

SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL TOILETS STRATEGY

MEETING: Special Strong Communities Select Committee

DATE: 21st May 2019

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Monmouthshire County Council Local Toilets Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the draft Local Toilets Strategy, as attached in Appendix One.
- 2.2 Noting comments and additions made since the draft report was presented to this Committee on 13th February 2019, further to public consultation and further input, the strategy goes to Cabinet on 5th June 2019 for adoption.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Part 8 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 'Provision of Toilets' came into force on 31st May 2018. It places a duty on each local authority in Wales to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy for its area.
- 3.2 Local authorities in Wales now have the responsibility to –
- Assess the need for toilet provision for their communities
 - Plan to meet those needs
 - Produce a local toilets strategy, and
 - Review, update and publicise revisions to the strategy.
- 3.3 Local Authorities must prepare and publish their strategies by 31st May 2019. Due to the ten week consultation process, and Committee diaries, this Authority will be a few days late with the strategy going to Cabinet on 5th June. Welsh Government have been advised of the slight delay and are satisfied to accept. The duty to prepare a local toilets strategy does not require local authorities to provide and maintain public toilets directly. Indeed, further to the work of the 'Public Convenience Working Group' in 2009 (a sub-group of this committee), most public toilet blocks were successfully transferred to Town and

Community Councils to manage. It is for the County Council to take a strategic view on how publicly accessible toilets can be provided and accessed across the county.

3.4 A draft strategy, attached as Appendix One, has been prepared. This has incorporated :-

- Opinions expressed via a public survey, that ran between 19th December 2018 and 11th January 2019.
- Comments made during the public consultation period, that ran between 22nd February and 3rd May 2019.
- Comments from Gwent Police and Abergavenny Town Council's own survey from the summer of 2018.
- Two surveys of the 18 public toilet blocks, one by Members on 7th February and the other by Property Services in April 2019.

3.5 The statutory guidance (August 2018) from Welsh Government has been followed in preparing the local strategy. One key undertaking was to 'map out' all existing publicly accessible toilets in the county. This comprehensive map – showing locations, opening times, etc. – has been shared with Welsh Government to be provided on an all-Wales basis. The map will also be provided via our own website for open access.

3.6 The key actions identified are as follows –

1. Continue to work closely with Town & Community Councils on options for maintaining and improving public toilet provision in the county
2. Work with partners on how to best utilise the £17,200 Welsh Government grant
3. Work with the private sector to seek to provide more publicly available toilets where most needed
4. Display the national 'toilet/toiled' national logo (see 10.1) in all participating toilet facilities, including Leisure Centres, libraries, etc.
5. Improve awareness and information available on publicly accessible toilets by updating information on the Monmouthshire CC website and the open access data held by Welsh Government, together with App development
6. Regularly review cleaning and maintenance standards, together with T&CC's who typically manage the public toilets in our towns and villages
7. Environmental Health Officers to inspect both public and privately provided toilets as part of their inspection regime. Provide a grading of public toilets to determine progress over time
8. Work closely with Gwent Police to find solutions to reduce anti-social behaviour associated with public toilets
9. Provide proactive advice to all event organisers in the county on the suitability of their toilet provision
10. Respond to any Welsh Government recommendations on public toilet provision, and seek out notable practice adopted in other counties
11. Set up a small Working Group, of Members and Officers, to ensure recommendations are implemented

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION, (includes social justice, safeguarding and corporate parenting):

4.1 The completed 'Equalities & Future Generations Evaluation' form is provided as Appendix Two, attached.

4.2 The draft Local Toilet Strategy provides an assessment of the current toilet provision, and has regard to the input from the public survey and consultation, together with Gwent Police comments. Key actions will be monitored and reviewed with partners. Overall, if actions are implemented, the strategy will have a very positive impact. Public provision will be maintained or improved, access information enhanced, encouraging people to take exercise and stay more physically active.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

5.1 Producing a Local Toilet Strategy is a statutory duty, as required under Part 8 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017. This Authority must prepare and publish a local toilet strategy for its area by 31st May 2019.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

6.1 A progress report setting out the steps taken as a consequence of the strategy will be produced every two years, as per Welsh Government statutory guidance. An evaluation of cleanliness, overall provision, any increase/decrease in levels of anti-social behaviour, etc. will be regularly carried out with facility providers, notably Town and Community Councils.

6.2 The key actions are provided in Section 12 of the strategy, and are listed in 3.6 above. Progress will be monitored against the actions specified to ensure the strategy is effective.

7. REASONS:

7.1 The preparation and publication of a Local Toilet Strategy is a legal requirement, as outlined in Section 3 of the strategy.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 The resource implications of providing the strategy has involved significant Officer time. As per 6.1 of the strategy – Appendix One – Officers from Public Protection, Operations, Property Services, Finance, Tourism, Leisure & Culture, Policy & Development, Communications and Shared Resources Service have all contributed. Added to this, three Members of this Committee have undertaken their own inspection of current public toilet blocks, both those provided by Monmouthshire CC and Town & Community Councils.

8.2 Welsh Government has recognised the additional work required in developing public toilet strategies and Monmouthshire has been successful in accessing a one-off £17,200 grant payment. How best utilise that funding, noting costs in 8.1 were met internally (Officer and Member time), is one of the actions going forward.

9. CONSULTEES:

Head of Operations
Facilities Supervisor
Chief Officer – Enterprise
Chief Officer – Social Care & Health
Head of Commercial & Landlord Services

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

'The Provision of Toilets in Wales: Local Toilet Strategies', Statutory Guidance, August 2018 – Welsh Government

9. AUTHOR:

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10. CONTACT DETAILS:

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Appendices

Appendix One Draft Local Toilets Strategy
Appendix Two Equality & Future Generations Evaluation