

This report will be published on 18 May 2021



Report Number **C/21/05**

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 26 May 2021  
**Status:** Non-Key Decision  
**Responsible Officer:** Aarron McKinney - Engineering & Buildings Senior Specialist  
Alastair Clifford, Operations Lead Specialist  
Andy Blaszkowicz, Director Housing & Operations

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor John Collier, Cabinet Member for Property Management and Grounds Maintenance

**SUBJECT:** Progress report for the installation of new public conveniences and kiosk at the Lower Leas Coastal Park

**SUMMARY:** This report sets out the proposal for the agreed capital funding for a new kiosk and toilet block to be provided at the Lower Leas Coastal Park.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal and project plan in order to deliver new enhanced facilities for the park to cater for high demand.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report C/21/05.
2. To agree the proposed project plan for delivery of new public conveniences and kiosk.

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's latest approved General Fund capital programme includes £150,000 to deliver a new kiosk and public convenience block at the Lower Leas Coastal Park to address a shortfall in the existing provision.
- 1.2 The existing facilities are in reasonable condition but are relatively small in scale resulting in large queues and the need to hire event toilets to deal with the seasonal influx of visitors. Last year due to the pandemic and increase in numbers the toilets were inundated daily.

## 2. PROJECT DELIVERY

- 2.1 It is intended to deliver an additional 3 – 4 unisex cubicles with direct access (similar to those at Dymchurch Seawall) with a small kiosk on the end of the building.
- 2.2 The proposed location for the block is to the west of the Amphitheatre, site on the north bank, see plan AR0134-1001 (*Appendix 1*).
- 2.3 The site is well situated for users approaching the park from the Zig Zag path and will provide facilities at either end of the play area zone.
- 2.4 A review of the title deeds indicates that the block will be sited on The Leas title which is a long lease granted by the Radnor Estate. The title has restrictions on development and profit taking. Smith Woolley has confirmed that, in principle, the Folkestone Estate will give consent for the proposed new toilet block subject to detailed plans being provided for the proposed development and the reimbursement of Lessor's costs for providing the relevant consent. This would normally be with a simple approval of the plans but Clause 18 of the Lease dated 24 October 1913 prevents the sale of any goods or commodities. Smith Woolley acknowledge the Council's intention is to use the rent to fund the operation of the toilet block and state this will require a variation of the lease to permit such a use. Subsequent consent will then be required for any sublease, the terms for which need to be agreed in due course. The freeholder's solicitor, Boodle Hatfield will need to confirm their fees but for a standard Deed of Variation for a freehold restrictive covenant, their fees are £750 plus VAT. Their surveyors' fees will be £250 plus VAT, assuming the matter does not become more complex.
- 2.5 The Estates & Assets team are liaising with the Radnor Estate and have received initial approval to the proposals.
- 2.6 Cleaning costs for the block while mitigated due to the presence of park keepers on site are still expected to be in the region of £13-15,000 per annum with cyclical maintenance at £2,000.
- 2.7 The design of the building is intended to be sympathetic of the area and will be relatively small in scale, single storey with a flat roof and clad in timber materials. The building may benefit from an overhang over the kiosk, subject to further design/budget considerations. See reference photographs for Port Isaac & Plymouth (*Appendix 2&3*).
- 2.8 Healthmatic have been instructed to assist with the design/pre tender stage of the project. The company has previous experience of working for the Council having been involved with the Dymchurch Seawall & Sandgate Esplanade public conveniences. The company specialises in the delivery of prefabricated public facilities.



### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Financial provision has been made available to increase the provision of toilets within the ever popular coastal park. Further commentary on the financial position for this scheme is included with the Finance Officer's comments shown in section 4.2 of this report.
- 3.2 The inclusion of a kiosk will help to offset the costs of running this extra provision whilst providing a useful service to users of the park.
- 3.3 Full planning permission and utility connections are yet to be approved, though should be fairly straight forward.
- 3.4 The provision of a changing places toilet although recommended and important to the community poses financial and logistical complications in this location. The provision of such should be picked up as part of the place plan.

### **4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS**

#### **4.1 Legal Officers Comments (NE)**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report but the restrictions that the Radnor Estate have the benefit of will need to be varied or extinguished before the installation can proceed.

#### **4.2 Finance Officers Comments (LW)**

The Council's latest approved General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme (MTCP) includes budget provision of £150,000 for this scheme to be met from prudential borrowing on the assumption it will generate a small net additional revenue stream of approximately £6k per year, after allowing for annual capital financing costs.

The MTCP item originally assumed the scheme would take place on land at the Coastal Park belonging to the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity. However, the report clarifies the scheme is to take place on Council owned land adjacent to the Coastal Park. This has no bearing on the existing budget approval for the scheme.

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

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

(Aarron McKinney – Engineering & Buildings Senior Specialist)

Telephone: 01303 853309

Email: [Aarron.mckinney@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:Aarron.mckinney@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: None

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: AR0134-1001 Coastal Park Kiosk Block Plan.pdf

Appendix 2: Plymouth.jpg

Appendix 3: Port Isaac.jpg

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**Andy Blaszkowicz, Director – Housing & Operations**