

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** Barbican Toilets  
**Committee:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 10 December 2013  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Vincent  
**CMT Member:** Anthony Payne (Director for Place)  
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**Ref:** 01692/13  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

To include £371,000 in the Capital Programme for a scheme to provide replacement toilets at Quay Point and Elphinstone Car Park, The Barbican.

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### **The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 -2016/17:**

#### **Pioneering Plymouth**

The proposals are flexible in their provision which will ensure that the toilets are responsive to future needs. Through toilet charging, the new toilets will provide an income stream to allow revenue savings to be achieved and will incorporate in the design mechanisms to save costs and reduce environmental impact.

#### **Growing Plymouth**

This project will directly contribute to this priority by facilitating job creation through growing the tourist industry and through construction employment. The refurbished toilets will also continue to support the needs of peripatetic workers who work outdoors or at locations away from their normal base.

#### **Caring Plymouth**

The provision of high quality toilets built to modern standards will help reduce inequality by making the premises fully accessible and catering for baby changing needs of families including disabled parents.

#### **Confident Plymouth**

Currently the toilets are in a poor condition with one site closed as it is structurally unsound. Providing high quality facilities will help embed civic pride which will engender greater business confidence. Providing modern toilet facilities will lead to more people choosing to use the Barbican businesses, which in turn will help raise aspirations.

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## **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land**

The capital cost of demolishing the existing public toilets at Elphinstone Car Park and Quay Point and replacing them with flexible, relocatable units capable of being easily and cost effectively relocated is £371,000. It is proposed that this should be funded from capital receipts.

It is expected that replacing the out-dated toilets will result in revenue savings in the region of £16,000 per annum.

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

This project will help address the following issues:

Child Poverty – Refurbished toilets will assist business growth, and this could create new job opportunities (including the positive impact on supply chains) and help families back into work and out of poverty.

Community Safety – The design of the toilets takes into account potential anti-social behaviour issues such as vandalism and unwelcome and inappropriate uses of the toilets. The development of the Elphinstone Car Park site will remove/reduce anti-social behaviour that can be associated with derelict sites.

Health and Safety – During the construction phase the site will be under the full control of the Main Contractor who will be bound by the Construction Design Management Regulations.

A number of risks (High, Medium and Low) are associated with developments of this nature and that is entirely normal. An example of some of the key risks include: planning consent, increased costs and delays. A full risk register log has been prepared and will be maintained and updated on a regular basis.

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## **Equality and Diversity**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

The proposed development will be completed in accordance with current Building Regulations and statutory approvals and as such will be fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provisions on design access requirements and the Equality Act 2010. A full EIA is therefore not considered appropriate for this proposal.

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## **Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

Cabinet is asked to –

Amend the Capital Programme to include £371,000 for a scheme to provide replacement toilets at Quay Point and Elphinstone Car Park, The Barbican. The funding is to be from Capital Receipts;

Reason: To enable the proposed project to be added to the Council's Capital Programme.

#### **Alternative options considered and rejected:**

## Project Options

#### I) Do Nothing

Whilst this option does not cost anything to deliver, it results in the continuing decline of the public toilets which will impact on visitor numbers and business confidence. The toilets will remain as assets and will have on-going management costs associated with them. There will be no benefits associated with this option.

2) Refurbish the existing toilets.

This option would secure the refurbishment of the Quay Point site but would not be economically feasible for Elphinstone Car Park where the roof is structurally unsound. This solution however would not be flexible to future needs and there is an aspiration for a land mark building on this site in the medium term.

3) Adapt the existing toilet buildings with modular ‘plug in’ externally accessed unisex toilets.

This option would not be suitable for Elphinstone Car Park for the reasons stated in (2) above. This solution offers more flexibility for Quay Point as in theory the modular ‘plug ins’ could be relocated elsewhere in the future but in practice this would be costly.

4) Replace the toilets with a traditional building

This option would secure high quality replacement toilet facilities but it would lack the flexible advantages of the modular build approach and the build time would be longer and unachievable in the preferred time frame of completion by Easter 2014.

## **Published work / information:**

None

## Background papers:

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Revised Barbican Public Toilets Business Case		yes			x				

## **Sign off:**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Over a number of years, Plymouth's network of public toilets has been in decline. Whilst the Service have strived to maintain a good level of provision and cleanliness, years of under investment and reduced revenue budgets have resulted in a network that looks tired and is increasingly subject to structural issues. To address this there is a political manifesto pledge to "overhaul the network of public toilets, keep them clean and open to help stop vandalism".

1.2 This project aims to improve public toilet provision in the Barbican at Quay Point (opposite the Mayflower Visitors Centre) and Elphinstone Car Park by replacing existing outdated toilets with modular build ones. Whilst having a permanent appearance and a lifespan similar to a permanent building, the modular toilets would be capable of being easily and cost effectively relocated in line with future needs.

1.3 The proposed replacement of the public toilets at Quay Point and Elphinstone Car Park will help secure a valuable public service as well as improve civic pride and promoting growth and confidence. Toilet charging will help address anti-social behaviours and provide PCC with a long term revenue stream with which to maintain the toilets.

## **2.0 Needs analysis**

2.1 Priorities for the toilets are for a solution that:

- Is deliverable in time for the summer 2014 season
- Is flexible and able to respond to future needs
- Upgrades the quality of the user experience
- Provides for a minimum of six unisex toilets and a disabled/ family toilet all with baby change at the Quay Point site
- Provides for a minimum of four unisex toilets and a disabled/ family toilet all with baby change at the Elphinstone Car Park site
- Provides for the inclusion of a Harbour Masters office and bin storage area to serve the businesses at Commercial Wharf as part of the Elphinstone Car Park Toilet scheme
- Introduces toilet charging primarily to address antisocial behaviour but also to contribute towards the revenue costs of the toilets
- Provides good value for money

## **3.0 Options Analysis**

3.1 An analysis of the possible options for the site has been undertaken and the following options to deliver the required improvements to the toilets have been considered:

### I) Do Nothing

Whilst this option does not cost anything to deliver, it results in the continuing decline of the public toilets which will impact on visitor numbers and business confidence. The toilets will remain as assets and will have on-going management costs associated with them. There will be no benefits associated with this option.

2) Refurbish the existing toilets.

This option would secure the refurbishment of the Quay Point site but would not be economically feasible for Elphinstone Car Park where the roof is structurally unsound. This solution however would not be flexible to future needs and there is an aspiration for a land mark building on this site in the medium term.

3) Adapt the existing toilet buildings with modular ‘plug in’ externally accessed unisex toilets.

This option would not be suitable for Elphinstone Car Park for the reasons stated in (2) above. This solution offers more flexibility for Quay Point as in theory the modular ‘plug ins’ could be relocated elsewhere in the future but in practice this would be costly.

4) Replace the toilets with traditional build toilet building

This option would secure a high quality replacement toilet facilities but it would lack the flexible advantages of the modular build approach and the build time would be longer and unachievable in the preferred time frame of completion by Easter 2014. The toilets would also be out of operation for a longer period.

5) Replace the toilets with modular system build toilet buildings

This option is the preferred option because it offers a flexible solution and as the toilets are constructed ‘off site’ it minimises the period that the existing toilets are out of use. Such toilets can be easily and cost effectively relocated should the need arise in the future. A variation on the modular build method is to convert a former shipping container. This has been successfully used on the site next to the Quay Point toilets site by the Real Food Company.

#### **4.0 Affordability**

£371,000 is required to be included in the Capital Programme to deliver the modular build toilets at Quay Point and Elphinstone Car Park. This includes all project costs including the demolition of the existing toilets and all fees and surveys.

It is expected that there will be revenue savings as a result of the toilets being provided and the introduction of toilet charging. Toilet charging has already been successfully introduced at the Armada Way toilets in the City Centre where it has helped to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour. It is anticipated that the balance of maintenance and operational costs with the income received from toilet charging (20p per use as per Armada Way) could realise annual revenue savings of £16,000.

#### **5.0 Programme**

In order to provide the toilets in such a way as to minimise the impact on visitors and the surrounding businesses there is a desire to see the toilets completed by Easter 2014, ready for the busy summer season. To achieve this, a contractor needs to be appointed as soon as possible to work up the design and submit Planning and Conservation Area Consent applications. A procurement process is underway and tenders have been received so as soon as the project is included on the Capital Programme, an appointment can be made. The Capital Delivery Board have considered and approved this proposal to replace the existing toilets with a modular system build solution.