

CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

NOTES FOR THE MEETING TO BE HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2011

Agenda

No

3. Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2011:

- 1 Appointment of Conservators: The Democratic Services Committee Manager has confirmed that Cambridge City Council has agreed to the appointment of Cllr Kevin Price to serve as a Conservator as from 21st July 2011 (City Council appointments are due for renewal after 31st December 2012).
- 5.1 River Cam Navigation Benefits' Assessment: Copies of the Inception Note prepared by Ecorys Ltd, setting out the timetable for the consultation and report, were circulated to Conservators as requested. There have been regular exchanges with the consultants as the project has proceeded. The consultants held a series of interviews with an initial list of stakeholders; these discussions helped them fashion the format of the questionnaire. The licensing sub-committee group met with Ecorys Ltd to discuss interim progress on 11th August. The Conservancy's offices provided a list of local stakeholders and Cam-registered vessel owners to the consultants. The Environment Agency provided a list of registered vessel owners for the purposes of the consultation questionnaire (161 contacts). These address details could not be released to the consultants as a third party so they were mailed directly from Baits Bite on 12th September. The consultation deadline has been fixed to Friday 7th October. In the interim, Ecorys Ltd has committed to some further on-site fieldwork to interview people for their opinions.
- 5.2 H&S Framework: The Chairman has signed the final approved version of the Safety Management Statement for Employees. Further sub-policy statements are in draft (see item 6, Other Matters for Decision).
- 5.3 Navigational issues at Garret Hostel Lane: The appointed working group (John Adams, Keith Richards, Dick Pryce-Jones, Ian Nimmo-Smith, Geoff Brighty and the River Manager) met on 24 August to discuss the items raised in 5.3 of 14th July meeting in greater detail. See Note 4, Matters for Decision – regulating the commercial punting industry.
The River Bailiff has been able to return to his duties and the immediate need for a part-time Bailiff to be appointed was deemed no longer appropriate. Note 4 refers to a staffing strategy for improved enforcement ahead of the 2011/12 season.
- 5.4 Grazing Agreement, 1.74 acres: Archer & Archer have been instructed to prepare the new Business Tenancy Agreement, as agreed.
- 5.5 Grazing Agreement, Clayhithe Field: Ditto the above.
- 5.6 Clayhithe House: Instructions have been issued and, subject to the best offer, contractor Andrew Williams has commenced the repairs and painting of the exterior window frames and doors. SCDC confirmed that like-for-like repairs did not require Listed Building Consent on this occasion.

- 6.4 Tree management plan: Management of trees affecting the Conservators' statutory undertaking remains reactive. It has not been possible to discuss a strategy with City officers for the safe managing of riverside trees. Letters to the City Council's Tree Team (7th May, 27th June) about a tree branch pressing upon the roof of Jesus Lock-Keeper's Cottage have received no response. A letter has been sent to one private landowner in Chesterton seeking action to raise the overhanging branches which are soon to set root into the river. The River Bailiff's re-identification of trees along the Halingway between Baits Bite and Clayhithe is still in progress ahead of the identification of winter pollarding works. The Public Activity Safety Management Statement (see item 6) sets down a commitment to managing public safety in accordance with the guidance issued by the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group. Lessons may be learned from the RSPB's case study published on their website. The three river crew have been on a one-day training course in Basic Tree Inspection.
- 6.4 Regulation of punts on the upper river: Section 25 of the 1922 Act gives powers to the Conservators to make byelaws and for the upper river, and sub-clause 1(k) applies to those reaches upstream of King's Mill Weir 'for the government good order and regulation of persons navigating the rivers and waters ...'. The Conservators may be best advised to seek further legal advice on whether the Code of Practice for Commercial Punt Operators can be extended to the upper river. Craft are not subject to registration requirements on this non-statutory section of navigable river, and the Code is usually adopted when an applicant applies for annual craft registration.