

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Environment and Community		
DATE:			
TITLE:	Public Toilet Review		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Development		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Housing and Community		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Nathan Johnson/John Hussey		
OPEN		WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	Yes/No Dependent on Panel views

REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:
Review arrangements for provision of public toilets including charging for toilets. Consider value of public toilets to the community and to the retail and tourism offer of the area.
KEY ISSUES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a budget gap to meet in the next five years – cost of public toilets is £374,000 per annum. • The Council generates substantial revenue from charging for services. With regard to public toilets, many of these are within or adjacent to car parks. • Some toilets are provided for a very local use or adjacent to parking that is generating income for third parties.
OPTIONS CONSIDERED:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current arrangements. • Close or transfer of costs. • Charging for toilets.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
The current arrangements for provision of toilets on car parks and amenities be retained. Consideration be given to alternative options for other toilets not linked to car parks or amenities.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:
Maintain the service provision but contribute to Council budget savings targets.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

1.1 The Borough Council operates 22 toilet blocks across the Council's area. A large proportion of the toilets are connected with car parks, transport hubs and resort locations operated by the Council with a few others on miscellaneous sites. Locations are shown on the attached maps.

1.2 Provision of public toilets is not a statutory responsibility for the Council. A report by the BBC earlier in the year noted;

- At least 1,782 facilities have closed across the UK in the last decade, Freedom of Information requests found.
- Ten areas, including Newcastle, Merthyr Tydfil in south Wales and Wandsworth in south London, now have no council-run public toilets at all, data showed.
- The Local Government Association said councils were trying to keep toilets open but faced squeezed budgets.
- Public toilets have existed on UK High Street for more than 150 years but there is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide toilets, meaning they are often closed down if councils feel they cannot afford the upkeep.
- Raymond Martin, of the British Toilet Association, said providing toilets was about health, wellbeing, equality and social inclusion.

1.3 Many councils have introduced charging for public toilets with mixed results. Factors to consider include nationally it is estimated that running toilets costs councils over £100million while earning only £4.5million in income.

1.4 Both Age UK and the BTA (British Toilet Association) have expressed concern that the loss of public toilets becomes an increasing problem for people with medical conditions, older people, people with disabilities, pregnant ladies and families.

https://www.brunel.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/148792/Publicly-Accessible-Toilets.pdf

1.5 The public toilets operated by the council are detailed below. Those adjacent to a Car Park are identified by (CP) and those adjacent to a fee paying amenity by (A). Seasonal toilets are identified by *

1.5.1 King's Lynn

St James' Multi-Storey	CP	2 Mens	2 Ladies	1 Disabled
Vancouver Bus Station	CP	4 Mens	6 Ladies	1 Disabled
Baker Lane	CP	3 Mens	6 Ladies	1 Disabled
Ferry Street	CP	3 Mens	6 Ladies	1 Disabled
Walks Management	A	2 Mens	2 Ladies	1 Disabled
Walks Broadwalk	A	1 Mens	1 Ladies	1 Disabled
Gaywood		2 Mens	3 Ladies	1 Disabled

1.5.2 Hunstanton

Seagate	CP*	6 Mens	8 Ladies	1 Disabled
Cliff Top (Leased)	CP*	4 Mens	6 Ladies	1 Disabled
Central/Bus Station	CP	3 Mens	4 Ladies	1 Disabled
Southern/Central Prom	CP*	6 Mens	13 Ladies	1 Disabled
Esplanade Gardens/Green	A	2 Mens	6 Ladies	1 Disabled
Bowling Green/Cliffs	A*	2 Mens	3 Ladies	1 Disabled

1.5.3 Heacham

South Beach	*	1 Mens	1 Ladies	1 Disabled
North Beach	*	3 Mens	3 Ladies	1 Disabled
Heacham Village	*	1 Mens	2 Ladies	

1.5.4 Burnham Market

CP	3 Mens	3 Ladies	1 Disabled
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1.5.5 Downham Market Town Centre

Wales Court		1 Mens	2 Ladies	1 Disabled
Memorial Fields Car Park		2 Mens	3 Ladies	1 Disabled
Howdale	*	2 Mens	3 Ladies	

1.5.6 Others

Old Hunstanton – adjacent to private car park area serving				
Old Hunstanton Beach	*	4 Mens	5 Ladies	1 Disabled
Holme-next-the-Sea		2 Mens	2 Ladies	1 Disabled

1.6 Recent Changes

Over the last few years as lease arrangements have expired, the Council has closed or handed over a number of toilets to third parties;

- Denver Sluice
- Hilgay
- Snettisham
- Brancaster
- Austin Street – King's Lynn

2. Operation

2.1 Staff/Cleaning

- 2.1.1 Most of the toilet blocks are cleaned as part of the general duties of street cleaning staff. In Hunstanton/Resort this involves a substantial increase during the season but at peak times maintaining standards of cleanliness can be difficult with very high user volumes in some toilets.
- 2.1.2 In King's Lynn the toilets covering Vancouver Car Park/Bus Station are permanently staffed by a dedicated cleaner seven days per week from 07.30 to 18.00. Overnight, 2 individual toilet cubicles are available for use with the main toilets locked.

The other King's Lynn toilets are covered by one dedicated cleaner seven days per week.

2.1.3 For outlying toilets Appendix 1 shows the scheduled daily visits.

3. Budget

3.1 Revenue

	2016/17
Repairs and Maintenance	54,300
Electricity	16,930
Rates	25,050
Water	48,090
Sewerage/Cesspool (Heacham South Beach)	7,450
Insurance	4,180
Street Sweeping Recharge	218,000
	374,660

3.2 Appendix 2 gives a breakdown of the actual cost per toilet block for 2015/16.

4. Options

Many of the toilets operated by the council are well used, being close to car parks, public transport or visitor attractions. In particular many of them are also associated with activity generated income, including car parks and amenity areas.

There are a number of toilets which could be considered for further work either to close or hand over to third parties.

4.1 Gaywood

The toilet is surrounded by small retail shops, food outlets, a library and a large Tesco supermarket, some of which have toilet facilities. The toilet is isolated, in a passageway between the car park and Lynn Road. It is often subjected to anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

4.2 Holme-next-the-Sea

The toilet block is leased from the Le Strange Golf club until 2021. It is open 24hrs all year round and is adjacent to a fee paying car park run by a private consortium from the Le Strange Golf Club.

4.3 Old Hunstanton

The toilet is adjacent to a fee paying car park and beach huts that are owned and run by third party.

4.4 Howdale, Downham Market

An isolated toilet block adjacent to the Howdale that is rarely used but is subjected to vandalism.

4.5 Ferry Street, King's Lynn

The toilet block is very well used for events e.g. Festival Too but has much lower levels of use than the other King's Lynn town centre toilets on the average day. It

is regularly subjected to anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Consider closure but retain for events.

4.6 Heacham Village

The toilet block is on the main road through Heacham and directly in front of the Bowls Club. There is little parking near the toilet block and is hardly used.

5. Charging

5.1 The Panel has asked that consideration is given to the introduction of charges for toilets.

5.2 Issues to consider might include;

- Volume of customers i.e. costs v potential income. At the extremes introducing charging at Holme-next-the-Sea would be a net increase in budget.
- Fees/income generated by customers i.e. for car parks, bus services, Resort amenities, kiosk lettings, etc.
- Business Rates generated from successful town centres.
- Would charging be for the same level of service as currently provided or a better service with additional costs paid for by fees.
- Impact of introducing fees in selected toilets e.g. if charges were only introduced at the busiest toilets, for example, Hunstanton Central Promenade would customers displace to other toilets?
- Wider impact/perceptions of the public, residents, holidaymakers, businesses, etc of the impact of charging.
- Bus Station – high use by senior citizens travelling for free and with a higher need for access to public toilets.

5.3 The Public Lavatories (Turnstiles) Act 1963 was brought in to make it the duty of local authorities to abolish turnstiles in public lavatories and sanitary conveniences:

1. - Abolition of turnstiles

(1) Every turnstile in any part of a public lavatory or public sanitary convenience controlled or managed by a local authority, or in any entrance or exit of such a public lavatory or convenience, shall be removed not later than six months after the passing of this Act; and after the passing of this Act no turnstile shall be installed in, or in any entrance or exit of, any such public lavatory or convenience.

(2) It shall be the duty of local authorities to ensure that the provisions of this Act are complied with notwithstanding anything in any other Act, whether public or local.

The London Local Authorities Act 2012 at section 6 states that “Section 1 of the Public Lavatories (Turnstiles) Act 1963 (abolition of turnstiles) shall not apply in respect of a public lavatory or public sanitary convenience controlled or managed by a borough council”. However, this only applies to London Borough Councils, so the The Public Lavatories (Turnstiles) Act 1963 would still apply to the Borough

Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and prevent the installation/use of turnstiles on toilets controlled or managed by the Council.

In terms of parish councils, the Public Lavatories (Turnstiles) Act 1963 refers to local authorities rather than borough or parish councils. Under section 270 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority in England means a county council, district council, London borough council and parish council. So parish councils seem to be caught by this legislation as well.

5.4 The Panel has asked for consideration to be given to introducing charging for toilets. A number of councils either already charge for toilets or are considering charges.

5.5 There is some evidence to indicate that the level of income generated is less than would be expected based on number currently using toilets;

- Edinburgh 18 toilets 7 charged for
 - 13/14 £8,223
 - 14/15 £5,282
 - 15/16 £1,338
- Edinburgh 7 £1,338
- Boston 3 toilets £21,500
- Plymouth 3 toilets £52,000
- Two toilets in Cotswold
33,000 visits £5,960 income
- Fenland £2,500 income
- Ambleside 7 toilets £50,800

5.6 Collection of cash is also estimated at £7,546 per annum for Plymouth.

5.7 The 2016/17 income estimate from car parks is

	Parking Ticket Fees	Penalty Charges	Total
Hunstanton and Heacham	£785,800.00	£34,640.00	£820,440.00
King's Lynn surface car parks	£2,318,590.00	£109,770.00	£2,428,360.00
King's Lynn Multi-Storey	£749,630.00	£0	£749,630.00
Long Term Season Tickets	£89,750.00	£0	£89,750.00
Total	£3,943,770.00	£144,410.00	£4,088,180.00

- 5.8 To create revenue for the use of public toilet there are a number of methods that can be employed:
- Permanently manned toilets with toll paying entry
 - Existing or increased charge to car parking to offset public toilet use
 - Coin operated entry systems (COES)
- 5.9 Permanently manned toilets. Kings Lynn bus station is the only permanently manned public toilet block in the Borough with Baker Lane and Ferry Street public toilets being partially manned. All other toilet blocks are unmanned but visited throughout the working day.
- 5.10 Additional Charge to Car Parking. In Coastal regions where toilets are Co-located with public car parks it would be possible to add a charge to car parking to cover the use of public toilets. The toilet provision would need to be in operation while the car park was open. Motorists may object to this system claiming it to be unfair as coach parties and pedestrians do not have to pay.
- 5.11 Coin Operated Entry Systems (COES).

There are a number of coin operated systems available depending on type of access that each toilet block has. Some systems are suitable for private and commercial sites but not for local authority run toilets. Chapter 32 of the 1963 Public Lavatories (Turnstile) act does not allow local authorities to install turnstile entry systems.

Local authorities may however incorporate the use of coin operated doors for access to individual cubicles. The table at Appendix 3 identifies those toilets that may be for COES.

- 5.12 Should the Council wish to charge for public toilets then further work would need to be carried out on the Capital cost of introducing appropriate entry control systems. As a guide a budget cost for the installation of a paddle gate system at Baker Lane is £25,000.
- 5.13 Coin control systems can be subject to increased vandalism costing several thousand to repair.
- 5.14 Surplus from charges at an individual toilet is difficult to quantify as covered in the report. However, it is clear that any charges paid by the public would be reduced from Capital, maintenance and collection costs.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Transfer or Closure

If the Council were to transfer those public conveniences not associated with car parks or amenity areas either to Parish Councils or charge as special expenses this would represent a net saving of £39,752.

	£
Heacham Village	3,871
Gaywood	6,813
DM Memorial Playing Field	7,607
DM Howdale	5,600
Walks Broadwalk	4,848
Walks Management Building	3,069
Wales Court, Downham Market	7,944
	39,752

6.2 If other public conveniences associated with third parties at Old Hunstanton and Holme were closed or transferred this would represent a saving of £13,708.

6.3 Estimating income from a specific toilet facility would require additional work.

7. Future Works

7.1 The Hunstanton Heritage Lottery scheme includes for refurbishment of the Esplanade and Bowling Green toilets in Hunstanton during 2017. The cost of coin operated entry is not included in the budget costs.

8. Proposal for Consideration

- 8.1 Maintain the existing arrangements with regard to provision of public toilets.
- 8.2 Should the Council charge for toilets that are closely linked to car parks or other fee paying activities or consider the toilet use to be according to the parking/other charges.
- 8.3 Should alternative options be considered to cover those toilets which are not linked to a fee paying service or serving a very local need particularly when leases come to an end.
- 8.4 Should closure of some toilets be considered if it can be demonstrated there is very low use.

APPENDIX 1

PUBLIC CONVENIENCE LOCATIONS & OPENING TIMES							
NAME	LOCATION	OPENING HOURS	Out of Hours Facility	DISABLED	BABY CHANGE	CLEANINING ROUTINE No OF VISITS	
						Summer April - October	Winter November - March
Northern Area							
Heacham South Beach	South Beach Rd, Heacham	24hrs All year	1 Unisex & 1 disabled toilet all year	Yes	No	3	2
Heacham North Beach	Jubilee Road, Heacham	24hrs All year	2 Unisex & 1 disabled toilets all year	Yes	Yes	3	Reduced opening
Heacham Village	Lynn Road, Heacham	07.30 - 16.30	No	No	No	2	closed
Seagate	Seagate Road, Hunstanton	24hrs April - Nov	3 Unisex & 1 disabled toilets all year	Yes	Yes	3	Reduced opening
Central Promenade	Seagate, Hunstanton	24hrs All year	2 Unisex & 1 disabled toilets all year	Yes	Yes	3	Reduced opening
Bus Station	Westgate, Hunstanton	24hrs All year	1 Unisex & 1 disabled toilet all year	Yes	Yes	3	2
Esplanade	Esplanade Gardens, Hunstanton	24hrs All year	2 Unisex & 1 disabled toilets all year	Yes	Yes	3	2
Bowling Green	Cliff Parade, Hunstanton	07.30 - 17.30	No	Yes	No	3	closed
Cliff Top	Cliff Top car park, Lighthouse Close	24hrs All year	1 Unisex & 1 disabled toilet all year	Yes	Yes	3	Reduced opening
Old Hunstanton	Old Hunstanton Beach	24hrs All year	Unisex toilets 24hrs all year	Yes	No	3	Reduced opening
Holme	Beach Road, Holme	24hrs All year	2 Unisex & 1 disabled toilets all year	Yes	No	2	2
Burnham Market	Foundry Field	08.00 - 20.00	No	Yes	Yes	2	2
Kings Lynn							
Bus Station	Kings Lynn	07.30 - 18.00	Unisex toilets 24hrs all year	Yes	Yes	Perminantly attended	
Ferry Street	Kings Lynn	07.30 - 18.00	No	Yes	Yes	Partially attended	
Baker Lane	Kings Lynn	07.30 - 18.00	No	Yes	Yes	Partially attended	
Gaywood	Rear of Gaywood Fruit & Veg shop	07.00 - 16.00	No	Yes	No	2	2
The Walks	Broadwalk, Kings Lynn	07.00 - 17.00	No	No	No	3	2
The Walks	Management building		No	Yes	No	3	2
St James Multi-Storey	Inside car park	07.30 – 23.30	No	Yes	Yes	2	2
Southern Area							
Memorial Fields	Lynn Rd, Downham Mkt	07.30 - 17.30	No	No	No	3	2
Wales Court	Bridge Street, Downham Mkt	06.00 - 18.00	No	Yes	Yes	3	2
The Howdale	Howdale Rd, Downham Mkt	07.30 - 17.00	No	No	No	2	closed

APPENDIX 2

	Site Name	Cesspool/ Sewage	Electricity	Water	Repairs	Tech Team	Cleaning Materials	Staff/ Vehicle costs	Rent	Business Rates	Insurance	Support Services	Utilities Recharge	TOTAL
	NORTHERN AREA													
1	Heacham South Beach	6,725	313	611	908	1,114	1,170	4,320		-	94	188.10		15,444
2	Heacham North Beach		916	2,204	1,043	1,114	1,170	4,320		-	255	188.10		11,211
3	Heacham Village		151	396	261	1,114	260	960		792	88	188.10		4,210
4	Seagate		973	3,162	2,609	1,114	2,340	5,760		3,168	323	188.10		19,637
5	Central Promenade		2,354	6,176	2,609	1,114	1,560	8,640		-	690	188.10		23,331
6	Hunstanton Bus Station		893	3,494	1,304	1,114	1,300	4,800		2,880	157	188.10		16,131
7	Esplanade		1,055	5,309	1,304	1,114	1,430	5,280		-	214	188.10		15,896
8	Bowling Green		3,485	2,955	783	1,114	1,170	4,320		1,344	111	188.10	- 3,376	12,094
9	Cliff Top Car Park		1,470	73	1,304	1,114	1,170	4,320		-	279	188.10		9,919
10	Old Hunstanton		406	2,056	1,043	1,114	910	3,360		1,488	144	188.10		10,710
11	Holme		209	1,206	522	1,114	520	1,920	1	418	48	188.10		6,146
	CENTRAL AREA													
12	Bus Station			2,260	3,652	1,114	3,750	46,000		-	340	188.10		57,304
13	Ferry Street	963	687	1,888	2,348	1,114	3,000	18,640		6,000	317	188.10		35,145
14	Baker Lane		1,003	3,518	2,348	1,114	3,000	28,000		5,760	293	188.10		45,225
15	Gaywood		-	329	522	1,114	1,500	4,500		1,296	106	188.10		9,555
16	Walks (B Roadwalk)		561	493	522	1,114	1,500	4,500		-	167	188.10		9,046
17	Walks (Management Bld)					1,114	1,500	4,500				188.10		7,302
18	St James Multi Storey					1,114	750	4,500				188.10		6,552
	SOUTHERN AREA													
19	Memorial Playing Field		421	241	1,128	1,114	600	8,400		-	86	188.10		12,179
20	Wales Court			838	1,128	1,114	1,000	14,000		888	154	188.10		19,311
21	The Howdale		129	299	1,128	1,114	400	5,600		1,020	77	188.10		9,956
											117			117
		7,688	15,027	37,509	26,466	23,402	30,000	186,640	1	25,054	4,060	3,950	- 3,376	356,420

APPENDIX 3

Toilet location	Current provision	Adaptable doors	Seasonal toilets/ Not Suitable
North			
Holme	2 x Unisex toilets 24 hr	2	
	1 x disabled toilet 24 hr	1	
Old Hunstanton	1 x Urinal trough	0	✓
	3 x cubicles	0	
	6 x ladies cubicles	0	✓
	1 x Unisex 24 hr	1	
	1 x disabled toilet 24hr	1	
Cliff top	1 x Urinal Trough	0	✓
	3 x cubicles	0	
	8 x ladies cubicles	0	✓
	1 x Unisex toilet 24hr	1	
	1 x disabled toilet	1	
Bowling Green	2 x urinals	0	✓
	2 x cubicles	0	
	4 x ladies cubicles	0	✓
	1 x disabled toilet	1	✓
Esplanade	1 x Urinal Trough	0	
	1 x cubicle	0	
	5 x ladies cubicles	0	
	2 x Unisex toilets 24hr	2	
	1 x disabled toilet	1	
Hunstanton Bus station	2 x Urinals	0	
	3 x cubicles	0	
	5 x ladies Cubicles	0	
	1 x Unisex toilet 24hr	1	
	1 x disabled toilet	1	
Central Promenade	1 x Urinal Trough	0	Reduced opening
	5 x cubicles	0	
	12 x ladies cubicles	0	Reduced opening
	2 x Unisex toilets 24hr	2	Reduced opening
	1 x disabled toilet	1	Reduced opening
Seagate	1 Urinal Trough	0	✓
	6 x cubicles		
	12 ladies cubicles	0	✓

	3 x Unisex toilets 24hr	3	✓
	1 x disabled toilet	1	✓
Heacham North	3 x urinals	0	✓
	5 ladies cubicles	0	✓
	2 x unisex toilets 24hr	2	
	1 x disabled toilet	1	✓
Heacham South	1 x Gents	1	✓
	1 x Ladies	1	✓
	1 x disabled	1	
	1 x unisex toilet 24hr	1	
Heacham Village	1 x Gents	0	✓
	2 x Ladies	0	✓
Burnham Market	3 x Ladies	0	
	3 x Gents	0	
	1 x Disabled	0	
CENTRAL			
Bus Station	4 x Gents	0	
	6 x ladies	0	
	1 x Disabled	1	
	2 x 24hr	2	
Baker Lane	3 x Gents	0	
	6 x Ladies	0	
	1 x Disabled	1	
	1 x baby change	1	
Ferry Street	3 x Gents	0	
	6 x Ladies	0	
	1 x Disabled	1	
	1 x baby change	1	
St James Multi - Story	2 x Mens	2	
	2 x Ladies	2	
	1 x Disabled	1	
	1 x Baby change	1	
Gaywood	2 x urinals	0	
	3 x Ladies	0	
	1 x Disabled	1	
Broadwalks (Walks)	1 x unisex	1	

	1 x Disabled	1	
Main Building (Walks)	1 x Unisex	1	
	1 x Disabled	1	
	1 x unisex	1	
SOUTH			
Memorial Fields	2 x Gents	0	
	3 x Ladies	0	
	1 x Disabled	1	
Wales Court	2 x Unisex	2	
	1 x Gents	1	
	1 x Disabled	1	
Howdale	2 x Gents	0	✓
	3 x Ladies	0	✓
Possible Cubicles		52	