

Housing and Community Service Scrutiny Panel



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| Date of meeting: | 10 December 2025 |
| Title of Report: | Public Toilets in Plymouth – Briefing Report |
| Lead Member: | Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development, and Communities) |
| Lead Strategic Director: | Si Bellamy (Chief Operating Officer) |
| Author: | Ann Thorp |
| Contact Email: | Ann.thorp@plymouth.gov.uk |
| Your Reference: | AT 24.11.2025 |
| Key Decision: | No |
| Confidentiality: | Part I - Official |

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the principles that will be used to inform public toilet provision in the City and will guide the next steps in relation to this element of the development of our Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Members of the Housing and Communities Scrutiny Committee are invited to comment on the principles we are proposing to use and embed.

To meet the Council's priorities, toilet provision needs to link to key areas of focus and the associated locations across the City as follows:

- Good transport links are key to supporting a vibrant economy and helping to support those working in the City have a choice about how they travel to and from their workplace – public toilet provision should be available at key transport interchanges.
- Supporting the tourist industry by being welcoming and providing a clean and tidy city – public toilets should be available in areas of high tourist footfall.
- Encouraging residents and visitors to utilise the green spaces and the foreshore to promote health and well-being therefore reducing health inequalities – public toilets should be available in heavily used green/blue spaces.

To ensure that the provision of toilets is suitable and based on the above, the following principles should be considered:

- Any decision taken in respect of how the corporate estate is managed, linked to the asset management plan and future investment in the City, should consider if access to a public toilet facility is required.

- Council priorities, such as those above should be taken into account during the decision-making process.
- How future provision is funded. If grants or financial support are available as part of the investment into the City and the lifetime costs of any provision taken into consideration
- Partnership working should be developed to ensure that toilet facilities that are available to the public within the City are promoted.
- Council managed public toilets should be reviewed to ensure that they offer value for money and consideration given to future provision as buildings reach end of life or if there is substantial change in the local area.

Alternative options considered and rejected

As this is a briefing paper to guide the next steps for the public toilet provision within the Strategic Asset Management Strategy, there are no direct implications at this time on this report and therefore no other alternative options have been considered.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Providing Quality Public Services;
Spending Money Wisely.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

As this is a briefing paper to guide the next steps for the public toilet provision within the Strategic Asset Management Strategy there are no direct implications at this time in this report.

Financial Risks

The average annual running costs for repairs, maintenance, utilities and cleaning for the current public toilet facilities is £353,402.03 of which on average £48,906.45 is generated from charges for usage. Depending on the Strategic Asset Management Plan around future public toilet provision, the financial commitment to public toilet provision may increase if additional toilets are required.

Legal Implications

Public toilets are not a statutory function and therefore there are no legal implications on the principles proposed.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

As this paper will not make a change to the current public toilet provision there will be no impact on the current carbon footprint

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

As this is a briefing paper to guide the next steps for the public toilet provision within the Strategic Asset Management Strategy, there are no direct implications at this time in this report

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

| Ref. | Title of Appendix | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) |
|------|-------------------|--|
| | | <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i> |

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Briefing report title | | | | | | | |

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

| Title of any background paper(s) | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box. | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| None | | | | | | | |
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Sign off:

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| Fin | N/A | Leg | N/A | Mon Off | N/A | HR | N/A | Assets | N/A | Strat Proc | N/A |
| Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Chris Squire | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date agreed: 01/12/2025 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Chirs Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date approved: 01/12/2025 | | | | | | | | | | | |