

Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

NAFWC 2014 (Paper 3)
Pierhead Project Update

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



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Pierhead Project Update

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1.0 Purpose and summary of issues

1.1 This paper outlines the progress of the Pierhead project to date and makes proposals for the launch events planned for the week beginning 1 March. It also seeks support for plans for the future operational management of the building.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission is asked to:

- note the progress update in paragraphs 3.1-3.3;
- agree the proposals in paragraphs 4.1-4.8 for the March launch events; and
- consider the proposals as set out in paragraphs 5.0-5.6 for revised operational arrangements for events and bookings, following the opening of Pierhead.

3.0 Discussion

3.1 Following the Commission's approval of the renovation and upgrade works to the Pierhead in December 2008, work was carried out during January-June 2009 to finalise the plans and specifications for construction, design and AV/IT tenders. A detailed planning application submitted to Cardiff County Council was finally approved on 13 August. Following confirmation of planning consent, contractors were appointed to carry out their work on a fairly tight schedule. Work started on site on 14 September 2009.

3.2 The Commission has been informed of progress via regular contributions to the Management Board report to the Commission and the Llywyddion through the weekly communications meeting.

3.3 The current position is that:

- the works are on schedule for completion within budget by 12 February, as approved by the Commission December 2008;**
- the project team's focus is now on training, operational planning and finalisation of the project budget;**
- party groups have been contacted to offer them the opportunity to discover more about the refurbished Pierhead, and the services and opportunities it will offer them and their constituents; and**
- we are arranging for the Commissioners to visit the Pierhead as soon as practicably possible.**

4.0 Launch events

4.1 Plans to launch Pierhead from the 1 March are at an advanced stage. We plan to open the building to the public on 1 March and to hold the inaugural Pierhead Sessions between 4-6 March.

4.2 The opening of Pierhead on 1 March is an opportunity to engage local stakeholders and partners, events services users and the media. A promotion and publicity plan has

been developed by the Media/Brand/e-democracy team using both new and traditional communication methods to ensure that the purpose of the building is understood by our customers.

4.3 Activities on the day will include:

- invited local groups and people with links to the Pierhead to visit the exhibition;**
- street performers outside the building work in partnership with the WMC and Waterfront Partners;**
- promoting the building to local and national press and media;**
- an art exhibition of iconic photojournalism by the photojournalist Phillip Jones Griffiths linking the Senedd and Pierhead; and**
- the WCVA United National Gold Star Community Awards taking place at the Senedd, recognising the contribution of Welsh people to international development. Attendees will include a Senior United Nations figure, up to 150 people from across Wales and guests from a number of African nations.**

4.4 The Pierhead Sessions will be held from 4-6 March.

4.5 The purpose of the sessions is to celebrate the reopening of Pierhead to involve, inform, and inspire and establish Pierhead as a public arena for free speech and debate. This will be achieved through a series of events that will feature renowned speakers and special guests discussing a range of topical issues (e.g. environment, media, democracy) which affect the lives of people in Wales and the UK.

4.6 The Pierhead Sessions will be open to all members of the general public. Each session will be produced in collaboration with a number of partner organisations from the public and private sectors. These stakeholders will be the primary target audience of the sessions.

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- 4.7 All sessions will be ticketed, but free of charge, with tickets available on a first come first served basis. In order to ensure that the sessions are accessible to all, they will be recorded and accessible through the Assembly's website. The website will also include exclusive interviews with some of the speakers.**
- 4.8 To date, confirmed speakers include: Speaker Bercow, Matt Smith (the new Doctor Who), Charlie Beckett (Director of Polis), George Monbiot (author and journalist), Emily Bell (Director of digital content for Guardian News and Media), Andrew Pierce (Assistant Editor, The Daily Telegraph) and Kevin Maguire (Daily Mirror). Events will be held in partnership with the Western Mail, the Hansard Society, BBC Cymru and Cardiff School of Journalism.**
- 5.0 Operational planning**
- 5.1 Particular emphasis has been placed on developing arrangements for managing the Pierhead as a visitor attraction and as an events venue.**
- 5.2 Assembly staff have worked on detailed operational plans which are being finalised. Current plans propose that we enable public access to Pierhead as a visitor attraction between the hours of 10:30-16:30 (last entry 16:15) Monday-Saturday. When events are booked for Pierhead, they will take place between 09:00 and 21:00. In exceptional circumstances it will be possible for events to run until 23:00. Opening the Pierhead for events at the weekend is not resourced at present, this would need to be kept under review in the light of the needs of the Assembly and the development of the building. All events will continue to be sponsored by Assembly Members.**
- 5.3 The development of a new National Assembly for Wales Events Strategy outlines new procedures for delivering a professional event management service for the Assembly and includes the establishment of a co-ordinated service through an Assembly Events Network, drawing on expertise from existing Assembly services including IT, Facilities Management, Security and External Communications.**

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- 5.4 The strategy's new guidance and procedures will enable us to direct event bookings and specific event types to the appropriate space on the Assembly estate, ensuring the best possible experience for our customers and upholding the reputation of the Assembly.**
- 5.5 We propose that the Assembly continues to offer the Pierhead event space free of charge for events linked to the work of the Assembly. However, when necessary and appropriate, we will to charge to recover additional costs, including energy costs, wear and tear to our equipment and overtime costs.**
- 5.6 These proposals will be communicated to Assembly Members and customers/stakeholders from the beginning of February and will be implemented from mid-March onwards, when the Pierhead will become available for bookings.**