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| REPORT TO: | DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE | AGENDA ITEM: 13 |
| DATE OF MEETING: | 8TH NOVEMBER 2001 | CATEGORY: DELEGATED |
| REPORT FROM: | DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE | OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: N/A |
| MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: | JOHN HANSED (5770) | DOC: c:\myfiles\sac\committe\development services\public-toilets.doc |
| SUBJECT: | PUBLIC TOILETS | REF: JRH/SAC |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | SWADLINCOTE, NEWHALL, ETWALL, MELBOURNE, OVERSEAL, REPTON, TICKNALL, WILLINGTON, WOODVILLE | TERMS OF REFERENCE: DS7 |

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the views of the Committee on the levels of service provision for toilets be fed into the ongoing Reprioritisation and Refocussing, Service Planning and budgetary processes.
- 1.2 That the appropriate parish councils are advised of the Committees decisions to enable them to fix their budgets for 2002/03.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To consider the current situation regarding the Council's public toilets and to decide what service reductions or developments should be included in the forthcoming budget process.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Early in 2000 the Council closed five of its public toilets to make cost savings as part of its response to its serious financial position. Subsequently in April 2001 a report was submitted to the Housing and Environment Committee explaining the current position, on the council's toilets, and seeking Member's views.
- 3.2 The information presented is still broadly applicable now and a copy of the report is attached at Annexe C. In additional background information is included in Annexe A and B, as follows.
 - Annexe A – a summary of the main issues and conclusions arising out of the April report.

- Annexe B – a summary of the decisions made at that meeting and of the additional information requested by Members.

3.3 Since this meeting there have been the following developments.

Further approaches by Parish Councils

- 3.4 Etwall Parish Council have repeated their request that the toilet be kept open and would want to be consulted prior to any proposal to close it.
- 3.5 Overseal Parish Council are now able to enter into a partnership arrangement with the Council due to improved circumstances.
- 3.6 Woodville Parish Council asked for information regarding how much a partnership arrangement would cost. This information was provided although it was stressed that this Council would not necessarily accept a partnership offer, if made. In any event the Parish Council have since said it would not be able to meet such costs.

Completion of Refurbishment works at the Delph Toilets

- 3.7 These works were undertaken and completed at the end of October. At present the required improved maintenance is not being provided.

Making Charges for Toilets

- 3.8 In addition, following the meeting in April, additional information has been sought. Four Councils understood to have pay toilets in operation were consulted but only two responded. The results are summarised in Annexe D. Charges are made only at toilets where there is an ongoing staff presence. The reasons for providing staff are both to reduce the likelihood of vandalism and to provide improved maintenance. This increased level of service justifies the charge but both Councils confirmed that costs exceed income by a considerable margin. They did not consider it would ever be realistic to believe charging could be set to a self financing level and that increased charge rates, set with such an objective, would simply reduce usage to an unsustainable level.

Cleansing Function

- 3.9 Cleansing of the toilets in the Town Centre and Ticknall is carried out by the operational staff in the Direct Services Unit. Alternative means of cleansing is being investigated but, unless carried out by the D.S.O. within existing resources, it would mean additional expenditure over existing budgets.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The current budget provision allows for continuation of the three Council run toilets and the two partnership toilets. It does not include for additional cleansing costs required at the Delph toilets (anticipated to be approx. £7500 per annum) or for the anticipated pump replacement at East End Toilets (approx. £2000.)

4.2 If a partnership agreement was entered into at Overseal, as requested by the Parish Council, the additional costs to this Council would be £250, for service costs, plus additional building maintenance works required (£500 per annum – estimate)

4.3 Additional financial information is included at Annexe E.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Closure of five toilets and the creation of two partnership arrangements has led to cost savings that were essential as part of dealing with the prevailing budgetary situation early in 2000.

5.2 The Council now has a more stabilised financial position and is reviewing its future service provision as part of the Reprioritisation and Refocussing exercise. It is suggested that this exercise should include consideration of what the appropriate level of service provision should be for public toilets.

5.3 In conjunction with the Reprioritisation and Refocussing, Budget Proposals are being prepared including consideration of both reductions in expenditure as well as revenue service developments.

5.4 The views of Members are sought on either reductions or developments they would wish to see included in this process for toilets. Annexe E sets out some financial information to help with this consideration.

