9 September 2010

Milford Mercury

Councillors disagree with port chief over LNG risk documents

THE release of risk assessments by Milford Haven Port Authority regarding LNG shipping in the Milford Haven waterway would not be 'counter productive,' Milford Town Councillors have said.

The comments came at a meeting of the council's public works and planning committee on Monday.

Councillors were discussing a response from harbourmaster Mark Andrews regarding safety concerns raised by LNG expert Dr Raymond Cox and the release of risk assessments into the public domain.

Mr Andrews said the authority had complied with SIGTTO (tanker shipping) guidelines throughout the whole process of preparing for LNG traffic into the port.

Mr Andrews said: "There is not one single risk assessment that provides a go, no-go answer, but rather a myriad of separate but inter-locking assessments that are undertaken in determining how we manage and control LNG shipping along with all other shipping and leisure craft movements in the port.

"Such assessments and procedures are reviewed and re-tested on a regular basis to both take into account any changing circumstances and verifying their continuing currency.

"It is therefore impractical and counter productive to even consider releasing all this documentation into the public domain."

Mr Andrews said the port authority had written to Dr Cox on at least two occasions inviting him to meet with them to discuss his concerns directly,, but he had not responded.

Councillor John Cole said he believed if full access had been given to the risk assessments, the issue would have been resolved a long time ago and said it was regrettable that the authority had not taken that step.

The committee agreed to write to the new port authority chief executive Alec Don stating it would not be 'counter productive' to release all documentation to the public domain.

The committee also agreed to ask Dr Cox if he would take up the port authority's offer of a meeting to discuss his safety concerns.