

# MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
<b>1.1 Welcome</b>	<p>1.1 The Chairman (Dr N.Bristow) welcomed everyone to this 'Zoom' MAC meeting this morning after what he thought was a very constructive public meeting.</p> <p>1.2 The Chairman then expressed the loss to the Trust and to the area of M.Shackleton (Dock Master – V.Dock) and what a good friend he had been to him personally.</p>	
<p><b>2.1 Present - 'Zoom'</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Apologies</b></p>	<p>2.1 Those present then identified themselves and the organisation whom they represent:            N.Bristow – Port Dinorwic Sailing Club            K.Griffiths - Natural Resources Wales            I.Huws – Ynys Mon Council            T.Jones – MSFOMA            G.Tyrer – Port Dinorwic Marina            D.O'Neill – Caernarfon Harbour Trust            C.Jones – RWYC/VDBHA            I.Thomas - Caernarfon Harbour Trust            T.Bailey – RNLI            S.Morgan – Plas Menai</p> <p>2.2 Apologies :            K.Fitzpatrick</p>	
<b>3. MAC Minutes Review</b>	<p>3.1 The Minutes from the previous MAC meeting that was held on 12<sup>TH</sup> February 2020 were agreed by all those present.</p>	
<b>4. Feedback on Public Consultation</b>	<p>4.1 The Chairman highlighted the following topics that were raised during the public consultation (of which approximately 80 people attended by 'Zoom'). These were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swellies</li> <li>• Unified approach – speed limit</li> <li>• Signage</li> </ul> <p>4.2.1 Mr I.Huws (Ynys Mon Council) reminded the MAC members that C.Hughes (FLAG) had secured £30,000 funding for the Menai Strait. This money not only went to pay for a warden on Ynys Mon; but also for the local authorities to improve local bi-lingual signage/wildlife interpretation panels. It was intended to have all the signage in place for 2020; but due to the pandemic this will now occur next year. Despite the support in the poll for an 8 knot speed limit at Menai Bridge, a fatality still occurred there on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020.</p> <p>4.2.2 The Chairman agreed to the suggestion by C.Jones that the signage should use pictures rather than words in a simple, but effective manner to display the regulations for all vessels. Mr C.Jones also proposed that non-wake zones should also be created in the most sensitive areas (e.g. moorings). The problem then will be one of enforcement, whilst also determining if an 8 knot limit (depending upon the vessel) is too fast for the wakes it creates.</p> <p>4.2.3 The Harbour Master commented that the CHT would be responsible for enforcement. The problem, however, would be for the CHT requiring to be 'geared up' (i.e. for its speed patrol) - a) to identify vessels breaking its By-laws/speed limit and then for b) successful prosecution.</p> <p>4.3.1 The meeting discussed the illegal launching of jet ski's from the Aberforeshore. It was mentioned that at various layby's Gwynedd Council have placed large boulders to prevent any access/launchings. Although this stretch of water is within the jurisdiction of the Trust, it would not be feasible to place a man there to prevent any launchings. The only other option would be for the CHT to refuse all launchings from that area. How does one identify and prosecute a private user who does not have a sticker? The CHT nevertheless do intend to implement a registration system for 2021, along the lines used for the past 20 years by Gwynedd Council.</p>	

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During the course of this discussion the following points were also made:

- Any enforcement would need to be uniformly applied throughout the Menai Strait, whether after one or three 'strikes'.
- To have the same sticker throughout the Menai Strait authorised by the CHT, Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils.
- For the signage to educate our customers throughout the Menai Strait in order to encourage personal responsibility.
- For the CHT to have a working register alongside those of Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils to assist with identification and enforcement.
- To seek that all private operators with their own launch sites have their vessels registered (despite also paying rent to the Crown Estate).
- To recognise that access to the Menai Strait is for all water users.
- To have the 5 knot speed limit in specific areas (e.g. moorings) and to target the minority who misbehave.
- By failing to deal with the Jet Ski problem at Port Dinorwic, etc. it could cause extensive damage to the Menai Strait economy.
- Following the tragic death at Menai Bridge on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020, it was felt that there was a knee jerk reaction by the CHT, which led to the 5 knot speed limit being extended. This was done without proper consultation and so pushed the problem into the waters of Ynys Mon. The Swellies is a dangerous area and so now the problems at Menai Bridge have increased. This flies in the face of the Code of Conduct partnership; thus emphasising the need for those concerned to consult properly.
- With the CHT extending the 5 knot speed limit, it raised awareness of the problem and the need for safety of navigation following this tragic death.
- Commercial vessels were given exemption when operating in the extension zone. However, this then created the impression to non-commercial water users that if the commercial operators were not abiding by the 5 knot speed limit, then they had no justification to do so either. The solution would be if the 5 knot speed limit applied to everyone.
- The extended 5 knot speed limit is still within the jurisdiction of the CHT without it having to amend its By-laws.
- The Trust consulted with Seawake/Rib Ride and have had an excellent response regarding the extension zone. Any problems reported are dealt with immediately over the telephone.

4.3.2 It was suggested that small sailing vessels (whether for training or actively racing) should also be exempt from the speed limits. It was reiterated that access should be available to all water users. Better education/information is required to ensure that all jet skiers, etc. do not perform 'doughnuts' around vessels, as well as breaking the speed limits. During a discussion it was mentioned about zoning parts of the harbour; whilst also ensuring that more RYA courses are available to improve training/education for PWC's. By reducing the registration fee for those having completed successfully an RYA course. It would then provide an incentive for these water users to further their training and education. This is a policy that Ynys Mon Council are currently operating, in which the RYA acts as an honest broker between all concerned. However, it is those people who are not attending these courses that are causing the problem. Gwynedd Council, in contrast, do not operate this policy, preferring to generate more income. For the CHT, its main income comes from the Slate Quay car park and at present it derives no registration fee income, despite maintaining a speed patrol vessel. Due to the pandemic this year the Trust's income will be substantially reduced. In particular from the car park, with it being substantially less than the £250,000 it approximately earned during 2019.

4.3.3 It was initially remarked that during the public meeting it was not properly discussed about having either a uniform 5 or 8 knot speed limit for the Menai Strait. It was then discussed that at 8 knots, it creates a much larger wake than at 5 knots and so for the suggestion of matching the 8 knot speed limit at the NE end of the Strait to be dropped. In addition, it was also a surprise that Plas Menai/RYA were Against having a registration scheme.

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	<p>4.3.4 When discussing the poll that was taken during the public meeting. It was highlighted by Mr G.Tyrer (Port Dinorwic Marina) that if the extent of the 5 knot speed limit was extended (i.e. from the Caernarfon Bar to Puffin Island), it could influence the number of berth holders/customers wishing to use their facilities. It was also emphasised during this discussion the need to specify whether the 5 knot speed limit was to be measured through the water and <b>not</b> over land. It was also considered to restrict the speed limit zones to those of the Swellies and the moorings at Port Dinorwic. Mr I.Huws (YMC) reiterated the economic impact to local businesses and so in turn jobs (in which central and local government have invested in) if they were to be changes to the speed limits/zones on the Menai Strait.</p> <p>4.4.1 The meeting then voted 2 to 1 in favour of keeping the existing 5 knot extension limit.</p> <p>4.4.2 It was also suggested that an exemption be given to sailing vessels with regard to the 5 knot speed limit and to confirm that PWC's should give way to sail.</p> <p>4.5 It was suggested to replace the current artificial boundaries between the CHT and Ynys Mon Council on the Menai Strait. To have instead one body representing the whole of the Menai Strait. This would then allow, within this new body, the CHT to implement legislation (that Ynys Mon Council would not be able to do so and vice versa), through their existing legal powers for the benefit for the whole of the Menai Strait. This would then entail discussions between the CHT and Ynys Mon Council as to how best they could both utilise their respective legal, etc. powers. Mr I.C.Thomas informed the meeting that the last time the Trust revised its Harbour Revision Order (HRO) that it proved to be very costly. He then added that it was from the last HRO which established the Marine Advisory Committee (MAC), before proceeding to express his disappointment that more members of the MAC were not attending this meeting. If members from organisations were not participating at the MAC meetings, then they should be replaced by those who would attend. Mr I.C.Thomas and the Harbour Master would listen to the advice from the MAC, otherwise it would not give credibility to the CHT in making its decisions.</p> <p>4.6 For the launching slipway information maps/noticeboards to reflect the partnership between the CHT and Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils in applying what are the rules to be obeyed and the consequences if they are not. For the MAC to provide feedback on the initial drafts before they are eventually installed.</p> <p>4.7 A discussion ensued as to what environmental impact assessment had occurred (if any) by the NRW for allowing the vessels "Velocity", etc. to operate on the Menai Strait. Mr I.Huws (YMC) informed the meeting that Rib Ride had received a subsidy from the Welsh Government of £80,000 towards the cost of acquiring this vessel. In addition, Visit Wales had also supported Rib Ride and Seawake in assisting local economic development, but with no risk assessment for environmental impact. Ms K.Griffiths in reply said that the NRW would not be consulted if somebody wished to purchase a vessel for use, or transiting, the Menai Strait. Mr T.Jones (MSFORMA) commented that the NRW should undertake an internal review as to why no impact assessment had been undertaken when, for example, the vessel "Velocity", was procured.</p>	
<p><b>5. Any Other Business</b></p>	<p>5.1 Dr N.Bristow informed the meeting that he had now completed his two year tenure as Chairman of the MAC. He then added that he was willing to remain as Chairman for a further two years or to stand for re-election or step aside; whatever the MAC decided.</p> <p>5.2 Dr N.Bristow then thanked all for participating in this very productive meeting.</p>	<p><b>MAC</b></p>

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<b>6. Items to be referred/ recommended to the CHT</b>	6.1 The Chairman identified the following items from this MAC meeting to be recommended to the CHT, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For the Menai Strait slipway information panels to use pictures and not words; whilst also reflecting the partnership of the CHT and Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils.</li><li>• To consider having non-wake zones for sensitive areas (e.g. moorings).</li><li>• To have the same sticker throughout the Menai Strait authorised by the CHT, Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils.</li><li>• To confirm that the 5 knot speed limit applies to vessels through the water.</li><li>• To maintain the 5 knot extension speed limit.</li><li>• For small sailing boats undergoing training or actively racing should be exempted from the speed limits.</li><li>• The exemption for commercial vessels to be removed from the extension speed limit.</li></ul>	<b>CHT</b>
<b>7. Date of Next meeting</b>	7.1 <u>The MAC members agreed that the date of the next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10.00am at the Harbour Office.</u>	<b>Harbour Master</b>