



Cambridge City Council

To: Executive Councillor for Arts Sports & Public Places
Report by: Head of Streets and Open Spaces
Relevant scrutiny Community Services Scrutiny 13th October
committee: Committee 2011

Change of Use of City Council Mooring Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Play Boat is a Community Development project that increases opportunities for children and young people to access the river and surrounding open spaces, it also provides open access play sessions and residential opportunities.
- 1.2 The Executive Councillor for Community Development previously considered and approved the Play Boat in July 2008.
- 1.3 The Children and Young People's Participation Service (ChYpPS) wish to consider the use of an existing commercial mooring on Jubilee Gardens as an operational base. This will require the change of usage from commercial to educational.
- 1.4 Any change of use for the mooring and any subsequent fee levied requires the approval of the Executive Councillor for Arts, Sports and Public Places.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:-
 - a) Approve the permitted change of use of the existing mooring to allow the Play Boat to be based in Jubilee Gardens, and to;
 - b) Levy an annual fee, equivalent to the annual charge for a residential river mooring licence.

3. Background

- 3.1 The ChYpPS play boat is the first of its kind in the country and offers a unique experience for children and young people, schools, community groups and families to access the River Cam.
- 3.2 Following approval by the Executive Councillor for Community Development in July 2008, and a further project appraisal for additional S106 funding in July 2010, the custom-designed, 60-foot-long, 10-foot-wide narrowboat, was delivered to Cambridge at the end of January 2011.
- 3.3 The Play Boat increases opportunities for children and young people to access the river and surrounding open spaces, it also provides open access play sessions and residential opportunities.
- 3.4 Young people were involved in planning the design of the boat, undertook crew training and have since been involved in the launch events and programming for the boat.
- 3.5 The boat delivers play and dedicated environmental sessions. It also works with city partners to provide short residential opportunities outside of the city for children and young people.
- 3.6 The play boat's internal space is open plan to enable lots of space for play. Sessions running from the boat includes open access drop in sessions and closed group work, involving activities such as environmental art, river dipping, cooking and fishing projects.
- 3.7 The boat is available for trips and overnight residential.
- 3.8 The Executive Councillor for Community Developments decision in July 2008 was based on initial moorings outside the City with a view to eventually securing moorings within the city.
- 3.9 Since the arrival of the boat in January 2011, the boat has been moored outside the City. The travel to collect the boat combined with the time taken to navigate the river to the collect point results in a considerable 'downtime' period as well as additional travel costs. A permanent mooring in the City will increase the efficiency of the boats operation and availability.
- 3.10 On Jubilee Gardens there is a mooring position that has existing Planning Consent for commercial activity detailed in Appendix A.

This mooring was previously occupied by 'Gallery on the Cam' and has remained vacant for more than 12 years.

- 3.11 Property Services value this commercial mooring as potentially £3500 per annum.
- 3.12 The existing City Council residential moorings do not extend to this area. Area B of the City Councils residential moorings details as follows residential mooring permitted for 75m on Jubilee Gardens upstream of the weir, adjacent to Chesterton Road.
- 3.13 Residential moorings attract a full fee of £1015.50.
- 3.14 Officers have considered the loss of potential external commercial income and the inequality of residential moorers paying but not the Play Boat. Officers believe that benefits to the local community outweigh any potential loss of income.
- 3.15 Officers consider and consulted on the proposal that the existing commercial mooring could be made available for the Play Boat.
- 3.16 Consultation included, Camboaters, Jesus Green Association, Cam Conservators, and Angling & Rowing Associations. Respondents detailed the following considerations: -
- Support for: -
- The change of use from commercial to educational use;
 - A fee equivalent to the residential river mooring fee is charged;
- 3.17 Officers in the Planning team have been consulted and advise that conversion of the current commercial mooring to be used, as an educational mooring would not require planning permission. Permission is needed for the mooring not the use of the boat itself.
- 3.17 Executive Councillor approval is needed to effect the change of use.

4. Considerations

- 4.1 There is vacant mooring position on Jubilee Gardens that has had no expressions of interest since 1999.
- 4.2 There are operational justifications for the Play Boat to be moored in the City.
- 4.3 There are no Planning considerations from the proposed change of use of the mooring from commercial to educational.

- 4.4 Consultation has detailed the need for improvements to the riverbank to allow access to the Play Boat; occasions when the Play Boat may have to be moved to allow the river level to be lowered for works; and that use of the lock to navigate from the upper river to the lower river will need the approval of the River Manager.
- 4.5 It is recommended that a mooring fee of £1015.50 be justified on the basis that it is comparable with other residential moorings in the locality, and that no formal commercial mooring fee has been attainable for 10 years.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

There is a potential loss of a commercial mooring fee, should a viable proposal be made in the future to Property Services.

5.2 Staffing Implications

There would be no adverse impact on officer time, other than the task of ensuring the boat was registered and licensed to be on the River Cam (which it is for 2011/12).

5.3 Equal Opportunities Implications

Improvements in access to recreational benefits of the river by people from diverse backgrounds including but not exclusively those with a disability and those on low incomes.

5.5 Environmental Implications

There are no adverse implications in this change. There will be less fuel usage due to the proximity of the proposed mooring.

5.6 Consultation

Completed when preparing the background to the report

5.7 Community Safety Implications

None

6. Background papers

These following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Report to Executive Councillor for Community Development – Purchase and Launch of ChYpPS Community Play Boat – 24th July 2008.

7. Appendices

Appendix A - Location Plan

8. Inspection of papers

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

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