

CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 23rd January, 2020.

Present: Mr. A. Parker (Chairman), Mrs. C. Dimond (Vice-Chairman), Councillor N. Humphrey (Penarth Town Council) and Mr. S. Jones (Quay Marinas Ltd).

Also present: Mr. A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), Mr. A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity), Ms. N. Taylor (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Mr. A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority) and Mr. M. Thomas (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from Mr. C. Atherton (Waterfront Partners), Councillor L. Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration), Commodore D. Cairncross (Cardiff Bay Yacht Club), Mr. C. Michael (RSPB Wales), Councillor M. Michael (Cardiff Council Cabinet Member for Environment) and Mr. P. Stone (Canoe Wales).

(b) Minutes of the Annual Meeting Held on 6th November, 2019 –

A query was raised regarding the entry in the minutes about the use of a wildlife friendly mower for the grass on the Barrage, to which the officer from the Cardiff Harbour Authority replied that a new officer would be looking after the grounds and had recently met with colleagues from Parks. Furthermore, natural grass would be allowed to grow in parts providing a 'mosaic' layout in order to protect wildlife friendly areas. Finally, the officer mentioned the RSPB Urban Buzz Project which would be starting in April 2020.

There was also a discussion relating to the e-bike scheme mentioned in the previous minutes and the request to obtain a further update for the Committee. The Chairman asked the Clerk (the Democratic Services Officer) to obtain this update and email it to the Committee. Members also discussed having a contract for e-bikes that were designed to go uphill easily and that a number of places in Penarth had been identified in the initial pilot for the e-bike scheme. It was suggested that there would be several ideal areas for e-bike parking at the Marina due to the good CCTV and lighting there as well as potential for discussions with Next Bike regarding this. It was further suggested that the Group Manager for Transport Services for the Vale of Glamorgan Council be contacted regarding potential discussions with Next Bike about parking and charging points for e-bikes. The Chairman also stated that Section 106 money could be available for this type of sustainable transport.

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 6th November, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

(c) Penarth Headland Link Update –

A report from the Group Manager Transport Services, Vale of Glamorgan Council was tabled, which Members were able to review at the meeting regarding the Penarth to Cardiff Barrage Sustainable Transport Corridor Study update.

In summary, the report described the current progress on the potential options for improving sustainable transport within and between Penarth and Cardiff Barrage with a funding application for local transport funding to be submitted to Welsh Government from the Vale of Glamorgan by 14th February, 2020 – if successful, the chosen consultant would then begin the WelTAG Stage 3 Study; as well as the Vale of Glamorgan Council continuing to work with partners in order to explore the possibility of buses using the Barrage.

Following this report, Mr. Michael provided the Committee with a verbal update regarding the work undertaken between Penarth Headland Link Charity and its partners regarding the headland link.

Mr. Michael stated that he had had a meeting with the Head of, and the Cabinet Member for, Neighbourhood Services and Transport recently concerning progress on this matter. He added that the details regarding the contract for the WelTAG Stage 3 work was still to be worked through but were in progress.

Mr. Michael showed Members a picture of the Headland Link and stated that a new route on this was essentially a “no-brainer” for the Vale. He stated that a new route to the Pier was required which would also give access to the Coastal Link and Taff Trail due to the current link over to the Barrage proving difficult for cyclists and tourists. The Penarth Headland Link Charity and other volunteers had carried out some preliminary work already which amounted to £500k and had advice and support from persons who had worked previously within the infrastructure and economic development sectors. He appreciated that the WelTAG process needed to be proceeded with, but this would take some time to do due to the necessary legalities as well as the difficulties in constructing a link via a stage by stage process rather than doing this in parallel. However, he was optimistic about the conclusion of WelTAG 3 with the Welsh Government’s support and which had been evidenced by regular meetings between them and the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Councils (the Vale of Glamorgan being the lead Authority). There had also been interest from the Associated British Ports (ABP) as well as Welsh Water – this was particularly important due to the complex layout of water pipes near the causeway that might need to be disturbed as part of the development. Mr. Michael noted that although the necessary permissions around the development of this link would be provided, this would take time. However, if the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Councils did not seize the opportunity to undertake this now, then the development could be impacted by future projects elsewhere or potential shortages of capital money. Ultimately, this would only be a success through ongoing collaboration between the Welsh Government, Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Councils - with the Harbour Authority

potentially being the ideal 'neutral' structure through which these Local Authorities and Welsh Government could collaborate on this measure.

The Chairman pointed out that the Vale of Glamorgan remained a strong ally in terms of this development with another Member reiterating the importance of the scheme and it being an excellent opportunity for tourism and cyclists to come to the area.

A Member asked Mr. Michael about the ownership of the land over which it was proposed the Link would be built. Mr Michael stated that there were three main elements. One third had been in private ownership which posed a significant problem in the past, but that stretch was now owned by the Penarth Headland Link charity. The charity had also been granted an option over a third of the length that was owned by Plymouth Estates. The remaining length was owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council while the connections from the link to the Barrage were in the hands of the Harbour Authority. The charity's rights were capable of being transferred at the right time for development work to be started. He stressed that the only objective of the Charity was to facilitate the building of the Link in the public interest.

A Member stated it was essential for Local Authorities and Welsh Government to collaborate on the design as previous designs had been over-engineered. Mr. Michael agreed and said that this had been scoped by highly experienced engineers working pro bono for the charity, while the connection to the Barrage would be over the unused part of the outer harbour thereby creating a gentle 'curve' for the link.

A Member asked about the consultation process for this and was told that it was all covered under the WelTAG and Cardiff Barrage Act.

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

(d) Navigational Safety – Cardiff Harbour Authority –

This was presented by the Harbour Master, Mr. A. Vye-Parminter from Cardiff Harbour Authority, which provided an update on recent events, advising that dredging of the Outer Harbour was now complete after an initial delay. Licences from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) were now in place for three years so dredging would revert to the normal six-monthly frequency in order to ensure continued safe navigation.

Mr. A. Vye-Parminter went on to refer to the annual navigation buoyage inspection regime and how this was due to start in February.

Finally, Mr. A. Vye-Parminter added that the monitoring of depths in the upper reaches of the Taff around the water bus stops was continuing. It was

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

(e) Progress Report – Cardiff Harbour Authority –

Mr. A. Vye-Parminter and Ms. N. Taylor from the Cardiff Harbour Authority provided a progress update:

- Barrage
 - Lock 2 annual maintenance was on schedule and due to be completed at the end of January. The site would be closed on Wednesday, 29th January in order to remove the stop beams and to recommission;
 - Fish pass annual maintenance closure was in place from Wednesday, 15th January until the end of March 2020. However, only minimal routine maintenance would be required this year;
 - The painting work on bridge 3 would be due to start in mid February with a definitive date to be confirmed. It was also added that as well as painting work, checks such as on the welds would be carried out on the bridge structure;
 - A rolling programme of refurbishment on the sluice gates cylinders were ongoing due to their age and exposure to environmental conditions;
 - A new marine traffic control navigational aid had been purchased and scheduled for installation early on in this year in order to replace the current unit. The new LED technology replaced seven 375 watt obsolete bulbs.
- Environment
 - A total of 502 tonnes of litter and debris had been removed from the Bay over the last calendar year;
 - In addition, 150 tonnes of timber had been salvaged. This had been sent to Flat Holm and any surplus sold for biomass thus generating income;
 - The CHA Oil Spill Contingency Plan had undergone its five year renewal and had been signed off by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

It was

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

(f) Update Report – Natural Resources Wales –

Although Mrs. N. De Longhi was unable to be present at the meeting, Ms. N. Taylor from the Cardiff Harbour Authority was able to provide an update concerning some of the key areas as outlined below:

- Winter 2019 dissolved oxygen levels. Ms. Taylor stated that there had been 100% compliance concerning dissolved oxygen levels within the Bay. A new water quality model would be rolled out shortly which provided revised water quality categories. These would be disseminated to all key stakeholders of the Cardiff Harbour.

- Pollution Incidents / Cleansing. Ms. Taylor went on to say that there had been no major pollution incidents and that cleansing operations were in place in an attempt to stop any potential invasive species entering the Bay.

It was

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

(g) Indoor Area Update: Report to Cardiff Cabinet –

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.

(h) Any Other Business –

A Member referred to an issue around the timetable of one of the buses travelling between Penarth and the Bay. The Clerk advised he would refer this to the Group Manager, Transport Services, for the Vale of Glamorgan Council and report back to the Committee as appropriate.

A Member asked about the sports areas in the Bay that were currently undergoing maintenance. The officer from Cardiff Harbour Authority replied that these areas would be reinstalled in March 2020.

Several Members raised questions around the numbers of visitors to the Barrage over the last year or so, with an officer from the Cardiff Harbour Authority stating this could be up to about one million visitors but the officer would confirm the details and pass this on to Members.

Another Member asked about any events that could be promoted in and around the Barrage or Bay area for this year. An officer from the Cardiff Harbour Authority stated there were no Welsh Government supported major events for the year although they added that the International Food Festival would continue as well as the Beach due to their different revenue sources. They also added that the Aqua Park would be coming back and that they would share the calendar of events that would be going ahead over the next year with Members.

At the end of the meeting the Chairman reminded all present that if they had any queries or issues that they wished to raise, they should contact the Clerk who would place these on future agendas.

(i) Date of Next Meeting –

It was

AGREED – T H A T the Clerk contact all Members via email regarding the method of carrying out the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 1st April, 2020 (via attendance or email) and that the meeting start time would be amended to 5.00 p.m.