

Management Committee

August 2017

Weymouth Seafront Public Toilet Improvements

For Decision

Briefholders

Cllr Kate Wheller, Community Facilities

Cllr Jeff Cant, Finance and Assets

Cllr Christine James, Social Inclusion

Senior Leadership Team Contact

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

Report Author

Sarah Cairns, Interim Head of Assets and Infrastructure

Statutory Authority

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Purpose of Report

- 1 Following a recent report by the British Toilets Association various improvements to the toilet provision along Weymouth seafront have been identified. This report is to request the allocation of reserves in order to improve these facilities

Recommendations

- 2
 - (a) To allocate £400,000 from reserves already set aside for one off projects to improve public toilet facilities along Weymouth Seafront
 - (b) To support the introduction of charges in some of the seafront toilets
 - (c) To delegate to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Finance and Assets and Community Facilities briefholders, authority to decide the exact location and provision of improved toilet provision in the central seafront area including the opportunity for private investment and to progress with such works
 - (d) To progress the feasibility of a Community Toilet Scheme whereby local private and commercial businesses join the scheme and allow members of the public to use toilets in their premises, and report back to Management Committee the outcome for a decision

Reason for Decision

- 3 The current toilet provision whilst adequate in number and location is now dated and are not providing suitable accessible facilities. The request for

an allocation from reserves will allow for the upgrading of the seafront facilities

Background and Reason Decision Needed

- 4 WPBC commissioned the British Toilet Association (BTA) to carry out a full review of the toilets along the Weymouth seafront from Lodmoor to the Peninsula. Their report is attached at Appendix A.
5. The toilets that they reviewed were
 - Overcombe
 - Lodmoor Car park
 - Greenhill Gardens
 - Pier Bandstand
 - King's Statue
 - Alexandra Gardens
 - Peninsula – temporary toilets
6. Whilst the report concludes that the locations and numbers of toilets are adequate it also shows that investment is required to bring the condition of these toilets up to an acceptable level.
- 7 One of the main recommendations is the provision of a new toilet block in the central seafront area near The King's Statue. Feasibility work will need to be carried out to determine the best solution for this location. Any solution will need to be at ground level and provide good accessibility for all. The cost of the provision of new toilets will be dependent upon the solution chosen. This will be the primary call on the £400,000 allocation.
- 8 The condition and cleanliness of the remaining toilets needs to be improved. It is anticipated that an investment programme to upgrade these tired facilities will be developed and implemented by 2019. This will include cleansing both inside and around the facilities. The improvements will be prioritised in line with the action plan attached at Appendix B, once it is known how much the new facility mentioned above will cost
- 9 One of the main issues that seafront toilets face is members of the public washing sand off after visiting the beach. This causes the drainage to become blocked and results in increased maintenance costs. Water is provided along the beach for this purpose by the means of standpipes. Some of the allocation will be spent in improving signage to the water pipes and introducing a publicity campaign, along with general improvements to toilet signage along the seafront.
- 10 The BTA report suggests that WPBC could introduce charging for toilets along the seafront. Many other resorts and city centres already do this, with charges ranging from 20p to £1 per visit. The monies raised from such charges would go towards cleaning and maintenance of the facilities. It has also been shown that where facilities are charged for the risk of vandalism and damage is reduced. Briefholders will be consulted on which toilet blocks could be allocated for possible payment facilities and the sum of money to be charged.

- 11 The temporary toilets located outside The Pavilion were included as part of the BTA review. Their opinion was that these toilets are well positioned and should be retained, and that The Council should consider the use of additional temporary toilets to cover peak demand periods.
- 12 A number of local businesses could be approached to participate in a community toilet scheme. Some work is required to identify and approach such businesses. The scheme would require some management once initiated to make sure reasonable standards are maintained and the facilities are promoted to the benefit of the town

Implications

13 Financial

Whilst the construction of a new toilet block is likely to qualify as capital expenditure, until a scheme is finalised this cannot be confirmed, therefore the request is to allocate revenue reserves to enable the project to be started. If, once more details are confirmed, capital receipts are an appropriate source of funding, then the funding could be switched to capital and the amount of reserves allocated reduced. Both capital receipts and revenue will be one off sources of funding and once they are allocated they cannot be used for other projects. The use of this funding will result in a reduction of investment income of approximately £16,000 per annum.

Temporary units either used during peak demand times or for evening use could be chargeable with the provider of these units taking the revenue raised in exchange for providing the units at no cost to the Council

14 Equalities

Currently the underground toilets are not fully accessible to all. The provision of a new toilet block near the King's statue will improve this situation. Any temporary units bought in will need to be fully accessible including appropriate signage. The Social Inclusion briefholder will be consulted on access issues and any other matters that could be seen as a barrier.

15 Risk Management

The risk of not upgrading the existing facilities is that it will deter visitors from coming to Weymouth beach. There is a real reputational risk from having inadequate and dirty facilities.

If there are not enough toilets located in the appropriate place there is an increased risk of members of the public urinating and fouling in the street. This will be a public health as well as a reputational risk for WPBC

16 Human Resources

There will be a necessity to manage a community toilet scheme if introduced. This could be the responsibility of the Town Centre Manager

Consultation and Engagement

Appendices

Appendix A – British Toilet Association report

Appendix B – Action Plan

Footnote

Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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APPENDIX B
ACTION PLAN

Location	Condition	Accessible	24hr	Recommendation	Priority
Overcombe	Good	Y	N	Retain	3
Lodmoor	Poor	Y	Y	Deep Clean	1
				Full refurbishment	2
				Investigate introduction of charging	1
				Link to local businesses for monitoring and fault reporting	1
Greenhill Gardens	Inaccessible	N	N	Close and relocate	2
				Or Temporary Units	2
Pier Bandstand	Insufficient number	Y	N	Monitor usage when other priority 1 improvements are implemented	1
Kings Statue	Inaccessible	Y	Y	Provide new toilet block Investigate introduction of charging Investigate feasibility of attendant or link to local business for monitoring	1
Alexandra Gardens	Good	Y	N	Investigate and improve drainage	2
				Improve signage	1
				Investigate provision of additional facilities on site	2
Pavilion	Good	Y	N	Retain until Peninsula redevelopment	3
				Improve signage	1
				Improve cleaning	1
The Promenade	NA	Y	N	Introduce toilets incorporated into café/retail units	3
Community Toilet Scheme	NA	NA	?	Investigate feasibility of introducing a scheme	1
Signage	NA	NA	NA	Improve signage on location maps and generally	1
External Provision	NA	Y	?	Introduce modern franchised out kiosks at intervals along the promenade for peak season	1
Beach standpipes	NA	NA	NA	Survey and carry out any minor repairs	1
				Improve signage	1

