

# Harbour Committee

## Agenda – Supplementary Dispatch



**Date:** Tuesday, 18 March 2025

**Time:** 3.30 pm

**Venue:** The Council Chamber, City Hall, College Green,  
Bristol, BS1 5TR

### **Distribution:**

**Councillors:** Andrew Brown (Chair), Patrick McAllister, Al Al-Maghrabi, Ani Stafford-Townsend,  
Kye Dudd

**Co-optees:** Kathryn Davis, Andy Brigden, Kevin Mowat, Will Stanley

**Various Officers**

**Issued by:** , Democratic Services  
City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR  
E-mail: [democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk)  
**Date:** Monday, 17 March 2025



# Agenda

## 5. Public Forum

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item.

**(Pages 3 - 29)**

Public Questions and Statements should be submitted via our webform:  
[www.bristol.gov.uk/publicforum](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/publicforum)

Petitions should be e-mailed to [democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk)

Questions - Written questions must be received 3 clear working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your question(s) must be received in this office at the latest by **5 pm on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025**. A maximum of three questions per person is permitted.

Petitions and Statements - Petitions and statements must be received on the two days prior to the meeting. For this meeting this means that your submission must be received in this office at the latest by **12.00 noon on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025**. A maximum of one statement per person is permitted.

Members of the press and public who plan to attend a public meeting at City Hall are advised that you will be required to sign in when you arrive and you will be issued with a visitor pass which you will need to display at all times.



QUESTIONS		QUESTIONS	
Question Number	Subject Matter	Name	All Speaking Unless Indicated
Qs 1, 2 and 3	Fees and Charges (Qs 1, 2 and 3)	John Sharman	
Q4	Insult Added to Injury - Harbour Mooring Policy (Q4)	Christina Hallett	Not Speaking
Qs 5 and 6	Accommodation Needs Assessment (Qs 5 and 6)	Trevor Gray	
Qs 7, 8 and 9	Location of Leisure Licences (Q7), Live Aboard Licences (Q8) and Short-Term Access Parking (Q9)	Maria Hernandez-Huentes	Not Speaking
Q10	Mooring Transfer Policy (Q10)	Mark Howkins	
Qs 11, 12 and 13	Advisory Nature of Harbour Committee (Q11), Transfer of Moorings (Q12), Tenders (Q13)	Samuel Macdonald	Not Speaking
Q14	Mooring Fees (Q14)	Jim Peterson	Not Speaking
Qs 15, 16 and 17	Previously Requested Documentation (Q15), Liveaboard Moorings on Club Moorings (Q16), Update on Fees and Charges and Club Discount (Q17)	Phoebe Arrowsmith-Brown	
Qs 18, 19 and 20	Acknowledgement That Clubs Manager Moorings (Q18), Mooring Classifications (Q19) and Invitation	Ben Ewing	

	Aboard our 140 Year Old Historic Light Ship John Sebastian (Q20)		
Q21	May Walk Path and Bridge (Q21)	TRESA cic	Not Speaking
Qs 22 and 23	Mooring Type – Draft Mooring Policy (Qs 22 and 23)	Molly Petts	
Qs 24, 25 and 26	Insufficient Evidence Used For Decision-Making (Q 24), Mooring Policy – Finding Solution For Sale of Vessels Within the Harbour (Q 25), Recommendation from Harbour Operation Review Report Not Being Actioned (Q 26)	Bristol Boaters Community Association	
<b>STATEMENTS</b>		<b>STATEMENTS</b>	
<b>Statement Number</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Speaking – Yes , No or Not Indicated</b>
S1	A More Flexible Approach to Mooring Transfer Policy	David Taylor	No
S2	Accommodation Needs Assessment	Trevor Gray	Yes
S3	Congratulations	Christina Hallett	No
S4	Ongoing Issue Of Speeding Boats	Allan Middleton	Yes

## **QUESTIONS 1, 2 AND 3 - SEE BELOW**

Name: Mr John Sharman

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 1: Benchmarking for Fee Increase

Question 1: Having been advised by the previous mayor that fees and charges in the harbour hadn't been reviewed for 20 years by the council, please can you confirm that more of an exercise was completed than the 2 tables comparing mooring rates only, which were provided to the stakeholder group.

**A: In addition to the bench marking tables provided, mooring fee reviews and bench marking comparisons were presented in the 'Savills - Bristol Docks Mooring Review 2020'.**

### Question 2: Benchmarking Information

Question 2: With regards to question 1 above (benchmarking), should there be more information available/completed by BCC, when will this be published and made public as promised/committed to at previous harbour committee meetings?

**A: The 'Savills – Bristol Docks Mooring Review 2020 has been made available to the Harbour Stakeholder Group.**

### Question 3: Benchmarking Review

Question 3: Should the answer to question 1 on benchmarking be no, there is no more information, then does the committee feel that due diligence was/has been completed to justify such an initial huge increase & for the fees to keep increasing above CPI year on year?

**A: N/A**

## QUESTION 4 – SEE BELOW

Name: Christina Hallett CBE

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 4: Insult Added to Injury

Question 4: It's clear Bristol City Council is bust financially and Council Tax is set to rise significantly plus service levels to be reduced (eg rubbish collections) across the city. Boaters have already suffered mooring fee increases higher than CPI/RPI with some fees are more than 200 % higher than previous years.

Question: would the new harbour committee be willing to soften the blow *and reduce the distress by asking the lawyers who wrote the impractical sentence 'The Harbour no longer allows transfer of moorings. Any sale of craft will require subsequent removal boat sold from the harbour'* discuss its meaning and wording with the harbour team and to bring some realism into the wording to address practicalities?

For example empty berths result in lost revenues - this is an unintended consequence. It's also impossible to move boats at the drop of a hat - some engines need overhaul for example. (Note for Lawyers who drafted the words above - please note licenses are issued to people not boats so word 'transfer' is misleading' . Just like car ownership, there needs to be a predictable process that the authority is accountable to. The harbour team have been doing a great job since end of December and will understand and be able to explain the unintended consequences). (Note to journalists - many historic boats are being lost from Bristol's heritage and key tourist attraction as an unintended consequence of this impractical new policy wording ).

**A: The vacated mooring will be allocated to vessels wishing to relocate in the first instance. If there is no-one wishing to relocate, the waiting list will be checked for a suitable vessel. If there is no suitable vessel, the new owner may apply to remain on the berth. If there is a suitable vessel on the waiting list, the new owner can apply for a mooring and join the list but must make arrangements to leave the harbour.**

**The Mooring Policy, procedures, licence conditions and fees will be reviewed and updated for 2026/27. This process will include**

**engagement with the Harbour Stakeholder Group, its members and Economy and Skills Committee approval.**

**All harbours experience a turnover of people leaving due to age, personal circumstances and no longer wishing to own a boat, Bristol is no exception.**

## QUESTIONS 5 AND 6 – SEE BELOW

Name: Trevor Gray

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 5: Accommodation Needs Assessment

Question 5: I previously asked as to when the Council would undertake an Accommodation Needs Assessment for boaters as required under Section 124 of The Housing & Planning Act 2016. The following response was given.

‘The Statutory Harbour Authority does not need to carry out an Accommodation Needs Assessment. As stated in the question, this maybe a requirement of the Council to do so. This should be directed towards the relevant department to carry this out’. The following are extracts from the Draft Mooring Policy 3.2 This policy is not a legal document, and the Council, as the Statutory Harbour Authority 4.3 The City Council, as Harbour Authority, is still legally obliged to maintain the harbour as navigable water Could the committee please explain how the SHA differs from that of the Council and how the SHA, which department is responsible for the SHA and when it will be undertaken please. The underling issue is that the Council as the SHA should have completed an ANA before pushing ahead with large scale fee and policy change, the ANA would have been a key component to ensuring they were well informed of the needs they needed to meet.

**A:**

**Bristol Harbour Authority is within the councils Management of Place Department which is a separate directorate to Housing Needs.**

**Bristol Harbour Authority does not carry out Accommodation Needs Assessments (ANAs).**

**To arrange a housing needs assessment with Bristol City Council, you can follow these steps:**

- 1. Register with HomeChoice Bristol: You need to be on the housing register. You can apply online through the HomeChoice Bristol website.**



- 2. Complete the Application:** Fill out the application form with all the necessary details about your current housing situation, household members, and any specific needs you have.
- 3. Provide Supporting Documents:** You may need to submit documents such as proof of identity, income, and any medical or support needs.
- 4. Assessment:** Once your application is submitted, it will be assessed based on your housing needs. This includes evaluating your current living conditions, any medical or welfare needs, and your eligibility for different types of housing.
- 5. Banding:** Your application will be placed in a priority band based on your level of need. The bands range from Band 1 (highest priority) to Band 4 (lowest priority).
- 6. Bidding for Properties:** After your assessment, you can start bidding for available properties that meet your needs through the HomeChoice Bristol system.

For more detailed information, you can visit the [Bristol City Council Housing Allocations Scheme](#) page 1

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If you have any specific questions or need assistance with the application process, you can contact Bristol City Council's Housing Advice Team directly.

#### Question 6: Transfer of Mooring

Question 6: Please could the committee give the rational for not allowing the transfer of licenses/moorings in the harbour. This policy is directly causing an increase in empty moorings and hardship on both boat owners and the SHA. It has been recently muted that boats could be sold within the harbour upon a satisfactory out of water survey and the introduction of an administrative fee, this would allow for both much needed revenue for the SHA and security for boat owners.

**A:**

**The sale of vessels does not include the right of the licence holder to transfer the associated mooring. This policy is stipulated in the mooring licences and designed to enable fair and equitable opportunity for all to have access to moorings. Moorings with transferrable rights attract a significant premium and enable more affluent purchaser to pay premiums on lower value boats and jump to the front of the queue. This and premiums of prices prevent average boat owners from accessing moorings in the harbour.**

**The vacated mooring will be allocated to vessels wishing to relocate in the first instance. If there is no-one wishing to relocate, the waiting list will be checked for a suitable vessel. If there is no suitable vessel, the new owner may apply to remain on the berth and there would be no need to leave the Harbour. If there is a suitable vessel on the waiting list, the new owner can apply for a mooring and will be placed on the list but must arrange to leave the harbour if there is no available berth.**

**All harbours expect a percentage of turnover of boats each year and Bristol is no exception.**

## **QUESTIONS 7, 8 AND 9 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Maria Hernandez-Fuentes

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 7: Location of Leisure Licences

Question 7: Point 9.5 of the draft Mooring policy states: Licenses are not for a specific location. In fact, so far they have been, there is a field in the license "Berth Ref" that is specific and unique for each vessel. Could the wording be changed in the mooring policy to reflect the reality of the licenses?

**A: The Berth Ref is the berth allocated to the vessel for leisure/live aboard licences at the time the licence is issued, however the Harbour reserves the right to be able to move vessels for operational purposes.**

### Question 8: Parking Spaces for Live Aboard Licenses

Question 8: Point 9.6 of the draft Mooring policy states: No car parking spaces will be allocated on the quayside. Could the wording in the policy be changed to a more amenable / helpful statement for live aboard licensees such as: Parking space could be allocated in a suitably space sufficiently near to the vessel; this will be agreed in discussion between the Licensee and the Harbour Authority. We think the policy should reflect the future relationship between licensees and Harbour Authority in general, and therefore aim to be facilitating, rather than limited to current provisions.

**A: The Harbour Authority has a number of waterside areas across the estate with limited designated spaces that are available to all Mooring Licence holders for the purpose of loading and unloading associated with use of the vessels. Long term parking is available through pay and display.**

### Question 9: Short-Term Access Parking

Question 9: Point 9.6 on draft mooring policy also states: Occasional vehicle access for servicing vessels is possible in most locations, with short-term access passes issued. Would the short-term access time limit be negotiated with Licensees so that is really suitable to facilitate servicing works and family access?. i.e; longer than 30 mins would be helpful.

**A: 30 minutes parking is provided for loading as an unloading provision. Longer term parking is available at on street parking bays and nearby off street pay and display car parks.**

## **QUESTION 10 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Mark Howkins

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 10: Mooring Transfer Policy

Question 10: Recent changes to policy have prevented the transfer of moorings upon sale of a vessel without HM intervention or review. The result is the loss of many beautiful and historic vessels from the harbour and ever increasing empty moorings (60+) and associated loss in revenue of circa. £150k. In addition, recent mooring price increases and cost of living have made the harbour unattractive and unaffordable to the general public. Would the committee now consider it is time to review the transfer of moorings policy, putting it back at the discretion of the harbour master in order to maintain effective mooring occupancy and associated revenue, whilst also ensuring that suitable and historic vessels remain in the harbour?

**A: All harbours expect a percentage of turnover of boats each year and Bristol is no exception.**

**The sale of vessels does not include the right of the licence holder to transfer the associated mooring. This policy is stipulated in the mooring licences and designed to enable fair and equitable opportunity for all to have access to moorings. Moorings with transferrable rights attract a significant premium and enables the more affluent purchaser to pay premiums on lower value boats and bypass any waiting list. This and premiums of prices prevent average boat owners from accessing moorings in the harbour.**

**The mooring vacated by the sale of the vessel will be allocated to vessels wishing to relocate in the first instance.**

**If there is no-one wishing to relocate, the waiting list will be checked for a suitable vessel.**

**If there is no suitable vessel, the new owner may apply to remain on the berth and there would be no need to leave the Harbour.**

**If there is a suitable vessel on the waiting list, the new owner can apply for a mooring and will be placed on the list but must arrange to leave the harbour if there is no available berth.**

## **QUESTIONS 11, 12 AND 13 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Samuel Macdonald

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 11: Advisory Nature of Harbour Committee

Question 11: It continues to be clear from both constitution, minutes and agendas that the harbour committee has no power to make decisions and therefore does not govern the harbour. For example, all agenda items for the march meeting are 'for information' and the key decisions of fee increases and mooring policy are being made by other council committees. In the light of this, I ask again, why has bristol council chosen not to implement the expectations of the port good governance document that municipal harbours be governed (ie have decision making powers) by a committee that acts in the interest of harbour stakeholders, acknowledging that it is not legally required to do so, but highlighting that it is legally required to set out its reasons for refusing to meet this department for transport expectation, a requirement that it has so far failed to meet?

**A: The Harbour Committee is a sub committee of Economy and Skills and will refer all key decisions to that committee with a recommendation. The Harbour Committee and Economy and Skills Committee share the same chair.**

**All arrangements have been scrutinised by our independent Designated Person (DP). The DP's role is set out in the Port Marine Safety Code and the Guide to Good Practice in Port Marine Operations. They audit all aspects of how the harbour is run including how the committee is set up, and stakeholder engagement arrangements. The DP has signed us off as meeting requirements.**

**Section 4.4 of the Ports Good Governance Guidance states:**

***LA owned ports also operate within the governance and decision making structure of the overall decision making structure of the LA.***

### Question 12: Transfer of Moorings

Question 12: I asked at the last committee meeting how the new policy on the transfer of moorings was in the interest of stakeholders. The response

did not address my question, particularly as at present the policy appears to be causing a loss of revenue for the council as moorings have been left unused for significant periods following the sale of a boat. I ask again, how is the proposed policy on the transfer of moorings in the best interest of harbour stakeholders, including in the answer any positive feedback on the policy that the council has received from stakeholders and how this compares to the amount of negative feedback?

**A: The sale of vessels does not include the right of the licence holder to transfer the associated mooring. This policy is stipulated in the mooring licences and designed to enable fair and open opportunity for all to have access to moorings and any potential buyer may apply for a mooring in Bristol Harbour.**

**The vacated mooring will be allocated to vessels wishing to relocate in the first instance. If there is no-one wishing to relocate, the waiting list will be checked for a suitable vessel.**

**If there is no suitable vessel, the new owner may apply to remain on the berth.**

**If a suitable vessel is on the waiting list, the new owner can apply for a mooring and join the waiting list but must make arrangements to leave the harbour.**

**All harbours experience a turnover of people leaving due to age, personal circumstances and no longer wishing to own a boat, Bristol is no exception.**

#### Question 13: Tenders

Question 13: In the public forum of the July meeting, the committee stated it would look into the possibility of allowing berth holders to store tenders alongside their boats. Can I please ask for an update on this, and how the current prohibition on this sits alongside the stated aim to increase recreational use of boats in the harbour?

**A: Tenders are permitted to be stored on the mother vessel and not in the water. Vessel owners wishing to use them must apply for a navigation licence and hold the relevant insurance. Tenders are not permitted to be kept in the water.**



## **QUESTION 14 - SEE BELOW**

Name: Jim Peterson

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 14: Mooring Fees

Question 14: The minutes of the November meeting state as an action that 'draft minutes referred to policy committee team for reference to strategy and resources policy committee'. The current minutes do not outline that the large response from stakeholders was overwhelmingly against the suggested fee increases, backed up by many reasonable arguments as to the difficulties and unfairness of the proposed increases. The minutes also include considerable detail relative to other comments from a council official, that appear to dismiss the vast majority of stakeholder feedback. Could the committee please outline exactly what will be sent to the strategy and policy committee as a note of both stakeholder feedback and the comments of the harbour committee on the proposed fee increases, and give its reassurance that the overwhelmingly negative response from stakeholders to the proposals will be made clear to the committee and that the comments from a council official that ignore the stakeholder engagement are not presented as the views of the committee itself?

**A: The Harbour Stakeholder Group (HSG) feedback to the Committee and Action are available on the Harbour Committee webpages.**

## **QUESTIONS 15, 16 AND 17 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Phoebe Arrowsmith-Brown

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 15: Previously Requested Documentation

Question 15: In previous Harbour committee's and stakeholder group meetings it has been repeatedly requested that the council Publicize the full Harbour Review, including all the appendices and copies of referenced documents within. These documents are required by stakeholders so we can understand the foundations of decisions being made and help offer a balanced view to stakeholders expected to feed into the committee system. Multiple officers, including the Director, manager of place have stated these documents shall all be made available; however, they have not been forthcoming. Please acknowledge if these documents have been made available to the Harbour Committee and explain why they have not yet been made available to the stakeholders, and when stakeholders can expect to see them.

**A: The documents referred to have been provided to the Harbour Stakeholder Group to circulate to their members.**

### Question 16:- Liveaboard Moorings On Club Moorings

Question 16: Mooring policy 13.1 states that clubs 'will not be permitted to accept applications for live aboard moorings. Liveaboard moorings are an important part of the community all around the harbour and among other positives, they help with the security of local moorings. I understand that it is not the role of a club to offer liveaboard moorings, however when an active club member would like the ability to reside on their vessel on club moorings, does the Harbour Authority accept that liveaboard moorings are appropriate on club managed moorings and something that is possible?

**A: Live Aboard moorings are permitted on club moorings, however the application for these must be made through the Harbour Office and not through the club. Live Aboard licences are limited, and the application process must be fair to any persons applying.**

### Question 17- Update On Fees and Charges and Club Discount

Question 17: In the Harbour Stakeholder Action Plans, it states an ongoing action highlighted in yellow of: 'Ongoing - Harbour Team to look at fees and charges for various mooring locations.' Cabot Cruising Club owns and maintains its own pontoon electricity, lighting, water and access control. The maintenance of which costs the club money. Funding for which in part came from the offset of club mooring discount. Berth holders contributed this discount to the club for maintenance of club facilities. Since the removal of the club discount and council breaching its own pontoon maintenance agreement with the club, our maintenance programs have been put on hold. Please may the Harbour Committee update us of progress of the Harbour team looking at fees and charges and consider reinstating our club discount so we can continue with our maintenance program.

**A: Bristol City Council are unable to offer discounts for club members. The club vessel "John Sebastian" is currently charged at a leisure mooring rate and not a commercial rate. Historic vessels should be encouraged; however, charges will apply.**

## **QUESTIONS 18, 19 AND 20 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Ben Ewing

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 18:- Acknowledgement That Clubs Manage Moorings

Question 18: The boating clubs welcome the acknowledgement that they manage our own moorings; however, the details of this arrangement need to be finalised in policy and included in mooring licence agreements. Will the Harbour committee commit to working closely with the boating Clubs to ensure any policy is in the best interest of the recognised boat Clubs with moorings in Bristol harbour.

**A: The Harbour Authority is committed to engaging with boating clubs to review and update mooring licence agreements and responsibilities for maintenance of facilities.**

### Question 19: Mooring Classifications

Question 19: Cabot Cursing Club is a not-for-profit Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC), the custodians of a Bristol Built 140-year-old Historic Light Ship, the John Sebastian, and our Club is continually run entirely by Volunteers for 90 years. Our Club ship, The John Sebastian, moored on John Sebastain Quay has been in Bathurst Basin for 65 years and is the hub of our community. We used to work closely with the council and often hosted the Lord Mayor including the beating of the bounds. Please can the Council keep these facts in mind when considering Courtesy and Historic Mooring (Moorings Policy 9.14)

**A: These facts are noted and will be considered.**

### Question 20:- Invite Aboard Our 140 Year Old Historic Light Ship John Sebastian

Question 20: Cabot Cruising Club and committee would like to invite members of the Harbour Committee and council officers aboard the John Sebastian. We are open on Thursday evenings from 20:00. Please will you come and visit us?

**A: This invitation is noted.**

## **QUESTION 21 – SEE BELOW**

Name: TRESAcic

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 21: May Walk Path and Bridge

Question 21: Please can you provide an update on repairs to the May Walk path and bridge, including an anticipated opening date

**A: This wall is not a Harbour asset. BCC Highways are arranging emergency repairs. There is currently no fixed date for completion of this work. The council will communicate updates on when the work is due to be complete and the pathway re-opening in due course.**

## QUESTIONS 22 AND 23 – SEE BELOW

Name: Molly Petts

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 22: Mooring Type (Draft Mooring Policy)

Question 22: Longer term licences (leases) are a hugely desirable and valuable mooring provision, however the draft policy states ‘it is unlikely that further residential licences will be granted’. Will the committee please discuss the importance of continuing to offer longer term licences/leases in the areas with historic planning permission for residential use (Wapping Wharf and Welsh Back), not only due to the desirability to boaters due to the security this would offer, but also for the benefits to the council and to preserve the character and established uses of these areas?

**A: We do not offer residential leases. Bristol Harbour operates an annual liveaboard licence. Bristol has only offered annual liveaboard licences since 2023. This ensures that moorings are available to all.**

### Question 23: Mooring Type (Draft Mooring Policy)

Question 23: There are many houseboats currently within the Harbour which are unable to meet the terms with the new Liveaboard licence. The Fishers report advises that leases should be offered to houseboats (‘a floating decked structure which: is designed, or adapted, for use solely as a place of permanent habitation. does not have the means of, and which is not capable of, being readily adapted for, self-propulsion’ - HMRC). Will the committee reconsider the type of mooring options available to include appropriate licensing for houseboats?

**A: We are unaware of any liveaboard that cannot meet the terms of the licence. We advise anyone struggling to contact us directly. Bristol Harbour has never issued leases for residential only licences. Residential leases were controlled by Property Services.**

## **QUESTIONS 24. 25 AND 26 – SEE BELOW**

Name: Bristol Boaters Community Association

Committee: Harbour Committee

### Question 24: Insufficient Evidence Used For Decision-Making

Question 24: Regarding Item 7.a - Stakeholder Group Actions Reference log - SHG - A - 002 Decision log - SHG - D -002. Bristol Boater Community Association and Stakeholder Group have asked for a copy of the benchmarking study. Actioned 17.01.25 It is felt that the quality of information provided as evidence to justify the decision to increase the fees and charges 2023 is poor. This decision has significant effects directly on the community, which is compounded with further fee increases and by the change of mooring policy prohibiting the sale of vessels within the harbour, leading to increasing vacant berths, reducing income for the Council. This decision appears to have been made with insufficient consideration to the effects on harbour users and incomparable evidence. Is the information emailed from the harbour office really the only evidence used to set and approve the Fees and Charges schedule of 2023 or is there further information in the Savilles report which we have been requesting to see? If so please can we see this report.

**A: The bench marking information provided is what the Harbour Authority have on file. The Savills - Bristol Docks Mooring Review (2020) has recently been made available to the Harbour Stakeholder Group for distribution to its members.**

### Question 25: Mooring Policy - Finding Solution for Sale of Vessels Within The Harbour

Question 25: The harbour master has the discretion to allow vessels to sell within the harbour and the new owner to take on a new licence with the Authority, (as long as everything is in place and suitable) However the new mooring policy is prohibitive to this common practice, resulting in vacant berths, erosion of community and lack of investment in remaining vessels. To enable the sale of suitable vessels and new mooring agreements to be realised by having harbour masters discretion returned, backed up by suitable fit for purpose and reasonable policy- How can we progress on this issue and realise a solution which can benefit the harbour?

**A: The sale of vessels does not include the right of the licence holder to transfer the associated mooring. This policy is stipulated in the mooring licences and designed to enable fair and open opportunity for all to have access to moorings and any potential buyer may apply for a mooring in Bristol Harbour.**

**The vacated mooring will be allocated to vessels wishing to relocate in the first instance. If there is no-one wishing to relocate, the waiting list will be checked for a suitable vessel. If there is no suitable vessel, the new owner may apply to remain on the berth and here would be no need to leave the harbour. If there is a suitable vessel on the waiting list the new owner will have the option to apply for another mooring and join the list but must make arrangements to leave the harbour if none are available.**

**The Mooring Policy, procedures, licence conditions and fees will be reviewed and updated for 2026/27. This process will include engagement with the Harbour Stakeholder Group, its members and Economy and Skills Committee approval.**

**All Harbours expect and welcome percentage turnover of boats each year and Bristol is no exception.**

Question 26: Recommendation From Harbour Operation Review Report Not Being Actioned

Question 26: A recommendation from the Fishers Harbour Operational Review Report detailed an uplift in the fees to a maximum of 70% of average market rate levels phased in over a number of years to take into account the substandard boater's facility in most mooring areas. Why was this particular recommendation not actioned, and it deemed acceptable to continue to pile on consecutive above inflationary increases?

**A: Recommendations from the Harbour Operational Review Report were consider when setting mooring fees. 2025/26 mooring fees and charges have been set by the via the Council Committee decision making processes.**



## **STATEMENT NUMBER S1**

Name: David Taylor

Committee: Harbour Committee

Statement title: A more flexible approach to Mooring Transfer Policy

Statement: Re; the wording in the proposed policy saying. The “harbour authority no longer allows the transfer of moorings” Hopefully there can be some leeway between a “right” to transfer moorings (which seems to be the target of the new policy - something no-one expects or asks for) and being given the opportunity to, if certain criteria are met. This needn’t be a black or white issue as it hurts both parties; the council lose out on potential commission/income (eg a 5-10% levy on sales) and boaters lose by being denied a practice standard to most other harbours and marinas that enables boat sales. Criteria might include: agreeing a sale price (to prevent profiteering on moorings) interview with prospective buyer, boat condition and safety checks (already standard for licensing renewals so no extra work) and if those are satisfied then the boat owner should be given the opportunity to transfer the mooring to the new buyer. As it is, boats are being left unsold and uncared for and no new boats are coming in; the current policy is clearly detrimental to the council, boat owners and prospective buyers, and the vibe of the harbour as a whole. I urge the committee to reconsider this policy, thank you.

## STATEMENT NUMBER S2

Name: Trevor Gray

Committee: Harbour Committee

Statement title: Transfer of mooring policy

Statement: I'd firstly like to express my thanks to all those in the Council, especially those within the SHA, to the recent improvements within the harbour and communication with stakeholders. I'd like to suggest the following adoption of policy around the transfer of vessels. At a time when the Council repeatedly states its need of income I fail to see how enforcing the proposed policy of non transfer of licenses helps either the Council or boat owners. It's increasing frustrating as a boat owner to see the harbour emptying of boats, whilst fees rise above inflation to try and break even, whilst ignoring a highly viable revenue stream that benefits both parties. The Council as the owner of the mooring should benefit from the sale of vessels occupying that mooring, the following proposal ensures that benefit is felt by the SHA. Transfer of benefit of leisure or Live aboard license Proposal: Future licenses to be in 'Vessels' name, therefore transferable. Upon sale of a vessel the continued use of the current license is permitted upon the payment of a flat administrative fee of £1000, paid by the new owner directly to the HA upon signing of license. The transfer of license is subject to the Vessel being of a condition that is agreeable with the HA's terms of sale, a requirement being that all vessels must undertake an out of water survey before any transfer, alongside all terms of any offered license being met. Adopting this policy in simply terms generates £100,000 after 100 boat sales, paid directly to the harbour authority, therefore providing security for boat owners and much needed revenue for the harbour. It must also be noted that the current policy of forcing live aboard vessels to leave the harbour whilst then allowing a leisure license to enjoy that same mooring has a highly negative effect on income generated. Sale of Residential License and Mooring: The Council's seems to have the concern that the continued benefit of a mooring and long term residential lease overly inflates the value of a vessel and that upon the sale of the vessel there is no additional financial benefit to the Harbour finances. This policy proposal is intended to mitigate that concern, bringing both income to the Harbour Authority whilst providing security to residential boat owners. PROPOSAL: To continue limited areas of the harbour (those with

planning permission for the USE) to offer long term Residential leases. Whilst the historic 25yr term may be deemed unpalatable to BCC its therefore suggested offering 15yr leases. Add a clause to the current residential lease agreements that a 5% 'Sales Commission' fee (a form of stamp duty) of the vessels sale price is paid directly to the Harbour Authority upon each and every sale of the vessel. Upon a vessel being sold for £200,000 this would generate an income via Sales Commission of £10,000, paid directly to the Harbour Authority. Invoke the 5yr break clause in the current historical residential licenses, offer renewed long term leases whilst renegotiating current below market annual mooring fees and adding a Sales Commission clause. This would help solve the issue of current residential lease holders being unable to sell their vessels, caused due to uncertainty of potential new owners being able to renew leases, whilst also generating immediate income from Sales Commission and increased mooring fees. Its acknowledged that a vessel with a long term residential lease subsequently benefits from an overly inflated valuation in monetary terms, therefore its acceptable to realise that as the lease period decreases so does the valuation and any potential Sales Commission. At the point the lease expires the vessel resumes its basic market rate (value without lease or mooring), therefore reducing the commission payable. This makes the case for lease renegotiation before point of sale, being in the interests of both the Harbour Authority and boat owner.

### **STATEMENT NUMBER S3**

Name: Christina Hallett CBE

Committee: Harbour Committee

Statement title: Congratulations

Statement: I would like to congratulate the Harbour Committee - there have been noticeable positive changes around the harbour since later December and generally a more positive feeling. To name a few of the positive changes: 1) winter moorings have been filled which clearly generates more revenue (in the past years these have remained empty) 2) the harbour team sent a warm Christmas greeting to boaters. 3) facilities meetings have taken place 4) the Ebenezer has been moved 5) Underfall is back in business after the fire 6) shower and toilet blacks are cleaner with the new contractors. 7) some improvements already in some facilities and security. Plus more. It would be great if the Harbour Committee can sustain this feeling of a more positive engagement and help facilitate an ongoing dialogue with boaters whilst at same time raising revenues.

## **STATEMENT NUMBER S4**

Name: Allan Middleton

Committee: Harbour Committee

Statement title: Ongoing Issue Of Speeding Boats

Statement: There is an ongoing issue of speeding boats in the Harbour. These speeding boats make a wake which causes moored boats to rock violently. In the past boaters have been thrown into the water due to this wake. The wake causes damage to the boats & pontoons due to the violent movement of the boats affected by the wake. Environmentally these wakes are causing banks to be eroded as well as damaging wildlife in and around the water. Several complaints over many years have been made to the Harbour Office & Councillors about this issue, but nothing has changed. The main offenders are the rowing clubs & more recently the Yellow Ferries.