

**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY**

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to  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
6 JUNE 2018**

**MOORINGS, LEASES AND LICENSES UPDATE**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide further information and detail on moorings, leases, and licenses following the recent Overview and Scrutiny review of the same.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members review and make comment on the contents of the report.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

**3.1 Background**

- 3.1.1 Members will be aware that at its meeting of 28 March 2018 (Minute 952 refers) that Moorings, Leases and Licenses were reviewed. It was agreed that Members would be provided further detail on the following subjects :-

- Wharfage charges at Hythe Quay to be clarified
- Details to be provided on river income and areas leased
- An overview of Moorings charges and income

- 3.1.2 It was also agreed that a separate report would be prepared, at a later date, with regards to an action plan relating to the resolution of long standing issues at Heybridge Creek.

**3.2 Hythe Quay Wharfage Charges**

- 3.2.1 **APPENDIX 1** of this report provides a revised version of the table previously provided detailing charges at Hythe Quay compared to other similar locations on the East Coast. The table previously considered was not clear as some of the charges shown included VAT and others did not which caused some confusion. The rates in **APPENDIX 1** are all inclusive of VAT.
- 3.2.2 Since the last meeting the River Bailiff has developed, in consultation with Legal Services, a draft agreement for Berthing on Hythe Quay. This new document is intended to replace the current *Guidelines for use of Hythe Quay* and will give greater clarity over the responsibilities of all vessels using the facility. This document is currently subject to informal consultation with barge operators who have, on the whole, welcomed greater clarity. This document will also be sent to the Maldon

Harbour Improvement Commissioners for their views. The draft Agreement is attached as **APPENDIX 2**.

- 3.2.3 As part of the normal budget setting process each programme committee is requested to review Fees and Charges policies in relation to their committee. Fees Policy at Hythe Quay is delegated to Planning and Licensing Committee. It will be proposed that an option to pay an annual berthing fee is introduced from April 2019 for fully rigged sailing barges.

### 3.3 River Income (Leases and Licenses)

- 3.3.1 **APPENDIX 3** of this report provides an overview of income received from river moorings, leases and licenses. As some of the values are commercially sensitive, a summary of income from each agreement type is provided with individual leases / licences named as set out in the table below. Should Members wish to discuss specific leases or licenses then consideration will need to be given to whether that detail can be discussed in open session. A geographical representation of the same information is then provided within **APPENDIX 3 a-e** as set out below.

<b>Agreement type</b>	<b>Income Received</b>	<b>Map Legend (Appendix 3a-e)</b>
Commercial Foreshore and Boatyards	£70,525	Coloured Red
Fisheries	£8,482	Coloured Pink
Club Moorings and Access	£23,955	Coloured Blue
Caravan Park Launch Facilities	£1,585	Coloured Green
Other agreements, leases or licenses	£18,893	Coloured Brown
<b>Total</b>	<b>£123,400</b>	<b>N/A</b>

\*Figure is rounded

**APPENDIX 3a = Maldon and the upper reaches**

**APPENDIX 3b = Heybridge Basin and Northey Island,**

**APPENDIX 3c = Osea Island and Goldhanger Creek**

**APPENDIX 3d = Lawling Creek**

**APPENDIX 3e = Blackwater Estuary and St Peter's Flat (Natural England)**

- 3.3.2 Each Lease or License, when renewed or when a rent review is required, is valued by either the District Valuer or an alternative independent, experienced and qualified valuer. Experience has demonstrated that on occasion market forces dictate that a higher rental income is achieved.
- 3.3.3 As reported at the last meeting, when a longer term or higher value lease is renewed or extended, a Committee decision is required. All river leases are managed by the Planning and Licensing Committee and Minute 1232 refers to the most recent set of amendments that were approved by that Committee in April 2017.

### 3.4 Moorings Income

- 3.4.1 Members expressed some concern that the Council was not maximising income received from individual river moorings while noting that a number of mooring areas were now operated directly by sailing clubs or associations (**APPENDIX 3 Refers**).

Following the meeting on the 28 March, Officers have carried out research locally and further afield on the demand for moorings.

- 3.4.2 The River Bailiff has contacted a number of marinas, sailing and watersports clubs to discuss their views. A number of industry reports have also been reviewed to give a wider perspective on the state of 'boating' as a pastime.
- 3.4.3 There is a widespread decline across the UK in the numbers of people that own boats. This is reflected in reduced participation levels at sailing and yacht clubs within the District and across the UK. Virtually all local sailing clubs contacted have reported a downturn in the numbers actively involved in clubs. Motorised vessels including small craft such as jet skis have also seen a reduction in ownership and participation levels over the last 10 years although some clubs retain healthy memberships.
- 3.4.4 This is a national trend which is recognised by the British Marine industry and the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) the governing body for boating. The RYA recently held a webinar to look at ways to reverse the decline in numbers participating in sailing. The reason for the change are complex and may relate to a reduction in younger people taking part in boating and the perception that boat ownership is expensive and time consuming. It is also likely that the economic downturn has also affected boat ownership.
- 3.4.5 The habits of boat owners has also changed over the last 15-20 years with many of the remaining owners preferring to keep their boats in marinas where they can 'step on board' their craft without the need to row out to a mooring. Generally the marinas in the District and elsewhere offer a greater tidal window than traditional swing moorings in the upper reaches of the Blackwater. However even these higher value facilities have seen a reduction in demand.
- 3.4.6 Overall there is a national trend of declining participation and boat ownership and this directly relates to the demand for moorings. Given the value of the marine industry to the local economy of the Maldon District, it may be worth Members considering whether there are any policy measures that could be put in place that could help reverse or slow the trend on a local level.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 This report provides Members with further information in relation to Moorings, Leases and Licenses.
- 4.2 A further report setting out an action plan to resolve long standing issues in relation to Heybridge Creek will be brought to this Committee and Planning and Licensing Committee at a future date.

## **5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

- 5.1 The Council has a corporate goal to create opportunities for economic growth and prosperity. The Blackwater estuary and activities that take place on and around it

provide a significant contribution to the local economy as well as income to the Council.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None identified with this report
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – There are no corporate risks associated with this report.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Income received from Moorings, Leases and Licenses totals in excess of £123,400.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.

Background papers: None

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