

CARDIFF BAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Remote Annual Meeting held on 2nd June, 2021.

Present: Mr. A. Parker (Chairman), Councillor L. Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan Council), Ms. F. Abbott (Natural Resources Wales), Mr. S. Jones (Boatfolk Marinas Ltd), Mr. C. Michael (RSPB), Mr. P. Stone (Canoe Wales) and Mr. M. Thomas (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer).

Also present: Mr. A. Ernest (Penarth Tourism and Visitor Association), Mr. T. Gifford (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Mr. A. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity), Ms. A Middleton (Cardiff Harbour Authority) and Councillor M.R. Wilson (Vale of Glamorgan Council).

(a) Apologies for Absence –

These were received from Councillor N. Humphrey (Penarth Town Council), Mr. D. Hall (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Mr. J. Maidment (Cardiff Harbour Authority), Mr. K. Rogers (Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales), Mr. A. Vye-Parminter (Cardiff Harbour Authority) and Councillor C. Wild (Cardiff County Council).

(b) Appointment of Chairman –

Mr. A. Parker was appointed Chairman for the current Municipal year.

(c) Appointment of Vice-Chairman –

Mrs. C. Dimond was appointed Vice-Chairman for the current Municipal year.

(d) Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd March, 2021 –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

(e) Timetable of Meetings –

The report proposed the timetable for future meetings of the Committee, with Members asked to consider the timetable and to make any amendments as required. It was proposed that meetings would be held either remotely or face to face subject to changes in Covid-19 restrictions.

The Chairman added that for at least the next two proposed meetings (8th September and 1st December, 2021) these should still be held remotely due to the ongoing pandemic and also the inherent advantages of holding such meetings

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of the Committee remotely (for example, remote meetings were far more accessible for Members and others to join as they did not have to commute potentially long distances in order to attend).

It was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T:

- The meetings continue to be held remotely using the relevant application/software for the time being.
- The Timetable of Meetings be approved.

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

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

Navigation

Commercial operators had resumed (in a COVID safe manner) following easing of lockdown restrictions. Mr. Gifford explained that some commercial operators had been able to resume their services much quicker than others due to differences in the size or type craft being used by these operators.

Operators were also back running to and from the water bus Castle stop, the first time since storm Dennis.

General

Regarding the Fish Pass, Mr. Gifford informed the Committee that the annual maintenance was now complete. The stop beams were removed on Wednesday, 7th April, with the Pass commissioned and back in operation.

In terms of dredging, the Outer Harbour Dredging Campaign had started on Wednesday, 10th March and was completed 10 days later. Mr. Gifford explained that this had been a relatively quick and straightforward process due to less maritime traffic resulting from COVID-19.

The Harbour Authority had started work on a video which would show stakeholders and others how the Barrage operated and dealt with high river flows. The video also explained how the feeding rivers reacted during high rainfall events.

A memorial bench had also been placed on the Barrage in memory of Joshua King who died aged 21. He was a keen skateboarder and loved the Barrage, his family crowd-funded the cost of the bench which included a skateboard attached to one side.

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Following the update, Mr. Stone (Canoe Wales) stated that he had received several enquiries from members of Canoe Wales regarding the possibility of operating commercially, such as the provision of paddle boarding and other activities within Cardiff Bay. Mr. Gifford replied that CHA Officers were speaking to the relevant stakeholders in order to see if this could be done, as currently the use of the authorised access point into the Bay (Public Slipway) was strictly for non-commercial use. CHA was working with Canoe Wales and local Paddleboard clubs regarding unauthorised access in the Bay. CHA had received a number of requests from businesses to operate stand up paddle boarding commercially within the Bay and the Harbour Master and Water Activity Centre staff were currently investigating the potential for licencing of such operations.

There being no further questions, it was subsequently

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

(g) Natural Resources Wales Update –

Ms. F. Abbott, representing Natural Resources Wales (NRW), provided an update to the Committee on the following areas of interest:

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) Levels

Ms. Abbott informed the Committee that the current DO levels were okay and there had been no notifications from CHA concerning low DO levels within the Bay recently.

Pollution Incidents and Investigations

Ms. Abbott provided a further update on the intermittent pollution discharging into Cardiff Bay from an outfall located near the Watermark Building, Ferry Road. Analysis of the discharge had found that it was leachate, very likely coming from the former Ferry Road landfill. In February 2021, the NRW, in conjunction with Cardiff Council and Geotechnology Ltd (NRW's landfill engineering expert contractors) had identified the source of the problem as the site's leachate pumping system, which was no longer working, causing leachate to accumulate in the landfill and then escape into the surface water system via a pipeline that should have been decommissioned. Also, they identified the leachate escaping via a new pipeline into the River Ely and there was a risk that the leachate could be escaping into the groundwater system due to the same issue. Cardiff Council agreed to investigate and improve the operation of the pumping station to stop pollution entering into the surrounding environment. Subsequently, the Council had been able to operate the pumping station manually until the system could be operated automatically.

Furthermore, a Compliance Assessment Report was issued on 26th March for the permit at the landfill site, which required Cardiff Council to undertake a number of actions to bring the landfill site back into compliance (namely, daily leachate pumping and regular monitoring of the leachate level and ground / surface water

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chemistry; and a report to be submitted to NRW on the long term resolution of this issue with an eye to modernise the permit for this landfill site).

Initial monitoring results from Cardiff Council had been positive with a reduction in leachate levels at the landfill site since pumping had re-started. Also, the Council had submitted an aftercare plan (first draft) to NRW for review. Ms. Abbott told the Committee that she would update them on this plan at the next meeting.

Regarding the ongoing issue of oil entering the River Ely (most likely from the Llandough Trading Estate), NRW had appointed a contractor, Draintec, to survey the drainage network of the Trading Estate and other nearby retail parks and industrial estates in order to trace the source(s) of the pollutant. This survey had now been completed and NRW were reviewing the results in order to formulate a strategy to deal with this problem. As part of this NRW would consult with the operators at the trading estate whose units were identified as the source of such leaks and provide pollution prevention advice to them.

Cardiff Bay Dredging Operations

Ms. Abbott stated that CHA had sought permission from NRW to dredge the water taxi areas on the River Taff adjacent to Bute Park and at Taff's Mead, which had been filled with cobbles deposited by Storm Dennis. This work, which also involved the deposition of the excavated cobbles into a deep area of the Bay, was successfully completed before the end of March, therefore not impacting on migratory fish.

Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station

Ms. Abbott stated that there were ongoing discussions with EDF (the owner / operator of the station) concerning the requirements of their Marine Licence application for the disposal of sediment at the Cardiff Grounds. As part of this, NRW would consider the sediment testing done previously at the grounds as well as the overall application, plus there would be a public consultation on this topic before any final decision was made. Ms. Abbott added that she would forward to the Committee a link to the NRW website regarding the process for environmental permits (in addition to the link already shared with Members around the NRW Permitting Service's dedicated Position Statement).

The Barrage Fish Pass

Ms. Abbott stated that the Barrage Fish Pass was closed in early spring for routine annual maintenance, which was carried out by CHA with NRW's agreement. NRW had been monitoring the fish pass since it re-opened in early April and eleven fish had passed through the Barrage by 12th May, when the data was downloaded. In terms of the numbers of fish passing through this year, these were similar to the numbers recorded in April 2020.

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

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(h) Any Other Business –

The Chairman asked Mr. Michael (Penarth Headland Link Charity) if there had been any progress in terms of the Headland Link. Mr. Michael replied that, at this time, further developments on the Headland Link were on hold until the process of appointing new Ministers and portfolios at Welsh Government (WG) had been completed. However, there had been in the meantime meetings with representatives (both Elected Members and Officers) from Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils on this matter, which had been extremely useful. Councillor Burnett (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration, Vale of Glamorgan Council) added that the Vale of Glamorgan Council was waiting on further details from WG about the link, as well as having to direct its focus on the UK Government's 'Levelling Up' Fund before further work could be done around the link.

(i) Date of Next Meeting –

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday, 8th September, 2021 at 5 p.m.