

Agenda Item

REPORT OF Head of Communities & Place
To: Internal Overview and Scrutiny
Subject: Call in – Cllr Ford Notice of Motion
Date: 16th March 2021

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To scrutinise the decision of Community and Resources Committee that:

The closure of Appledore Slipway for jet skis with suitable bollards being positioned to enable continued access for swimmers and canoeists, and the decision for Bank End to be left to the Harbour Board be agreed.

1. INTRODUCTION

At Community and Resources Committee on the 1st February The Head of Communities and Place provided a covering report for to assist the discussion around Cllr Ford's Notice of Motion. The report discussed a number of issues relating to achieving Cllr Ford's aspiration and also mentioned the benefits that jet skis users bring to the local economy. The report concluded that, as the Council has no power to manage the conduct of jet skiers on the water, the only real means of controlling jet ski use of the estuary was to place controls on launching from Churchfields slipway.

2. REPORT

At Community and Resources Committee Councillor Ford presented his following Notice of Motion which had been referred to this Committee by Full Council on 10 August 2020:

"With the ever increasing use of the slip way and river by various crafts, I am becoming greatly concerned over safety and noise pollution. I propose from next Easter that because we appear not be able to police the river, that we ban the launching of jet skis in Appledore, thus reducing the volume of high speed craft close to Appledore Quay and minimising the likelihood of accident and injury occurring. However, there would still be a facility for jet skis to launch at Bank End, Bideford, keeping the density at high water spread out."

During the debate and having considered the further statement from Councillor Ford included in the report, Members acknowledged the problems associated with jet skis.

Their concerns/proposals put forward included:

- To investigate the feasibility of using the slipway at Bank End.
- Bank End is within the Harbour Board area – they have control and have the right to ban anything going in the Harbour.
- The Authority to have control over jet skis before they go into the water (once on the water there are no means of managing or policing their appropriate use).
- A permit system was suggested – this had been tried previously but had not been successful.
- Other areas looking to ban jet skis



- Alternative sites – Members were advised there are other launch/landing sites, but the Authority will have no control over them.
- Appledore Slipway - Ease of Use – when car park and slipway built it has been easy to launch from there.

The Head of Communities & Places stated that without having a physical barrier installed, there is no way this situation can affordably be managed. The pros and cons of such a barrier were discussed. He had also spoken to the Harbour Master who expressed his concerns as this is a difficult problem to manage. If jet skis are allowed to launch from Bank End it is just a displacement of the problem.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

As set out in C&R report.

Financial Implications

As set out in the C&R report

Human Resources Implications

As set out in C&R report

Sustainability Implications

As set out in C&R report

Equality/Diversity

As set out in C&R report

Risk Management

As set out in C&R Report

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

As set out in the C&R report

Ward Member and Leader Member Views

As set out in the C&R report

3. CONCLUSIONS

It was proposed by Councillor Lock, seconded by Councillor James and -

Resolved:

That the closure of Appledore Slipway for jet skies with suitable bollards being positioned to enable continued access for swimmers and canoeists, and the decision for Bank End to be left to the Harbour Board be agreed.



A recorded vote was taken.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Brenton, D			
Bright, C			
Bushby, D		X	
Craigie, R	X		
Christie, P	X		
Dart, A			X
Hicks, R	X		
Hutchings, J			
James, K	X		
Laws, N	X		
Lock, R	X		
McGeough, D	X		
Wiseman, R		X	

(Vote: For 7, Against 2, Abstentions 1)

Call In

This resolution has been the subject of an approved call in request by the requisite number of Councillors and is therefore presented for debate.

Call in comments/reasons:

Cllr Pennington

Cllr. Ford's Motion -- a lot of discussion going on at the moment - this is not only about jet ski's -- widening to environmental issues in the Torridge and Taw estuary. Not sure how I view this should proceed - feel it is the Full Council as the overall effect is Torridge wide.

Cllr Newton

I have received the attached email outlining some potentially serious issues with the recent C&R decision to place bollards or barriers on the Appledore slip to deny its use to jet skiers. As such I think this decision should be looked at again by O&S and so I support Dermot's request to call-in this decision.

Cllr Jones

I am writing to support Cllr McGeough's proposal to call in the decision relating to the banning of jet skis from the C&R meeting dated 1st February.

My reasons for this are as follows:

I understand that the RNLI use this slipway, have they been consulted about the bollards being installed? The RNLI were not mentioned in the C&R meeting so I do not believe that sufficient consideration has been given to this.

The proposals for bollards would not only stop jet skis but also other craft which use the slipway o launch. I think that this is disproportionate and that further consideration needs to



be given to how any bollard system would work. As such, internal overview and scrutiny should be provided with a number of options for how such a system could operate.

Cllr McGeough

I have grave concern about the lack of information yesterday regarding the RNLI using the slipway for a rough water launch site for the boarding boat, installing physical barriers would prevent their accessibility to the slip.

I would also like costings provided for a permit system to be implemented which would then give the jet skiers a binding contract with the council.

My idea raised about CCTV would work and just needs keeping on top of by our very capable officers.

This would then provide the council with the means to control any anti social behaviour from the minority who are spoiling the fun for the majority. The physical barriers are going to penalise many residents and boat owners of Appledore who enjoy the use of the slip way for recreational purposes and to help their mental health through this current pandemic.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members scrutinise the resolution, as set out above, of Community and Resources Committee on the 1st February.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations: Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Governance, S151 Officer
Contact Head of Communities & Place
Officer:
Background
Papers:

