

B&NES Cabinet 8.10.2020 – Deputation concerning Mead Lane Moorings (agenda item 11)

Cllr Phil Harding – Vice Chair of Salford Parish Council and Chair of Planning

Salford Parish Council recognises the work undertaken by B&NES Council to take forward the commissioning of the structural survey during the many challenges posed by COVID-19.

The survey has made some inaccurate observations but more importantly we are concerned that it lacks a full condition survey of the rock armour below the water level. The mooring of boats including narrow boats will damage and reduce the lifespan of a rock armour stabilisation scheme designed and installed at a 45-degree angle. The report states that rock armour was not visible along several stretches of the riverbank yet describes it as “being intact”. Without a full inspection down to, and including, the toe of the scheme that is not a safe assumption.

However we are largely supportive of the recommendations by officers and hope the Cabinet will agree and take them forward promptly but with just a few important changes to ensure successful implementation.

Firstly, a “**longer-term aspiration to remove moorings**” in Mead Lane is too vague, open-ended and is unacceptable to our local community. Allowing this contentious issue to drag on any longer than necessary without an end date would cause further stress to residents, to boaters and risk critical damage to the rock armour risking the infrastructure it protects.

We note the aim to find suitable alternative moorings before removing the Mead Lane 14-day moorings but remind the Cabinet that before 2015 only rarely did boats moor in Mead Lane. Those were short-term visitor moorings. Also now, as then, live-aboard boats moor elsewhere in winter.

We therefore ask that Cabinet agrees today to **end the 14-day moorings in Mead Lane by no later than 31 October 2021, sooner if moorings elsewhere come forward**. If finding alternative 14-day moorings along the River Avon proves unsuccessful by next October, despite the considerable length of riverbank owned by B&NES, then a mix of other solutions may be appropriate. For example: lengthen to 14-days some of the shorter mooring limits elsewhere, and/or B&NES could rent mooring spaces where fees are charged and make those moorings available at a subsidised rate for lower-income boaters until new suitable moorings become available or are created.

We strongly welcome the creation of a joint **River Warden** post with CRT. We ask that this post is filled soon, preferably starting this autumn to help implement the changes in Mead Lane.

The lack of management and enforcement has been a major problem during and since the mooring trial when 14-day moorings commenced. **The 14-day moorings should therefore only be re-started for March to October next year IF the proposed River Warden is in post.**

We look forward to working constructively with the new River Warden and with the B&NES officer responsible for protecting the Mead Lane riverbank.

CLLR. PHIL HARDING, 8.10.2020

(Recommendation by Officers to B&NES Cabinet listed overleaf for reference)

NOTE

RECOMMENDATION BY OFFICERS TO B&NES CABINET MEETING 8.10.2020

The Cabinet is asked to agree to:

- Reduce the number of moorings in the short/medium term, by implementing paragraphs 2.2. & 2.3, thereby increasing the amount of open space along Mead Lane
- Agree to a long-term aspiration to relocate moorings from Mead Lane
- Ensure that suitable alternative moorings are identified and in place prior to reducing further any moorings at Mead Lane
- To increase enforcement & engagement capacity

Specifically:

2.1 To work with Waterspace Partners to identify alternative sites for 14-day moorings along the watercourse and to request that it gives due consideration to the Opinion Research Survey assessment and findings, and

2.2 To remove the 48-hour moorings at Mead Lane from 1/11/20, on a permanent basis, this part of the riverbank to be reallocated as open space for other leisure purposes and

2.3 Agree to no 14-day moorings at Mead Lane, on a seasonal basis, during the time period 1 November until the end of February each year and

2.4 When the Waterspace Partnership programme of work and Opinion Research Survey assessment is complete (see 2.1 above), review the moorings on Mead Lane, with the aim that the total number of 14 day moorings available along the watercourse are not reduced, and

2.5 Create a joint River Warden post with the Canal and Rivers Trust (CRT)

2.6 Delegate future decisions on Mead Lane/moorings to the Cabinet Member for Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Environment and,

2.7 Request that the Cabinet Members for Transport and Director of Environment, in consultation with Avon and Somerset Police, review the parking restrictions along Mead Lane/Saltford
