

This Report will be made public on 28 June 2019

Report Number **C/19/09**

**To:** Councilor John Collier, Cabinet Member for  
Property Management and Grounds Maintenance  
**Date:** 28 June 2019  
**Status:** Non key decision  
**Responsible Officer:** Andrew Blaszkowicz, Assistant Director

**SUBJECT: OPENING OF BOUVERIE PLACE TOILETS**

**SUMMARY:** Following negotiations between FHDC, Ellandi and the Bouverie Place Management Company, it has been agreed in principal that FHDC would adopt the public conveniences located at the bus station. This report sets out the costs and risks to achieving this.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Folkestone town centre currently lacks centralised public conveniences. Leasing and operating this facility will provide an important amenity within the central high street area.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report C/19/09.
2. To approve the proposed adoption and operation of the Bouverie Place public conveniences.
3. To approve £8,000 refurbishment costs to the toilets prior to opening.
4. To approve £12,000 revenue expenditure for the stocking, cleaning, external locking contract and reactive and cyclical maintenance.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The public conveniences form part of the larger Bouverie Place Shopping Centre that was built circa 2007. The provision of public conveniences was set as a planning condition for the development although this is no longer enforceable.
- 1.2 The toilets are situated within the central Folkestone bus station. Prior to the construction of the shopping centre FHDC operated a set of public conveniences at this location known as the Bus Station toilets.
- 1.3 The toilets were operated by the Bouverie Place Shopping Centre for a short period of time, however due to the continuous acts of vandalism the decision was made to close the conveniences.
- 1.4 The closure of the toilets have proven to be a point of consternation for local Councillors who see their provision as a necessity and a requirement under the original planning conditions.
- 1.5 Pleydell Gardens public conveniences are the only set of publicly operated toilets in the Town Centre.

## **2. BOUVEIRE PLACE TOILETS**

- 2.1 The toilets have been mothballed for a number of years, while they remain in relatively good condition, inevitably works are required to bring them back in to use.
- 2.2 A water leak has occurred above the suspended ceilings within the gent's toilets in two locations, causing damage to the ceilings and potentially light fittings.
- 2.3 Drainage to the urinals is defective with a leak behind the stud wall evident by rusting to the service hatch and staining on the floor.
- 2.4 Some previous acts of vandalism require repair such as broken wall tiles and doors.
- 2.5 The estimated costs to refurbish the toilets to a standard for use by the public is £8,000. This does not allow for any service issues that may be discovered once works commence.
- 2.6 The positive aspects of the toilets are that it is a purpose built facility with good provision of hand washing facilities, the walls are tiled full height and the water heating is by way of electric immersion heaters which offers reliability.
- 2.7 Clarity is required regarding the sprinkler system, intruder alarm and ventilation system with regards to its link to Bouverie Shopping Centre.
- 2.8 The revenue costs based on a similar sized toilet block in Folkestone would be £10,000 per annum for the cleaning, stocking and night time closure contract.

2.9 The provision of a parking space within the bus station will be required for the day to day maintenance and cleaning of the public toilets – to be discussed with Stagecoach.

2.10 It is expected that due to the toilets proximity to the main Folkestone bus station and past experience a higher than average cost for reactive maintenance can be expected. For this reason we suggest revenue costs of £2,000 would be reasonable.

### 3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 There is a significant level of perceived risk involved with operating these conveniences.

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Anti-social behavior – including vandalism	High	High	Ensure toilets are monitored 2-3 times per day.
Reduction in cleaning off all facilities within district	Medium	High	None. As there is no increase in funding for cleaners then cleaning this toilet will increase the burden on them, thus reducing the numbers of times they can visit other toilets. This will increase considerably if operatives cannot park close to the conveniences.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The public conveniences are purpose built and fit for purpose, but a small degree of works are necessary prior to opening.

4.2 The main area for concern with the toilets will be around anti-social behaviour leading to higher rate of vandalism than would be expected at other facilities.

### 5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (DK)

There are no legal implications rising from the body of the report.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (RH)

As stated within the report £20,000 costs would be required for repairs and on-going costs. It is expected that these costs can be covered with the 2019/20 Buildings budgets (through increased income compared to budget). A growth item will be required for 2020/21.

### 5.3 Communications

The adoption of Bouverie Place Public Conveniences has been widely publicized and has the potential to be a positive decision for the Council.

## **6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councilors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

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