The abstraction permit required ABP to reduce the flows taken from the River Taff at certain low flow conditions to maintain the flows in the River Taff and into Cardiff Bay.

Following the report, a CHA representative informed the Committee of another, more recent, pollution incident to be investigated by CHA / NRW regarding a breach of waste management on the banks of the River Ely. This involved a large amount of silt, and CHA were awaiting a further report / update from NRW, which Councillor Thomas (Penarth Town Council) felt should also include tracing the origin of the pollution source and potential discussions with Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) and the Vale and Cardiff Councils around enforcement.

Councillor Thomas also asked about the Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels and the impact of Carbon Dioxide / 'Acid Rain' on this. A CHA representative explained that this was not a significant issue, due to the extremely minute levels of this in the water. Of greater impact to DO levels were any 'storm surges' or similar of water which could increase bacteria and thus reduce oxygen levels, but this would be countered somewhat with high water flows and the energy generated by this.

No.

Councillor Lewis (Cardiff County Council) raised the potential issue of water pollution feeding into the canals at Atlantic Wharf and whether the River Taff fed into these. It was explained that no rivers fed into these, and if there were any concerns about these, they would need to be raised with Cardiff Council or ABP as they were not within the Harbour Authority's jurisdiction.

The question was raised around the water budget requirements, the fishpass and water levels / flows therein, with the CHA representative stating that there always had to be water maintained within the pass in order to allow fish to come into Cardiff Bay, even during the summertime where there were lower water flows. Under the Cardiff Bay Barrage Act, ABP would stop their abstraction from Blackweir in order to help maintain the water at the fishpass, and CHA would compensate ABP regarding the importing of seawater into the Barrage.

It was also highlighted that various agreements, in relation to the above, were being 'ironed out' between CHA and NRW who were in regular contact with each other.

On the query raised concerning the numbers and patterns of fish coming through the pass, particularly during July, August and September, it was explained that there was a legal duty to maintain the water flow, etc. at the fishpass irrespective of the numbers of fish going through.

On Councillor Thomas' and A. Ernest's queries concerning the installation of hotel accommodation / bedroom 'pods' at Penarth Marina, and their impact in terms of sewage etc, going into the Bay, a CHA representative explained that this was outside of CHA jurisdiction. However, the Vice Chair suggested that any such instances which occurred could be reported to the relevant authorities for enforcement measures.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the above report be noted, with any queries raised from this forwarded on to the appropriate representative to address.

(f) Any Other Business –

A. Michael, the representative from the Penarth Headland Link Charity, informed the Committee that a considerable amount of work was currently being undertaken in relation to the Penarth Headland Link project. The project was very much 'alive and well' despite the challenges faced in the current economic climate, with ongoing collaboration between the experts and volunteers involved with the charity, plus CHA, NRW and the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils.

(g) Date of Next Meeting –

The Clerk would contact all Members regarding the arrangements for the next meeting due to be held on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2023 at 5.00 p.m.