

TITLE: Six Month Update on Riverside Management Scheme

Committee: Commercial Services Committee

Date: 12th April 2016

Author: Lewis Bage, Project & Engagement Officer

[Q247]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To note the Ely Riverside mooring management update for the period of September 2015 – March 2016.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are asked to:

i) note the update and consultation findings regarding the Council's mooring enforcement scheme

ii) note the plans for the further improvement of the riverside area

3.0 ELY RIVERSIDE MOORING ENFORCEMENT SCHEME UPDATE (SEPTEMBER 2015 – MARCH 2016)

3.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council launched a new mooring management scheme on 7th September 2015 after extensive consultation to determine the most suitable and effective option to manage its moorings on the River Great Ouse in Ely.

3.2 All vessels that moor at the Council's moorings between Annesdale and Willow Walk, Ely are entering into a contract with the Council and are agreeing to pay a mooring charge if their vessel remains at the moorings for longer than 48 hours or if the vessel returns to the Council's moorings within 48 hours of leaving, irrespective of the length of the original stay. The contractual terms are set out on signage along the length of the riverside.

3.3 Any unpaid money is dealt with by the Council's Legal Department using civil enforcement procedures by way of summons via the County Court.

3.4 The Council's Ely Riverside Officers are responsible for recording the details of all vessels moored at the Council's moorings. Riverside Officers visit the moorings daily and if their records show that one of the mooring conditions has been breached then a Mooring Charge Notice is issued.

- 3.5 At the time of writing this report 22 Mooring Charge Notices have been issued to 6 different boats.
- 3.6 At the time of writing this report the Council has received 4 appeals. 3 appeals were accepted as medical evidence was provided in support of the appeal and 1 appeal was dismissed.
- 3.7 At the time of writing this report 3 cases for non-payment are being dealt with by the Council's Legal Department.

4.0 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

- 4.1 Consultation was carried out between 15th January – 18th March 2016. The purpose of the consultation was to obtain feedback on the enforcement scheme and to seek ideas as to how the Council and partners can continually improve Ely Riverside as a key destination for residents and visitors.
- 4.2 A range of stakeholders including local businesses, boating associations, the Environment Agency, boaters, fisherman and dog walkers were consulted. 19 questionnaires were completed and returned.

The key findings of the consultation are outlined below:

- 79% of respondents are happy with the current visitor mooring provision in Ely
 - 84% of respondents advised that they are happy with how the new mooring scheme is being enforced
 - Only 3 respondents advised that further information could be added to the mooring webpages
 - Only 1 respondent advised that they weren't happy with the scheme as the riverside has appeared quieter during the winter months
- 4.3 Stakeholders have advised that they are happy having been consulted throughout all stages of shaping plans and now in reviewing and evaluating the scheme.
- 4.4 Feedback suggested that the river has seemed busier in previous winters, however, in the past, a lot of the boats previously moored in Ely had been there for longer than 48 hours and moored in areas that could not previously be enforced.
- 4.5 Feedback included some concerns regarding visitor mooring capacity following the end of lease between the Environment Agency and the Council at the riverside towards the A142 Roadbridge in September 2015. However, the Council has taken action to increase visitor mooring capacity by carrying out dredging and fender installation works at Annesdale and by the incorporation of the Slipway and Willow Walk into the mooring management scheme. Additional mooring space has increased as there is now only one

commercial mooring berth as opposed to two.

- 4.6 The Council will continue to monitor visitor mooring demand in Ely during the summer boating season.
- 4.7 A Riverside stakeholder meeting took place on 16th March 2016 to address the consultation findings and discuss potential improvement priorities for consultation.
- 4.8 The group discussed the potential to improve signage and new ways to link the riverside with other tourism destinations such as the City Centre and Country Park.

5.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The District Council recognises that Ely Riverside is a key destination for residents and visitors and will continue to engage with stakeholders and river users to ensure that the area continually improves.
- 5.2 To date, the new mooring enforcement scheme is proving effective and enabling capacity for the area to be enjoyed by a variety of different user groups.
- 5.3 The recent improvement works carried out such as the installation of solar lighting and the widening of Lavenders Green path have proved very popular amongst visitors to the Riverside. The Council is currently carrying out further fender improvement works along Lavenders Green and will consult with the public and stakeholders during summer 2016 to address any other potential improvements.
- 5.4 Following a consultation, to be carried out in the summer of 2016, the Community Project and Engagement Officer will present a draft Riverside Improvement Plan for approval to Commercial Services Committee in January 2016.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 No financial implications and Equality Impact Assessment not required.

Background Documents

None

Location

Room
F008, The
Grange

Contact Officer

Lewis Bage
Community Project & Engagement
Officer
(01353) 665555
E-mail:
lewis.bage@eastcambs.gov.uk