



To: Executive Councillor for Public Places: Councillor
Andrea Reiner
Report by: Head of Streets and Open Space
Relevant scrutiny Environment Scrutiny Committee 16/1/2014
committee:
Wards affected: Abbey East Chesterton Market Newnham

CHANGES TO THE MOORINGS POLICY

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report contains recommendations for amendments to, and the management of, the Council's River Moorings Policy.
- 1.2 The report details issues and options that have been raised by stakeholders since January 2010, when the policy was last reviewed.
- 1.3 The report also highlights areas for further consideration and scrutiny relating to fees and charges, the formulation of an enforcement policy and the subsequent management of moorings.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- a) To give delegated authority to Officers to periodically close and review the River Moorings Waiting list when the expected wait for a mooring position is in excess of 18 months;
- b) To change the terms and conditions of the 48-hour visitor moorings, so that if a boat that moors at any City Council visitor mooring, the boat may not use any other visitor mooring in Cambridge within 7 days (without reasonable cause).
- c) To instruct officers to review the RML pricing structure, fees and charges for 2014 and beyond, to include an equality impact assessment, for future consultation and consideration by Environment Scrutiny Committee. The recommendation is to include a review of the discounts offered for sole occupancy and student status (but not the discounts offered for those receiving means tested benefits or pension credits); and
- d) To instruct officers to draft a River Moorings Policy document reflecting the Executive Councillor decisions to date, which would also

include an enforcement policy. It is recommended that the document be the subject of consultation and further approval by Environment Scrutiny.

3. Background

- 3.1 The River Moorings policy came into effect on the 1st April 2006 and further adaptations to the policy have been made since that time following periodic reviews.
- 3.2 At present there is no single document that can be called the definitive River Moorings Policy. The policy is a collection of previous Executive Councillor decisions.
- 3.3 In administering the River Moorings Policy, the City Council meets regularly with a range of stakeholders to discuss issues and concerns such as:-
 - Mooring at Riverside;
 - Liaison between river users;
 - Events;
 - And Waiting lists
- 3.4 Stakeholders include the Cam Conservators, Camboaters, and river users and residents groups and people who enjoy the river for its amenity value.
- 3.5 This report details discussion points, actions and outcomes from these meetings, sets out work to date and is intended to give background to recommendations as set out in section 2 of this report.
- 3.6 Management of the Waiting List
 - 3.6.1 Following the decision by the Executive Councillor for Sports, Arts and Public Place in January 2008, two Waiting Lists (Narrow Beam and Wide Beam) were merged to form one list in April 2008 in chronological date order.
 - 3.6.2 There are currently 251 applicants waiting for a narrow beam position (with 30 month wait for offer) and 75 waiting for a wide beam position (with 8+ year wait). It is recommended that the waiting list is closed and reviewed periodically, to help manage the waiting list and help manage expectations.
 - 3.6.3 A closed waiting list has the advantage of highlighting that the River moorings have reached capacity and that there are no more currently available. It may also discourage some boats and their owners from

entering onto the River Cam, and using the visitor moorings and other third party moorings as permanent locations.

3.6.4 Closing the waiting list is a management tool used in other areas of the Council, for example waiting lists for allotments lists are closed time to time for management purposes and to help manage expectations.

3.6.5 Closing the waiting list means that the list is closed to new applicants, but officers would continue to issue available licences in chronological order as spaces become available on the river.

3.6.6 It is therefore recommended that the Executive Councillor gives delegated authority to Officers to periodically close and review the River Moorings Waiting list, when the expected wait for a mooring position is in excess of 18 months.

3.7 Management of the 48 hour visitor moorings

3.7.1 There are currently approximately 8/9 visitor moorings at Jesus Green and Midsummer Common. Visitor moorings are free of charge, and are meant to be used by visiting boaters to the city.

3.7.2 Boats are allowed to stay at any given visitor mooring for up to 48 hours, and after that may not return to that visitor mooring within 7 days.

3.7.3 However, issues surrounding the use of the 48 hour visitor moorings have increased in 2013/14 with regular reports of the rules surrounding the use of these areas being flouted, both by local and visiting craft. Many boats stay longer than 48 hours on the visitor moorings, or shuttle between different visitor moorings in the city. There are regular reports of boats over staying 48 hours or returning to the same visitor mooring within 7 days.

3.7.4 It is therefore recommended to change the terms and conditions of the 48-hour visitor moorings, so that if a boat that moors at any City Council visitor mooring, the boat may not use any other visitor mooring in Cambridge within 7 days (without reasonable cause).

3.8 Review of River Mooring Licence pricing, fees and charges

3.8.1 Research completed by Officers in 2009 showed that the City Council is one of the largest local authority providers of moorings for residential craft in the country. The City Council has 70 River Moorings Licences.

3.8.2 It was agreed at Community Services on the 25th March 2010 to retain the existing Mooring Policy pricing structure and review after a 3-year period. This report sets out areas for the review to cover.

3.8.3 The Mooring Licence Fee (MLF) is the fee that boat owners pay to City Council on an annual basis.

3.8.4 City Council charges a flat fee of £1105.20 per annum. It also applies a 25% discount for the following categories:

- Single occupancy;
- Students;
- Those on means tested benefits; and
- Those receiving pension credits.

3.8.5 It should be noted that the single person occupancy discount and the student discount are reliant upon the integrity of the applicant and without considerable intrusion and resource are difficult to monitor and enforce.

3.8.6 The MLF flat rate is priced at a lower level than many other sites, and that the difference is particularly marked for larger vessels.

Location	Type	Basis for Charge	Fee for mooring of a 17.5m boat
Brentford	Basin	Flat Fee	£6526.11
Ware (Tumbling Bay)	Online linear	Length	£2867.90
Birmingham (Hockley Port)	Online and Offline	Length	£2258.55
Lincoln (Fosdyke)	Online linear	Length	£2105.78
Oxford City Centre	Online linear	Length	£1917.82
Cambridge City	Online linear	Flat Fee	£1105.20

3.8.7 Our current charging policy therefore favours those with larger boats in that they receive the same service for the same fee, whilst occupying more space. Cambridge is one of only a very few inland areas offering online moorings (i.e. part of the waterway) for wide beam vessels.

3.8.8 Cambridge Mooring Licence holders have an almost unique advantage with the exemption from council tax.

3.8.9 The MLF is below the rate of many marinas in the region, which means it is cheaper to keep a boat on the River Cam than it is to pay for a place off the waterway.

3.8.10 On the other hand, mooring licence holders in Cambridge have lower levels of amenity than moorers at other sites for example access to power, toilets, showers, postal services, car parking and the supply of goods such as gas and coal.

3.8.11 In terms of improving services to boat owners, current licence holders have asked for the Council to consider an additional Elsan point, which is a waste disposal point for chemical and cartridge toilets. There is currently one Elsan point in Jesus Green, so the need for further such facilities is most acute for those based at Stourbridge Common, who are the furthest distance from the facilities at Jesus Green. Any review of pricing, fees and charges should consider these improvements.

3.8.12 It is recommended that the Executive Councillor instruct officers to review the RML pricing structure, fees and charges for 2014 and beyond, to include an equality impact assessment, for future consideration by Environment Scrutiny Committee. The recommendation is to include a review of the discounts offered for sole occupancy and student status (but not the discounts offered for those receiving means tested benefits or pension credits).

3.9 Review of River Moorings Policy

3.9.1 As noted above, at present there is no formal overarching document that could be described as the River Moorings Policy. The policy is a collection of previous Executive Councillor Decisions from 2006 until present.

3.9.2 This has presented difficulties when boat owners, river users, residents or other stakeholders have asked for clarification of the policy, or for the policy to be enforced.

3.9.3 To ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of City Council policy, it is recommended that all previous Executive Councillor Decisions are presented as an amalgamation to form the basis of a single River Moorings Policy document.

3.9.4 The River Moorings Policy document should include provision for enforcement. This will ensure that officers comply with the principles of good enforcement by having clear standards and practices,

3.9.5 The Council aims to carry out enforcement fairly and in a way that avoids, as far as possible, unreasonable burdens and to offer simple advice to help individuals to comply with the law.

3.9.6 The Council requires Services to follow the principles of good enforcement, in particular:

- Courtesy and helpfulness
- Openness
- Clear standards and practices
- Proportionality
- Consistency
- Trained staff

3.9.7 It is therefore recommended that the Executive Councillor instruct officers to draft a River Moorings Policy document reflecting the Executive Councillor decisions to date, which would also include an enforcement policy. It is recommended that the document be the subject of consultation and further approval by Environment Scrutiny.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in relation to the recommendations set out in this report

(b) Staffing Implications

There are no staff implications in relation to the recommendations set out in this report.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

Any pricing, fees and charges review will be set within the context of the findings of an equality impact assessment of the current pricing schedule and River Moorings Policy. This to ensure that the City Council applies a consistent principle of fairness related to evidenced need and ability to pay, whilst at the same time applying a cost effective and prudent approach to maximising revenue income from the policy.

(d) Environmental Implications

The Terms and Conditions of the River Moorings Licence set requirements for Licence holders in connection to environmental considerations.

(e) Procurement

There are no procurement implications identified in this report.

(f) Consultation and communication

It is recommended that a public consultation is completed to influence the review of pricing, fees and charges. It is recommended that the consultation sets out the context with an issues and options paper. Responses and feedback to this issues and options paper will be used to formulate a response to the recommendation to review of pricing, fees and charges.

(g) Community Safety
None identified

5. Background papers

Meeting documents Community Services Scrutiny Committee, Thursday,
14th January, 2010:

6. Appendices

None

7. Inspection of papers

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