



**GRWP TASG A GORFFEN PIER BAE COLWYN
COLWYN BAY PIER TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

**Dydd Llun, 28 Mehefin 2010 am 5.00 pm
Monday, 28 June 2010 at 5.00 pm**

Bodlonddeb, Conwy

At/To:-

Y Cynghorwyr/Councillors:

Brian Cossey
Mary Doyle
Chris Hughes
Christine Jones

Abdul Khan
Roger Parry
Ron Peacock
Dennis Tew
Jason Weyman

Aelod Cabinet/Cabinet Member

Goronwy Edwards

Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Cymunedau /
Cabinet Member for Communities

Swyddogion/Officers:

Rob Dix

Pennaeth Adran: Busnes a Menter/
Section Head: Business and Enterprise

A G E N D A

1. Appointment of Chairman
2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest: Code of Local Government Conduct
Members are reminded that they must declare the **existence** and **nature** of their declared personal interests.
5. Urgent matters
Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
6. Purpose and Scope of the Task and Finish Group (Pages 1 - 2)
7. Victoria Pier, Colwyn Bay, Background and Current Position
(Pages 3 - 7)
8. Work Programme
Discussion on the way forward for the Task and Finish Group.

Note: The Local Government Act 1972 does not allow an item of business to be considered at a meeting of a principal Council unless requisite advance notice has been given. Therefore, unless the item is considered to be urgent, consideration of any other business is not allowed

In the event of the fire alarm being activated, would all Members please vacate the premises through the nearest fire exit.

FOR ASSEMBLY POINTS, please refer to "Actions in the Event of a Fire" notice displayed in the Council Chamber / Medium Committee Room / Meeting Room 3

VICTORIA PIER TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Monday, 28 June 2010 at 5.00 pm
Bodlondeb, Conwy

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Present: Councillor Brian Cossey (BC) (Chair)

Councillors: Chris Hughes (CH), Goronwy Edwards (GE), Roger Parry (RP), Jason Weyman (JW), Mary Doyle (MD), Ronald Peacock (RP), Dennis Tew (DT) and Christine Jones (CJ).

Officers: Iwan Davies (Acting Corporate Director) (ID), Rob Dix (Section Head, Business and Enterprise) (RD) and Peter Jones-Hughes (Principal Conservation Officer, Development/Building Control) (PJ-H).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED-

That Councillor Brian Cossey be appointed as Chair of the Victoria Pier Task and Finish Group.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED-

That Councillor Ronald Peacock be appointed as Vice Chair of the Victoria Pier Task and Finish Group.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Abdul Khan.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CODE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDUCT

Councillor Chris Hughes declared an interest, but as he had received dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak on issues relating to the pier he took part in the discussion.

5. URGENT MATTERS

None.

6. MINUTES

As this was the first meeting of the group, there were no previous minutes.

7. BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

ID explained that the Communities Overview Scrutiny Committee had set up this Task and Finish Group (T&FG) to produce an options paper to be considered by the democratic process. These options should relate to what the Council's involvement and role could be in relation to the pier going forward. The T&FG would look at each option identified, analyse them and produce a plan on each one to enable Community Scrutiny and Cabinet to give due consideration. He explained that although the pier was not in the ownership of the Council, the Council had an involvement owing to the fact that it had become a public issue, and it therefore seemed appropriate to investigate the options.

RD explained that the pier was a Grade 2 listed building, and as such all alterations to any part of the pier would need listed building consent. The pier was originally owned and managed by a predecessor Authority, but was sold into private ownership. Since that time there had been a series of private owners, none of whom had undertaken any significant investment. It was partially closed for safety reasons in 1987, and entirely closed in 2008

[REDACTED] The Regulatory Services Department had raised concerns about the safety of the structure of the pier. [REDACTED] with Royce Peeling Green (RPG) being appointed as Trustees in Bankruptcy. They have 3 years in which to settle the estate, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] RPG have limited resources in dealing with this bankruptcy. It did not appear that anyone had come forward with an offer to purchase the pier, and they were not in a position to raise any income from the estate. They have engaged Kings Sturge as surveyors to assess the value of the pier and validate any offers. At the moment there are no offers, and it could therefore be assumed that the pier had no value.

If RPG reach the point where they believe they can no longer expend funding on the pier or its security, they have the right to disclaim the property. Under the Insolvency Act the [REDACTED]. PJ-H agreed to determine the role of the Crown in situations such as this.

Following a request from the Chief Executive, a survey to assess the condition of the pier had been commissioned. DATRYS had undertaken the initial survey from underneath but had been unable to obtain access to the deck of the pier or any of the buildings to complete the work. RPG had been approached to gain access, and had been offered dates. [REDACTED] had not allowed anyone access to the pier. The Council had suggested that RPG take legal action to obtain access. However, RPG were not willing to take this route because of the cost and the [REDACTED], there had been no need to provide any security on the site.

The survey that had been undertaken indicated that the basic structure of the pier was sound. There were some issues around some of the girders supporting the decking and some of the cross bracing, and it was thought that

60% of the bracing needed replacement. The basic structure of the pier needed refurbishing, cleaning etc and some work needed doing to the piles beneath them. The commission to DATRYS asked them to undertake a complete survey and provide a brief with cost plans for various options from complete refurbishment to demolition. Their initial survey had indicated that the seaward 1/3 of the pier would be best demolished. However, a further survey stated that this may be restorable, but that additional costs would be incurred. PJ-H and RD had discussed this with CADW, who were in favour of retaining the pier. RD and PJ-H would undertake a detailed assessment once the full survey had been undertaken, and would ascertain whether it was possible to raise the necessary funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and other sources. RD stressed that funding from HLF would not be available to a private owner.

With regard to the responsibility of the Authority in relation to health and safety aspects of the pier, the Authority's insurers had stated that putting signs up to warn people not to walk under the pier was sufficient.

In response to a query from CJ asking whether it would be possible to de-list the pier, PJ-H informed her that this would have to be done via an application to CADW, giving detailed reasons for the request.

8. THE WAY FORWARD

General discussion took place, where it was agreed that the pier held a strategic location on the promenade, and that as part of the Colwyn masterplan it had been agreed that there should be a focal point in this situation, be it a pier or some other structure. Following public meetings called by the local MP, there were now three groups interested in retaining the pier and facilitating its regeneration. It was also agreed that the Authority did not need to become directly involved in the pier's restoration, but could act as a facilitator. In order to do this, all the options needed to be examined. However, WAG had indicated that it would only negotiate with a properly constituted group, and that any decisions made on the way forward must include a maintenance element.

RESOLVED:

1. Obtain access to the pier, via legal means if necessary, to enable a thorough survey to be undertaken.
2. Obtain costings and plans for all options from demolition to regeneration.
3. Submit an in-principle application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for restoration funds.

The meeting closed at 6.25 pm.

AGENDA ITEM 6



Disclosure of confidential information is a breach of the Members Code of Conduct and a disciplinary matter

REPORT TO:	Colwyn Bay Pier Task and Finish Group
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Goronwy Edwards
DATE:	28 th June 2010
LEAD OFFICER:	Iwan Davies, Acting Corporate Director
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rob Dix, SRA Programme Manager
SUBJECT:	Purpose and Scope of Task and Finish Group
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To remind Members of the purpose of establishing the Task and Finish Group and consider the scope of the work of the group

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Acting Corporate Director made a verbal report to Communities Overview and Scrutiny on 15th April 2010, highlighting the fact that the Council needed to establish a framework to consider potential actions and options going forward in relation to Victoria Pier following receipt of the structural survey currently being undertaken. Any recommendations would have to be considered by Scrutiny, in the first place, and then Cabinet. It was likely that there would be no single clear recommendation but the need to consider and balance a number of options.
- 2.2 It was therefore agreed to establish a politically balanced Task and Finish Group to work with officers to provide an objective analysis of the options available. That analysis to then provide the basis of a report and recommendation to Scrutiny and Cabinet. To aid the objective analysis it was recommended that the membership of the group included a wide cross section of members, not just from Colwyn Bay.

- 2.3 The Task and Finish Group will be supported by a multi disciplinary team of officers drawing upon the resources of the SRA Team, Community Development Services, Regulatory Services, Legal Services, Infrastructure Services, Environmental Services and Engineering and Design Services. The analysis of options will need to go beyond the practical possibilities highlighted by the survey but also consider approval processes, funding and future management. It is therefore suggested that the Group will, in its work plan, need to consider the views and interests of other stakeholders in the public, private and community sectors, as well as understanding the experiences of other areas in resolving similar issues.
- 2.4 The final recommendations to Scrutiny and Cabinet must therefore be clear as to the approach and actions to be taken by the Council, individually, or in partnership, and the management arrangements to support such actions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.
Minute 941 Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15 th April 2010	Committee Services	

AGENDA ITEM 7



Disclosure of confidential information is a breach of the Members Code of Conduct and a disciplinary matter

REPORT TO:	Colwyn Bay Pier Task and Finish Group
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Goronwy Edwards
DATE:	28 th June 2010
LEAD OFFICER:	Iwan Davies, Acting Corporate Director
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rob Dix, SRA Programme Manager
SUBJECT:	Victoria Pier, Colwyn Bay, Background and Current Position
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide Members of the Task and Finish Group with the background information and current position statement before considering the work necessary to undertake the 'task'.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

N/A

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)/OPTIONS

N/A

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The pier is a grade 2 listed building, first listed in 1975 and retained on the list after CADW resurveyed in 1994. The pier was first constructed in 1903, but has been poorly altered over the years. The last historic rebuilding in 1937 created a large and distinctive pavilion with entrance turrets in the art deco style. More recent post war alterations have damaged the historic character and appearance of the listed pier.

- 4.2 The pier was originally owned and managed by the Council but sold into private ownership in the early 1970's. Since that time a series of owners have failed to invest significantly in the maintenance of the pier resulting in the gradual deterioration of its physical condition and the loss of the integrity of parts of the structure. In 1987 the pier was partially closed on safety grounds. The pier has now been entirely closed since 2008 [REDACTED] er.
- 4.3 The continuing deterioration of the building/structure has raised the concerns of the Council's Regulatory Services and consideration of whether or not to serve notice under Dangerous Structures legislation. Concern about the potential financial implications of such an action has resulted in the Council undertaking a Structural Survey, to assess the condition of the pier and costs related to emergency works and fuller restoration.
- 4.4 [REDACTED] 17th July 2008. The debt is of some £54,000 with interest adding at approximately £4,000 p.a.. Royce Peeling and Green (RPG) have been appointed as 'Trustees in Bankruptcy' and have 3 years within which to settle the debt, [REDACTED] requested an annulment but to date has not been able to come forward with the required funds. RPG themselves have limited funds to expend on the asset and are not in a position to undertake restoration work, or significant emergency works. Whilst not having undertaken an extensive marketing campaign RPG are using the services of Kings Sturge to advise on value of the site and validate any offers made. To date nobody has made an offer, although it is known that other pier owners have considered the site. If RPG reach a point at which they believe that they can no longer expend funds on the site they have the right to 'disclaim the property'. Under the Insolvency Act 1986 this would mean that the property [REDACTED] Crown.
- 4.5 The pier is at an important position on the waterfront next to the direct route from the promenade to the town centre and immediately opposite the railway station. A significant programme of coastal defence and environmental improvement works are to be undertaken along the entire length of Colwyn Promenade, with physical work starting later this year. The first phase of the work will be between the Dingle slipway, westwards to the Toad Hall slipway. These proposals will include the creation of a permanent beach along this length to aid the facilitation of further tourism activity. These proposals are being incorporated into a masterplan being developed, on behalf of the Council and Bay Life partners, by DPP Shape. They have indicated that in order to ensure a proper and sustainable

linkage between the town and promenade it is important to have commercial/leisure/tourism activity focussed on the areas around the physical linkages, ie the Dingle and footway from the pier to Station Square. DPP Shape are therefore recommending that the pier needs either to be restored or replaced by alternative facilities. The efficient provision of the latter is severely restricted by the timing of the coastal defence works. It should also be noted that the SRA funded 'Turning the Tide' strategy for the visitor economy in the area recommends the restoration of the pier.

- 4.6 The listed building status of the pier means that Listed Building Consent will be required for any alteration, addition or partial/complete demolition works that affect the character of the structure. This control extends to works of repair if their specification and scale are considered likely to affect the character. Controls on works to listed buildings are exercised by the local planning authority, but any application that authorities are minded to approve must be referred for clearance from CADW before the consent can be issued. If a building is in the ownership of the Local Authority applications are determined by the Assembly Government as advised by CADW. Whilst demolition or partial demolition of the pier are options, such decisions would be influenced by the condition of the structure. For a listed building such as this CADW will, in the first instance, be seeking options which achieve the preservation of the listed building, either in whole or part. For instance the main pavilion building needs to be carefully assessed to see how much of the original 1937 structure and fabric remains.
- 4.7 With all of the above in mind earlier this year the Chief Executive approved the commissioning of DATRYS to undertake a detailed structural survey of the pier, which would:
- Gather relevant information on the condition of the pier.
 - Identify the extent of repair/replacement of both the structural members and the buildings upon the pier.
 - Using this information prepare a cost plan.
 - Recommend the extent and cost of necessary emergency works the immediate safeguarding of general public safety, with the pier closed.
 - Recommend options and cost plans for the renovation or otherwise of the pier in whole or part.
 - All costings need to take into account conservation principles.

4.8 At the time of writing the report the structural survey work for the main structure of the pier has been completed, with a cost plan yet to be finalised. However, to date, access has been denied to the pier deck and therefore the survey of the decking and building structures has not been undertaken. Approaches are currently being made to resolve this situation and a verbal update will be given at the meeting. The work currently undertaken does show that the main columns and column piles are in acceptable condition. However, the inspection does indicate that approximately one third of girders supporting the deck are in need of repair and approximately 60% of bracings and booms have failed and need repair or replacement.

4.9 The Acting Corporate Director has met with RPG to understand their position and also gain an acknowledgement of their willingness to work with the Council to obtain a viable solution. Whilst there are limitations upon what they can and cannot do there is a clear willingness on RPG's part to work with the Council or third parties to take the matter forward.

4.10 David Jones MP organised two public meetings to gauge the level of public interest / support for the retention and refurbishment of the pier. These were well attended and resulted in the establishment of a Pier Pressure Group. To date no approach has been made by the Council, or to the Council with a view to working together. At the meetings it was made clear that those leading the proposal for the establishment of the Pressure Group wished to keep it separate from the Council.

5. CONSULTATION

N/A

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7. RISK

N/A

8. DRIVERS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Victoria Pier represents a key site / structure within Colwyn Bay and as such is symbolic of the towns decline.
- Colwyn Bay is recognised as the primary regeneration objective for the Council, supported by the Assembly Government's inclusion of the area within the North Wales Coast Strategic Regeneration Area.