

Title of Report: Review of Public Convenience Service Provision for the Derry City and Strabane District Council area	Officer Presenting: Director of Health and Community Author: Head of Health and Community Wellbeing
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 To seek members' approval of the recommendations of the Working Group tasked with reviewing the current provision of public conveniences in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area (DCSDC).

2 Background

- 2.1 A Working Group consisting of Elected Members and Council Officers was established in April 2017 to undertake a review of public convenience provision within the Council area. A Terms of Reference and Action Plan was prepared and agreed by the group which incorporated the following areas:

- Provision of public conveniences in Council area (Council and non-council owned)
- British Toilet Association -Inspector reports (ES208/14)
- Condition Survey of council owned facilities
- Automated toilets
- Community Toilet Scheme
- Changing Places toilet facilities

- 2.2 Retailers and commercial properties play a significant role in helping local areas achieve the current level of provision. There are approximately 400 businesses including restaurants, cafes, hotels, public houses, shopping centres and supermarkets in the council area which allow the public access to their premises. Other public and private organisations also allow the public access to their premises.

3 Key Issues

3.1 The aim of the review was to seek to improve public access to better quality, clean and safe public toilets across the Council area. This would be achieved through:

- Implementing a Community Toilet Scheme across the Council area (target of 20 participating businesses in year 1).
- Carrying out improvement works to a number of public conveniences owned by Council.
- The provision of 1 or 2 'Changing Places' facilities which meet current best practice and provide leading accessible facilities for those with disabilities.

3.2 The recommendations of the Working Group as outlined in Appendix 1 include:-

3.2.1. Implement a Community Toilet Scheme with approximately 20 businesses participating (Year 1)

3.2.2. Retain existing Council toilet facilities in Strabane, Sion Mills, Plumbridge, Barnes Gap and Moirlough

3.2.3. Explore the feasibility of changing the location of the existing toilets in Donemana to an alternative Council site

3.2.4. Close Council public conveniences at Cranagh

3.2.5. Keep Claudy and Newtownstewart public conveniences closed

3.2.6. Close automatic toilets in Castlederg and Victoria Market

3.2.7. Upgrade/replace existing facilities at Barnes Gap and Moirlough

3.2.8. Examine the feasibility of providing a permanent Council toilet facility at Castle Site in Castlederg

3.2.9. Carry out any necessary maintenance/ refurbishment works to toilets retained by Council

3.2.10. Explore the feasibility of providing a Changing Places facility in the Strabane area as part of any future public or private capital project

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement and other Implications

- 4.1 Current council owned facilities are included as part of the rates estimates process. A number of the recommendations subject to approval will require to be included in the capital projects and service budgets and formally agreed with council. It is anticipated that savings as a result of some of the recommendations will help finance others such as the Community Toilet Scheme and improvements to those public conveniences retained. A further report will be presented to Committee with accurate cost for the implementation of the recommendations approved by council.
- 4.2 If council decides to provide a Changing Place facility there will be capital costs involved and other related costs such as promotion of the facility in addition to the annual running costs.
- 4.3 If council agrees to proceed with a Community Toilet Scheme there will be financial costs associated with the implementation and management of the scheme and annual review of participants in the scheme. The introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme will involve a partnership between Council and the local business community with Council making a financial contribution to participating businesses in return for the businesses making their toilet facilities available to members of the public. A proposed annual payment structure for participating businesses is outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.4 A number of businesses from across the City and District have expressed an interest in participating in a Community Toilet Scheme. The working group have taken the location of these businesses into consideration when determining whether those businesses could either complement or replace existing facilities.
- 4.5 The working group have recommended that the public conveniences located at Strabane, Sion Mills and Plumbridge be retained and that necessary maintenance/refurbishment works be carried out to improve the standard of provision. It is estimated these works will cost approximately £20,000.
- 4.6 The public conveniences situated at both Claudy and Newtownstewart are currently closed. The working group also recommend closure of those located at Cranagh which are in close proximity to the public conveniences in Plumbridge.
- 4.7 If Council agrees to the recommendations for toilet closure, there will be associated costs including potential human resource costs relating to the staff involved in the day to day cleaning and related duties. Subject to council's decision the human resource implications will be addressed by the Lead Human Resources Officer.

- 4.8 Initial expressions of interest in the proposed Community Toilet Scheme from businesses in Newtown Stewart and Claudy will incur expenditure of approximately £1,200 per year, with this figure increasing should more businesses participate in the Scheme.
- 4.9 With the proposed closure of the automatic toilets at Victoria Market, and Castlederg there will be a financial saving to Council of approximately £30,000 per year. Council have a contract with a private company which manage and operate these facilities. Expressions of interest to date from local businesses to join the proposed Community Toilet Scheme in these areas will involve expenditure of approximately £2,500 per year. This figure will increase should more businesses participate in the proposed Scheme.

5 Recommendations

5.1 That Council approves the following recommendations:-

- 5.1.1. Implement a Community Toilet Scheme using the criteria outlined in the application, agreement and associated payment structure outlined in Appendices 2, 3 and 4
- 5.1.2. Retain existing Council toilet facilities in Strabane, Sion Mills, Plumbridge, Barnes Gap and Moorlough
- 5.1.3. Upgrade/replace existing facilities at Barnes Gap and Moorlough
- 5.1.4. Explore the feasibility of changing the location of the existing toilets in Donemana to an alternative Council site in the village
- 5.1.5. Close Council public conveniences in Cranagh
- 5.1.6. Keep public conveniences at Claudy and Newtown Stewart closed
- 5.1.7. Close automatic toilets in Castlederg and Victoria Market
- 5.1.8. Examine the feasibility of providing a permanent Council toilet facility at Castle Site in Castlederg
- 5.1.9. Carry out any necessary maintenance/ refurbishment works to toilets retained by Council
- 5.1.10. Explore the feasibility of providing a Changing Places facility in the Strabane area as part of any future public or private capital project

Background Papers

Appendix 1: Report of Working Group

Appendix 2: Proposed Community Toilet Payment schedule

Appendix 3: Application form for businesses seeking to join the Community Toilet Scheme

Appendix 4: Agreement between Council and businesses participating in the Community Toilet Scheme