

Title: Toilets for Trowbridge

Portfolio Holder: Cllrs Rosemary Brown and Jeff Osborn

Reporting Officer: Peter Woodcock, Corporate Director

Key Decision: **No**

Purpose

To address the recommendation from Trowbridge Area Seminar:

"This item was brought before the Committee by Cllr Knight. Cllr Knight was concerned as since the closure of the public conveniences on the Town Bridge, Trowbridge is lacking in 'drivers/non-shopper' toilets. Trowbridge has adequate facilities for pedestrian shoppers and park visitors; however, if an individual is passing through Trowbridge or making a delivery, there are no facilities to use unless a fee is paid to park. Additionally, the train station does not have any public convenience facilities; the nearest being in the Shires which is very inconvenient, especially if someone has children or luggage.

Support was echoed by members to raise Trowbridge to the same standard as the other four towns in the district".

Background

The Council has invested heavily in improving its toilets, and consequently will spend £262,000 this year. This money goes to Interpublic who refurbish, manage, and maintain the facilities for us. Prior to letting this contract in the late nineties, the Council undertook a district wide review of what toilets it should provide. The views of each town were considered carefully.

Toilet provision in Trowbridge: in addition to the Council toilet in the park there are other toilets available to the public, for example in the Castle Place and Shires shopping precincts.

Most commercial premises will have toilets that are likely to be available to drivers delivering or working there.

Main issues

Toilets at the station: The Council has previously worked with the rail authorities to try and provide a toilet at the station. So far this has not been successful. It is unlikely that there will be progress unless the Council commits funding to the project, or manages to attract external funding for this.

Toilets within the Waterside Project: The District Council, in partnership with the County Council, has made significant progress in bringing forward the proposal for redeveloping the Waterside Site. The next stage in the process is the submission and consideration of an outline planning application. Marketing for the site will then commence in the New Year. Progress on this project has been previously reported to the Cabinet.

At this stage the final details of the scheme have yet to be determined. As such it is still possible to consider the inclusion of public toilets as part of the development. The Council's advisors for this project will be able to provide advice and guidance on the impacts of such a proposal on the overall scheme. Any decision to include public toilets as part of this development will need to be fully discussed and explored with the County Council as our partners in this project.

Way forward

Officers will raise the issue of toilets at the station with the rail authorities and explore the options before reporting back to the portfolio holder, who will then refer the matter to Cabinet if appropriate.

Once the consultants have provided advice on the viability and implications of providing public toilets as part of the Waterside redevelopment, and the County Council and other partners consulted. We will be in a position to advise Cabinet more fully.

Trowbridge Area Seminar will be kept informed of progress.

Financial implications

The Council may have to contribute to the cost of building and maintaining toilets at the station.

The provision of toilets in the Waterside redevelopment will cost a significant amount and take up some of the available land. This will affect the profitability of the project. The Council's consultants will provide advice on this aspect.

Legal implications

None at this stage.

Recommendation:

Officers explore the opportunities to provide toilets at the station and report back.

Cabinet is recommended to seek advice from the retained consultants on this project; if advice is received that this will benefit the overall project, the District Council should also seek to discuss this issue further with the County Council.

Human rights

The human rights implications have been considered in making the above recommendation.

Background papers

None at this stage.

Plain English

This report has been checked for plain English.