



Cambridge City Council

To: Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change:
Councillor Tim Ward
Report by: Democratic Services Manager
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee 9/10/12
Wards affected: All Wards

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO THE CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 The terms of office for the seven Conservators of the River Cam appointed by the City Council end on 31 December 2012.

1.2 At the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 26 June a new process for making these appointments was agreed. This report updates on progress and highlights the next steps to making these appointments.

2. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended:

- i. To consider the Appointment Panel's recommendation that applicants 1, 2, 3 and 4 (see appendix A) are recommended to the Executive Councillor as the four non-councillor City Council appointments to the Conservators of the River Cam commencing 1 January 2013.

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- ii. To recommend to Council on 25 October 2012 the appointment of four members of the public along with three City Councillor appointments, to the Conservators of the River Cam commencing 1 January 2013
- iii. To write, on behalf of the Council to those Conservators whose term will end thanking them for their valuable contribution.

3. Background

3.1 At the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 26 June 2012 the Executive Councillor agreed the following:

- i. To instruct officers to arrange an open and public process for seeking applications for some of the City Council appointments to the Conservators of the River Cam.
- ii. That the composition of the seven appointees be three city councillors and four members of the public.
- iii. That criteria be applied to the application process.
- iv. That Council appointees be required to sign up to the Council's Code of Conduct
- v. That the maximum term of office would be normally 3 x three-year terms with thereafter a break period of three years before a re-application can be made. This rule should apply retrospectively.
- vi. That a four-member panel would consider the applications and make recommendations to the Environment Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 October 2012. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Committee would not be bound by the recommendations.

3.2 As part of the new appointment process agreed in June, officers in Democratic Services worked with the River Manager at the Conservancy and local Ward Councillors to compile a list of people and organisations with an interest in, and/or knowledge of the river and its use. Information regarding the changes to the appointment process was then circulated to these interested parties. An advert was published on the City Council website, displayed in local Community Centres and placed on Conservancy notice boards and prominent positions along the River Cam.

3.3 Applications were invited over a 4-week period running from Monday 16th July until Friday 10th August and in total 25 applications were received. The 'skills, abilities, knowledge and experience section of each of the applications can be found at appendix A. As explained in the June report and in the application form sent out and read by applicants, the personal information on applicants will not be published. If the Scrutiny Committee wishes to discuss the specifics about individual applications it should do so in closed session as agreed at the June Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Recommended applicants

3.4 An Appointment Panel consisting of Councillors Johnson, Owers, Reiner and Saunders met on Thursday 30th August. The Panel assessed the 25 applications based on the agreed criteria:

- i. An interest in, and/or evidenced knowledge of, some aspect of river use.
- ii. Not a Councillor or officer of Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, other District or Parish Councils in Cambridgeshire. Not a relative or close friend of any current elected member or officer of the Council.
- iii. Live or work in the City of Cambridge.
- iv. Commitment to serve the community, attend meetings and a willingness to take required training and to offer requisite time to perform the duties to the satisfaction of the City Council.
- v. Willingness to sign up to a Code of Conduct applicable to members of the public made Council appointees.
- vi. Must declare any party political membership on the application form.
- vii. Will have disclosed to the Council during the application process any matter in his/her background, which, if it became public, might cause the council to reconsider the appointment.
- viii. Committed to a three-year term of office.

3.5 The Executive Councillor attended this meeting but did not take part in deciding who to recommend. The Appointment Panel all agreed on the four applicants recommended.

3.6 As stated in the June report, applicants have not been invited to address the scrutiny committee or Council about any application (including under the Council's public speaking scheme) as the selection process has been based purely on written applications.

3.7 Regarding the three city councillor appointments, two Liberal Democrat nominations (Ward and Reiner) have so far been received.

4. Implications

- (a) **Financial Implications** – there are none.
- (b) **Staffing Implications** - there are none.
- (c) **Equal Opportunities Implications**

No Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this review. Councillors will make appointments to the Conservators based on a new process, which is more open and transparent and invites a greater diversity of application. It also takes into account the Council's Vision Statement where citizens feel they can influence public decision-making.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

As part of this section, assign a climate change rating to your recommendation(s) or proposals. You should rate the impact as either:

Nil: to indicate that the proposal has no climate change impact. [Although by its nature, the work of the Conservators is focussed on environmental factors].

(e) **Consultation** – no implications

(f) **Community Safety** – no implications

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
Previous report to the Environment Scrutiny Committee – 26.06.12
Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee – 26.06.12

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Application forms received ('skills, abilities, knowledge and experience' section only)

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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