



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Dyddiad/ Date	30 th July 2025
Rhif Ffôn/ Direct Line	[REDACTED]
Ebost/ Email	[REDACTED]
Cyswllt/ Contact	[REDACTED]
Eich cyf / Your ref	David Chiaka Ejimofor
Ein cyf/ Our ref	[REDACTED]

HM Senior Coroner for Swansea and Neath Port
Talbot
The Guildhall
Swansea
SA1 4PE

By email: [REDACTED] and
[REDACTED]

Dear HM Senior Coroner for Swansea and Neath Port Talbot

**Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths – David Chiaka Ejimofor
(Deceased)**

This is Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's (NPTCBC) response to the report raised by HMA Ramsay following the inquest into the tragic death of David Ejimofor by drowning having jumped into the Sea at the Small Beach, Aberavon from the breakwater owned by Associated British Ports (ABP).

Our thoughts continue to be with David's family and friends following this incident.

NPTCBC has continued since the inquest hearing to engage in dialogue with the landowners, ABP, and our contracted specialists the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). As the inquest was told, RNLI are continuing through this season to undertake intensive monitoring and assessment around the small beach area, including insofar as it can the breakwater, in order to identify the required provision for lifeguarding services.

www.npt.gov.uk

Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol
Y Ganolfan Ddinesig, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ
DX 135226 Port Talbot 2

Head of Legal Services
Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ
DX 135226 Port Talbot 2

NPTCBC will continue its dialogue with RNLI in particular but also with ABP. NPTCBC will be led by RNLI's recommendations in view of their nationally recognised expertise and will continue to address recommendations as far as is practicable within resource and budgetary constraints. ABP's engagement with RNLI as to provision of services on the breakwater itself is beyond NPTCBC's knowledge.

Turning to address the specific concerns raised by the Coroner:

There are no lifeguards stationed at the breakwater during high risk period in the spring and summer months (when the weather is good and the tides high), when children and young people have been seen/known to jump into the water from it.

There is no duty in law on NPTCBC to provide lifeguards at beaches. Nonetheless, as HMAc is aware, NPTCBC engaged RNLI to assess the appropriate level of lifeguarding provision along the Aberavon seafront and upon its areas of ownership. It is not possible to have lifeguards stationed right across the beach at Aberavon, or at all beaches within the NPTCBC area, and so provision is targeted and public are reminded to look out for lifeguard provision and to, for instance, swim between the flags.

NPTCBC cannot police access to the breakwater, whether by lifeguard provision or otherwise. The breakwater is outside NPTCBC's ownership.

There are ongoing discussions between NPTCBC, RNLI and ABP seeking to identify and where possible implement measures which would help to reduce risks to people who use the beach and those who choose and are able to access the breakwater and the sea from off the breakwater.

As noted above, the RNLI is currently undertaking an exercise to monitor activity in the vicinity of the breakwater. These monitoring efforts and discussions are expected to continue across the summer 2025, to help inform a formal review of the Beach safety assessment and in turn a decision regarding lifeguard deployment for the 2026 summer season. Should it ultimately be determined that additional lifeguard coverage is necessary, NPTCBC's intention would be to implement this provision during 2026 subject to the necessary funding being available.

NPTCBC will of course share assessment of the risks identified along the beach in RNLI's assessment with APB.

Jumping from, and the water around, the breakwater is known to be dangerous

NPTCBC recognises that jumping from the breakwater into the sea is a dangerous activity. It is obviously so. NPTCBC cannot police access to third party owned land and does not own or exercise any control over the breakwater.

As previously outlined, discussions are ongoing regarding the potential implementation of additional water safety measures and interventions in the vicinity of the small beach to improve and support public understanding of hazards associated with this stretch of coastline, and where possible to provide methods of assistance for anyone who may get into difficulty.

The practice of placing a lifeguard at the breakwater at times of higher risk in the spring and summer months had been in place historically and was known to be effective at reducing the risk.

It remains NPTCBC's position that lifeguards have not been stationed at the breakwater for well over a decade, with no evidence to suggest the risk has worsened over that period. David's activity in accessing the breakwater and

jumping into the sea was in any event outside of the hours at which lifeguard provision would have operated. Nevertheless, dialogue will continue between NPTCBC, RNLI and APB and once the outcome of the RNLI monitoring exercise is available it will of course be taken into account in identifying what, if any, further measures are appropriate to be taken.

Why lifeguards had been removed from the breakwater prior to David's death and why that measure continues to be absent today.

As outlined at the inquest hearing, lifeguards were not regularly stationed at the breakwater but would occasionally pass there as part of a patrol. Lifeguard provision and arrangement for its implementation was changed over a decade ago, since when RNLI, as the national experts in lifeguard provision were engaged.

RNLI undertook its own beach safety assessment upon its engagement to provide services and since then has been provided with funding to implement the recommended level of services.

The current Beach safety assessments continue to recommend services along the Aberavon beach front area encouraging and instructing the public to swim at lifeguarded areas and during lifeguarded times. NPTCBC awaits the outcome of RNLI's current monitoring and risk assessment period following which, if recommended, changes in service along the beachfront area will be implemented. If there are no changes implemented NPTCBC will continue to provide the lifeguarding provision in line with the current RNLI recommendations.

Evidence that other deterrence measures put in place since David's death are working effectively to reduce the risk.

Monitoring of the breakwater is ongoing. Once the analysis is complete, NPTCBC, in cooperation with RNLI and ABP, will be able to assess whether any additional deterrent measures are necessary to effectively reduce the identified level of risk still further.

NPTCBC remains firmly committed to working in close collaboration with RNLI and ABP to mitigate identified risks in this specific area. We continue to advance measures aimed at preventing any recurrence of incidents of this nature.

Following the conclusion of the ongoing monitoring and once determinations have been made, a further update will be provided to HM Senior Coroner for Swansea Neath and Port Talbot.

Yours faithfully,



Head of Legal and Democratic Services