

**Urgent by reason of the need to seek endorsement of the direction of travel with regard to the future of the Kymin House and Gardens, the need to progress with community engagement work as outlined in the body of the report, and to ensure good governance and a decision in a timely manner in relation to the licence arrangements for the continued operation of the café at the Pier Pavilion**

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 14 March 2022</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Update on Penarth Pier Pavilion and the potential future working arrangements and opportunities for the Kymin House and Gardens
Purpose of Report:	To provide an update on the progress that has been made in reinvigorating the Penarth Pier Pavilion since under Council management and to outline potential links with other Council assets such as the Kymin House and Gardens.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Arts and Culture Cllr. Kathryn McCaffer
Responsible Officer:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Phil Southard, Culture and Community Learning Manager Trevor Baker, Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources A copy of this report has been shared with local ward members
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for executive decision by Cabinet
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since opening to the public under Council management in April 2021, Penarth Pavilion has generated additional income of over £70,000 through the Agreement between the Council and the Big Fresh Café, and profit share from cinema screenings, weddings, special events and commission from art sales.</li> <li>• A selection of community events has been undertaken at the Pavilion which include themed Halloween and Christmas events, open days, arts and crafts, carol concerts and music events. The Pavilion continues to provide a full programme of future activities and events for the community to enjoy, while also increasing income opportunities to support the running of the building.</li> <li>• The Kymin, Beach Road is currently empty, which provides the Council with an opportunity to deliver a further offer including community events and activities while also generating an income</li> </ul>

to support the running of the building. The successful model at the Pavilion could be replicated at the Kymin.

- The report, as well as updating Cabinet on the Pier Pavilion, also outlines ways in which the Kymin house and gardens could potentially be adapted and leverage the shared opportunities in working in tandem with the Pier Pavilion.

## Recommendations

1. That Cabinet considers and endorses the progress that has been made in reinvigorating the Penarth Pier Pavilion since it was taken under Council management following the insolvency of Penarth Arts and Crafts Limited.
2. That Cabinet agrees the operational management of the Penarth Pier Pavilion remain within the remit of the Council under the Learning & Skills portfolio, and that a new 12 month licence between the Council and The Big Fresh Catering Company (BFCC) be entered into under the powers delegated to the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer.
3. That Cabinet continues to receive annual reports on the community and commercial use and activities at the Pavilion.
4. That Cabinet considers the potential future uses of the Kymin, as outlined in this report, with a view to undertaking further engagement on the future of the site, both in terms of the Kymin grounds and the house.
5. That the report is referred to Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Skills) for consideration, with any views and recommendations reported back to Cabinet. Should the Scrutiny Committee have no views or recommendations to be reported back to Cabinet following consideration of the report resolutions 1-4 above be actioned.

## Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure that Cabinet is aware of recent developments.
2. To ensure consistency and build on the achievements to-date with the in-house operation of the Penarth Pier Pavilion, and to facilitate the ongoing benefits realisation programme for the Council, its schools, and the wider community with the continued operation of the onsite café by the Council's Local Authority Trading Company, BFCC.
3. To allow Cabinet to exercise effective oversight of this valuable resource.
4. To provide Cabinet with an update on the proposals for the future uses of the Kymin and to seek endorsement for progressing further engagement work, which is timely given the planned work to make the building wind and watertight.

5. To ensure that there is a wider-reaching level of Member oversight regarding these key and important venues and in order that the resolutions of Cabinet as detailed at (1-4) above can be progressed following consideration by the Scrutiny Committee should no views or recommendations be referred back to Cabinet.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Following the surrender of the lease by Penarth Arts and Crafts Ltd (PACL), the Vale of Glamorgan Council took over the management of Penarth Pier Pavilion in early 2021. The Council carried out a comprehensive programme of repairs and maintenance, prior to reopening to the public. The Pier café reopened in April 2021 under the management of the Big Fresh Catering Company and a portion of profits from the café are given back to the Pavilion to support its operation. A Pavilion Manager was appointed in September 2021 and has successfully arranged a comprehensive programme of community activities and events. The Pavilion Manager has also facilitated business and income opportunities to support the operation of the building. The Big Fresh and the Pavilion Manager inherited many prepaid-for events and weddings from PACL and have honoured all these events.
- 1.2 The Kymin, which is located to the North of Penarth Esplanade, is currently empty and provides an opportunity for the Council to develop a further offer at the site. The successful model at Penarth Pavilion could be replicated and/or adapted at the Kymin to provide community activities while also generating an income to support the running of the building.
- 1.3 The Kymin was previously let to Penarth Town Council, but reverted back to the Vale of Glamorgan Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. The Kymin is a detached Victorian house with approximately 2 hectares of mature landscaped gardens. The building is not listed but is identified as a “County Treasure” and is situated in the Penarth conservation area on Beach Road. On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 Cabinet approved the advertisement of the Kymin for commercial opportunity on a 99-year lease. Several bids were received, however none of the bids were successful in securing the lease. As well as updating Cabinet on the Pier Pavilion, the report also considers opportunities for the Council to retain the Kymin and gardens for the benefit of the local community and wider area.
- 1.4 Alongside the above, it should also be noted that a comprehensive refurbishment of infrastructure at Penarth Esplanade has been undertaken and is drawing to a conclusion, which has seen the resurfacing of highways and footways, repainting of railings and buildings at the pier and renewal of street lighting.

## 2. Key Issues for Consideration

### Penarth Pier Pavilion

- 2.1** Penarth Pier Pavilion is an attractive events venue that caters for both community and commercial activities. The Pavilion has several spaces available to hire such as the Gallery, meetings rooms, licenced wedding rooms and a cinema. The Pavilion also has a café and bar which are run by The Big Fresh on a profit share agreement. The spaces at the Pavilion are hired out for events such as community activities, weddings, education workshops, meetings, concerts, exhibitions and special events.
- 2.2** The first year of the Pavilion operating under Council management coincided with the pandemic and therefore the Pavilion has been subject to strict Covid related closures and restrictions. However, the Council has successfully hosted 225 events since opening in April 2021 and has generated income of £70,000. Income received as follows:

Income	Amount
Sale of Artwork	£630
Special Events	£6,264
Photo-Filming	£1,030
Hire of Penarth Pier Pavilion	£8,572
The Big Fresh Catering Company tenancy arrangements	£53,456

- 2.3** Recent community events held at the Pavilion include half term activities and themed Halloween and Christmas events. A New Year's Eve party was also planned but had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions in place at the time. The events held at the Pavilion include:
- Halloween children's disco and pumpkin carving
  - Christmas festive wreathmaking workshops
  - Three Polar Express film screenings with afternoon tea
  - Winter of Wellness funding has enabled a 7-week voice and performance workshop
  - A morning and afternoon Dinomania Dinosaur
  - Stage make-up workshop
  - Creative journaling workshop
  - Art workshops
  - Jewellery workshops
  - The Urdd also held a Welsh-speaking art workshop

- St David's Day was marked with a local pianist playing a Wales-inspired programme of music in the Gallery during the afternoon.
- 2.4** The Pavilion also hosted an 'Open Day' in December with the Penarth Salvation Army undertaking a carol concert outside the front of the Pavilion. The public were welcomed into the Pavilion to enjoy a tabletop exhibition showcasing recent activities at the Pavilion. The open day also provided the opportunity for the public to meet and engage with staff from the Pavilion, Library Services, Art Development, Makerspace, the Big Fresh Catering Company and Snowcat Cinema.
- 2.5** The Pavilion has worked closely with the community and built up links with several local community groups and individuals which include:
- Llandough Primary School, who held a children's art exhibition at the Pavilion, celebrating their 50th anniversary.
  - Albert Road Primary and Stanwell School organised a tabletop display of artwork and poems about Remembrance Day together with a beautiful poppy display for the Pavilion reception area and outside pillars.
  - St Joseph's RC School – 31 pupils attended the Gallery for their lunch whilst on a field trip to the Pier.
  - A small Hen Galen event was held in January which saw the head of the giant Bendigeidfran and the Penarth Mari Lwyd arrive at the Pavilion.
  - PCSO Matthew Brown, the community support officer for St Augustine's, held 3 drop-in sessions using the Pavilion classroom.
  - Penarth-based musician and freelance cultural facilitator, Richard Parry, has kindly loaned the Pavilion a baby grand piano for 2022. This will enable us to hold a series of café concerts planned for later this spring/early summer.
  - The Dawnstalkers swimming group held a photo exhibition and sunrise disco at the Pavilion.
  - Hamptons shop in Penarth kindly donated a Christmas tree and other festive decorations for the Pavilion's use.
  - Group 617, a local armed services veterans group, have returned to the Pavilion for their weekly meetings.
  - Red Herring Theatre company have a week-long show booked from 30th April.
  - Local resident association
- 2.6** The Pavilion has successfully hosted art exhibitions where a commission of 25% is charged on art sales. Previous exhibitions include the Dawnstalkers Group and Cardiff Print Workshop; the Workshop's exhibition was particularly well received, with 9 pieces sold. The current exhibition for March is Dinas Powys Art Group. A schedule is in place for monthly art

exhibitions to be hosted in the gallery space and the exhibition calendar is fully booked for the whole of 2022. Upcoming exhibitions are as follows:

- April: South Wales Arts Society
  - May: Glyn Evans Photography
  - June: Cowbridge Art Society
  - July: Art Life Society
  - August: Royal Watercolour Society of Wales
  - September: marine artist Nick John Rees
  - October: Andrew Henderson, a retrospective
  - November: Kate Williams Woosh Photography
  - December: Katrina Dimech's Children's Photography Club
  - Penarth Art Fair will also be taking place at the Pavilion between the 8th and 10th July
- 2.7** The cinema is primarily operated by Snowcat Cinemas who hold four screenings per week, which are a mixture of art house/ indie and mainstream films. Snowcat cinema currently pay an hourly rental fee for the cinema space and this, along with the bar takings from cinema-goers, gives additional profit back to the Pavilion. The cinema seats a maximum of 68 people (where Covid restrictions do not apply) and can also be hired out for suitable activities such as lectures and author talks.
- 2.8** Corporate meetings that have taken place at the Pavilion include an AGM for Alexandra Court, a series of meetings from Cardiff University, a Penarth fashion brand launch event, an advance screening of Wonders of the Celtic Deep before airing on BBC Wales, and a series of well-attended author talks by Penarth-based Griffin Books. In addition to previous events, the Pavilion team is currently assisting with enquiries from Capital Law for a summer staff party and Cardiff University Biosciences Department for a summer conference for 100 delegates.
- 2.9** Since the Council took over the operation of the Pavilion, staff have successfully hosted several wedding receptions which have provided an income through the hire of the venue and profit share from Big Fresh. The Pavilion offers five licensed rooms which can accommodate larger wedding ceremonies through to intimate ceremonies. The Pavilion has secured 10 wedding bookings for 2022 and continues to receive a steady stream of wedding and special event bookings for 2022 and beyond. A wedding fair is planned for May 2022 which will provide an opportunity to secure further bookings for the Pavilion.
- 2.10** Following on from the well-received series of public events, the following are now being planned for spring and summer 2022:

- A series of monthly art history lectures by Penarth-based art historian, Stella Grace Lyons, starting with a lecture about William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement on the afternoon of the 22nd March.
- Monthly afternoon café concerts in the Gallery, starting with The Cynefin Trio on the 11th March.
- Mother's Day café concert with tea & cake for the 27th March.
- Art demonstration with marine artist Nick John Rees.
- Kiki Dee and Carmelo Luggeri in concert on the 6th May.
- Wedding fair on Sunday 22nd May.
- Barb Jungr in concert – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July
- Catrin Finch in concert – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September
- Monthly Sunday jazz in the Gallery – aimed at increasing café footfall and gallery art sales, whilst providing a fantastic experience for the local and wider community.

**2.11** The Pavilion team has also created a new website and social media accounts, as they did not receive access to the previous accounts. The new website [www.penarthpierpavilion.com](http://www.penarthpierpavilion.com) along with new Facebook and Instagram accounts are active and being used by the team to promote events and activities at the Pavilion.

**2.12** The operation of the Penarth Pier Pavilion has provided a significant contribution towards the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy, facilitating a number of community, wellbeing, arts and culture events since being brought back into operation under the Council, and currently has a significant number of confirmed events planned for the rest of 2022.

### **External improvement works to the Esplanade**

**2.13** A comprehensive programme of work has taken place along Penarth Esplanade, the Pier and the exterior of the Pavilion. This has included painting of all the railings, lighting columns and benches along the Pier and Esplanade. The entrance gates and concessions have been painted along with the external walls, doors and entrance to the Pavilion. The work commenced October 2021 but due to bad weather conditions and the storm the work has been delayed; however, all work will be completed by the end of March 2022.

**2.14** Along with painting work, miscellaneous repairs to the masonry of the Pavilion and the wooden decking along the Pier have also been undertaken. Some of the railings require welding repairs, which are due to be completed by the end of March. Work will also take place to replace the wooden decking and ramps at the entrance to the Pavilion café. These works cannot commence until the scaffolding around the Pavilion is removed, but it is

anticipated that once works commence the decking should be completed within 4 weeks.

- 2.15** There has also been an extensive programme of highway refurbishment works along the Esplanade, which was completed in August 2021. The works undertaken are as follows:
- New buildout incorporating bollards constructed on Bridgeman Road junction with the access / egress to 'The Glades', in order to protect the new parking bays.
  - Junction improvements and buildout incorporating new tactile paving to Bridgeman Road in order to facilitate improvements to pedestrian movements.
  - Zebra crossing adjacent to Pavilion / Pier access, slight relocation and replacement of equipment/tactiles and carriageway markings - incorporating new buildout and bollards.
  - Zebra crossing adjacent to 'Coffi Co' replaced with new equipment, carriageway markings and formalised buildouts incorporating bollards, with new tactiles / paving localised.
  - Footway built out to the frontage of Penarth Yacht / Rowing Club down to the restaurant known as 'Romeo's', finished with new kerbs, imprint surface finish, socketed bollards and associated highway drainage.
- 2.16** Following on from the above highway improvements, the carriageway was planned, resurfaced and new carriageway markings applied by the Highway Maintenance Section which was completed in October 2021.
- 2.17** Improvement works are also planned for the historic shelter, located at the top of Cliff Road. The shelter is in a state of disrepair and will be rebuilt as part of a Section 106 Public art project.
- 2.18** Following a consultation undertaken in 2021, the Council has commissioned David Chambers from Aberrant Architecture to design and rebuild the new Victorian shelter. Public consultations were undertaken in January 2022 and Aberrant Architecture are currently developing the design and structure of the new shelter. The rebuild of the shelter will provide public art, whilst respecting its original design. It is anticipated that the work will be completed before the summer.
- 2.19** The Council has also attracted a new tenant for a building located at the top of Cliff Road. South Lodge is currently being converted into an ice cream parlour by 'Fablas' under a 10-year lease arrangement. Fablas will imminently be on site renovating and upgrading the facility. They anticipate that the ice cream parlour will be open to the public in the next few months. The extensive improvements along Penarth seafront, together with these other initiatives and further opportunities relating to the Kymin House and Gardens, will assist with the promotion of the Penarth Esplanade area as an

important and popular destination for the local community and visitors alike.

### **The Kymin House and Gardens**

- 2.20** The Kymin is a detached Victorian house with approximately 2 hectares of mature landscaped gardens and public open spaces. The Kymin is located within the Penarth conservation area on Beach Road. The Kymin house benefits from an elevated position over Penarth seafront and the Esplanade. There is a large main front lawn and two patios/terraces which give uninterrupted views towards the Pier and across the Bristol Channel. The gardens are considered one of several important open spaces within the Penarth Conservation Area and the house is identified as a 'County Treasure'.
- 2.21** The Kymin house and a proportion of the grounds were let to Penarth Town Council, until the lease was surrendered on 31st March 2020.
- 2.22** Since reverting back to the Council's control on 1st April 2020 the building has remained empty, however the grounds have stayed open to the public and have been maintained by the parks department. The Council explored the option of advertising the Kymin on a 99-year lease, however, despite interest no bids were successful in securing the lease.
- 2.23** The property is split over 2 floors with several different sized rooms and a basic kitchen. The house will require repair works to make the property wind and watertight. Specification of these works is currently being worked up and will need to be informed by ecological surveys, with a view to undertaking the works later in 2022. The need to undertake this initial work provides an opportunity for the Council to enhance the layout and facilities at the Kymin to enable the Council to secure a sustainable future for the house, providing a valuable community resource, whilst at the same time generating an income to support its use and retention.
- 2.24** The large lawn at the front of the building can be enjoyed throughout the day and there is adequate space for informal and potentially more formal use and enjoyment. There is also currently a small patio area at the front of the building and there is parking available on site. The Council's Tourism team is keen to explore the running of events in 2022, and several open-air events have already been scheduled for the Spring and Summer period, as set out in paragraph 2.31.
- 2.25** With the successful model of anchor tenancy currently in place at Penarth Pier Pavilion in partnership with the Council's trading company, Big Fresh Catering, the principles of the model could be replicated, adapted or incorporated for use at the Kymin, to establish a new revenue stream to support the costs in maintaining the building and its grounds. Working in

partnership for events across the Pavilion, Big Fresh Catering and the Kymin would not only create unique opportunities and resources for events, but would also yield additional community benefits, with Big Fresh Catering's model of reinvesting surplus into Vale of Glamorgan schools and local community groups.

- 2.26** The property would potentially be suitable for a range of uses, including but not restricted to corporate events such as meetings, training, networking, community events, ceremonies or similar. Further consideration would be required into the cost and appropriateness of the refurbishment of the building and the suggested uses, but it is clear that these examples demonstrate the variety of uses and functions that could be accommodated at the Kymin. It is important that more detailed consideration involves wider engagement and also the appropriateness of possible uses in terms of securing the long-term sustainability of the building.
- 2.27** In relation to the grounds themselves, the parks department is currently working in collaboration with two community groups, Penarth Growing Community (which is part of Gwyrddio Penarth Greening) and Friends of the Kymin to develop the Kymin community gardens. The volunteer groups have also received support from Keep Wales Tidy 'local places for nature programme', via a grant and support from a Project Officer. As part of this initiative the group are installing a food growing garden on the lower boule court area of the Kymin grounds which will include a greenhouse and three raised beds.
- 2.28** These community groups are active and regularly meet at the site to develop and maintain the community gardens. The groups have a core focus of sustainability and the natural environment. The aim of the Kymin Friends is to 'encourage the ongoing public enjoyment of the park and gardens' and 'make sure the quiet character and diverse wildlife of the area is protected'. <https://friendsofthekymin.mystrikingly.com/>
- 2.29** The objectives of the community groups support the Council's well-being objectives to work with and for our communities and to respect, enhance and enjoy our environment. As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to our well-being objectives, the future use of the site should consider the current and future use by our community groups.
- 2.30** Benthg community group in Penarth has shown an interest in working alongside the two community groups already established at the Kymin. Benthg Cymru, which translates to Borrowing Wales, is a community initiative which is active across Wales. The initiative promotes sustainability through sharing and loaning of equipment, which minimises items going to landfill while also providing a resource for the community. The aim of the initiative is to create a 'culture of resilience and environmental sustainability that brings communities together to share items, knowledge and skills'. The

initiative works towards Welsh Government's strategy to drive Wales 'towards becoming a zero-waste, carbon net-zero nation by 2050, or earlier'.

- 2.31** The two community groups currently on site utilise the former public toilets and garage at the rear of the house, which supports their work in the community garden. Benthyl are interested in using the garage space, along with the two community groups, for storage of items such as lawnmowers, gardening tools and DIY tools which are then loaned out to the local community, promoting a circular economy. This is something that can be considered further alongside and not separate from wider engagement on the management of the site.
- 2.32** As part of the ongoing assessment of options for the grounds, wider consideration will be required as to the synergies between the house itself and the gardens, and potential uses within the house and the opportunity for events to be set within the Kymin grounds. Given the location of the site, and its relationship with the Pier and Pavilion and the wider Esplanade, the grounds seem to provide an excellent opportunity for holding events – both community run and also more commercial and specific seasonal events such as open-air theatre, well-being activities as well as during the summer season. It is considered that community mapping should be undertaken, led by stakeholders but supported by the Council. This will help to inform the various improvements and enhancements necessary to upgrade the grounds themselves. This report seeks the endorsement of this approach.
- 2.33** As set out above, the Council is currently engaged with several partners and community groups and is seeking to bring new events to the Kymin gardens for the community to enjoy. For example, details are currently being finalised to bring a number of outdoor theatre productions to the grounds for the community to enjoy. To this end, the Council is planning to host productions of Peter Pan, Pirates of Penzance, and A Midsummer Night's Dream over the summer period.
- 2.34** The grounds could potentially also be used to host pop-up food events, community fairs, activities and games, building on successful events of this nature held previously on the site.
- 2.35** Strong links have been established with the 'Friends of the Kymin' group, who have advised their support in delivering new events and opportunities on the grounds. Working closely with these community groups is reflective of our ambitions in replicating the success to-date with bringing the Kymin back into community use, building on the success to-date at the Penarth Pier Pavilion.

- 2.36** For the site to be sustainable for the future, it is important that the Council establishes a model that supports the community groups and future community activities, while also providing an opportunity to generate income to support the running of the Kymin. Engagement with the wider community is an important and essential next step, both in terms of the grounds and the house itself. It is essential that, as we enter the Spring, engagement activity continues and builds momentum, hence the recommendation (3) attached to this report.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The potential future uses of the Kymin focus on working with community groups to provide a valuable resource for the wider community to enjoy.
- 3.2** The continued development of the events held at Penarth Pier Pavilion, and the proposed future uses of the Kymin, provide opportunities for the Council to support and promote learning and the development of skills within our communities.
- 3.3** The development of the Kymin and potential community uses, focuses on well-being activities that will provide opportunities to support mental well-being and physical health. The enhancement of the Kymin and future activities at the Pavilion provide a valued community space which will support the development of cohesive communities.
- 3.4** The potential community activities at the Kymin have a core focus on the environment and the natural surroundings at the site. The activities complement the surrounding areas, while also promoting and encouraging participants to respect and enjoy our environment in a fun and interactive way.

### **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1** Depending on the recommendations by Cabinet a further business plan will be developed outlining any financial considerations.

#### **Employment**

- 4.2** Depending on the recommendations by Cabinet a further business plan will be developed outlining any employment considerations.

**Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** Subject to Cabinet approving Recommendation 2 all necessary legal agreements will be entered into between the Council and BFCC.

## 5. Background Papers

Environment and Regeneration Cabinet report 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Minutes.pdf)