

ANNEXE A

Summary of the main issues and conclusions arising out of the report to the Housing and Environment Committee on 5th April 2001.

1. In the spring of 2000 the Council closed the following toilets.

Newhall
Overseal
Repton
Woodville
Willington
2. Etwall and Melbourne Parish Councils responded positively to a request to run their toilets in partnership with this Council. The parishes open, close and clean the toilets and this Council pays the service and building maintenance costs (The partnerships commenced in April 2000 and are still operational).
3. The toilet at Ticknall is subject to a legal agreement requiring the Council to operate it into the foreseeable future.
4. A usage survey was undertaken at the two Swadlincote Town Centre toilets, in 2001, and showed both are well used.
5. SRB funding had been obtained to improve the interior of the toilet near the Delph, in Swadlincote. As a condition of funding the Council was required to improve the cleansing and maintenance of the toilet. Additional funding was sought for the improved maintenance as part of the 2000/01 for budget process but was not approved.
6. The five closed toilets represent an ongoing liability to the Council which would only be removed by demolition and disposal of the land.
7. The following financial implications applied.
 - Estimated savings made in 2000/01 were approximately £21,000.
 - A further £5,600 could be saved if the toilets at East End Car Park, Etwall and Melbourne were also closed. The majority of this money would be saved at East End.
 - There was no budget provision for the additional cleansing needed at the Delph toilets after their refurbishment. (It would be possible to absorb this additional work if the East End toilet was closed).
 - The pumping station at East End Car Park toilets will soon need replacement at an (unbudgeted) cost of £2000.

- It would cost around £11,000 to demolish all toilets other than the Delph and Ticknall.
 - After such demolition additional final savings of around £7000 per annum could be expected.
 - If Woodville toilet were demolished the integral bus shelter would be lost. This would cost around £3000 to replace to current standards, although the County Council would probably provide 50% grant aid.
8. All parishes, where toilets have closed, have complained at the loss of service. There was a relatively low level of public complaint.
 9. The two partnerships, at Etwall and Melbourne, have allowed the Council to maintain toilet provision at a relatively modest costs.

ANNEXE B

SUMMARY OF THE DECISIONS MADE AT THE MEETING
OF THE HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
ON 5TH APRIL 2001

1. It was felt that the toilets at East End Car Park and Melbourne should be kept open and a better way of cleansing should be provided.
2. The Council should investigate the possibility that users make a payment.
3. It was suggested that provision in Swadlincote and Melbourne should be preserved.
4. Members were not minded to provide toilets in rural areas.
5. Current provision levels be maintained, pending a further report.

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|----------------------------|--|--------------|-----|
| REPORT TO: | HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE | AGENDA ITEM: | // |
| DATE OF MEETING: | 05 APRIL 2001 | CATEGORY: | DEL |
| REPORT FROM: | TECHNICAL SERVICES MANAGER | OPEN | |
| MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: | JOHN HANSED (595770) | DOC NO: | |
| SUBJECT: | PUBLIC TOILETS | | |
| WARDS AFFECTED: | SWADLINCOTE, NEWHALL, ETWALL, MELBOURNE, OVERSEAL, REPTON, TICKNALL, WILLINGTON, WOODVILLE. | REF: JRH/LJW | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members about the current situation on the Council's public toilets following the reductions in services carried out early in 2000.

2.0 Content

- 2.1 In January 2000 Officers were asked to identify potential savings in expenditure due to the Council's serious financial position. In due course a report was considered by Urgency Sub Committee on 31st January 2000 at which a number of Service reductions were agreed (minute US/74 refers).
- 2.2 The proposals put forward included service reductions at the Council's public toilets as follows:
- closure of all public toilets other than the toilet near Swadlincote Bus Station
 - asking parish councils to take on cleansing and operation of toilets, in their areas, with the Council paying a grant, as a means of keeping these toilets operational but still making savings in costs.

Members agreed to the proposals although there was concern over the prospect of closing the toilet in East End Car Park, in Swadlincote and it was agreed to keep this open pending further review.

- 2.3 In due course a number of parish councils were asked to consider carrying out the operational duties at toilets in their areas with the Council continuing to fund the service and repair costs. A letter was sent to each Council and a copy of a typical letter is enclosed at Annexe A.
- 2.4 Subsequently following discussions with Ticknall Village Hall Committee, the Council was reminded that in order to comply with a legal agreement, set up when the new Ticknall Village Hall was built, it had an ongoing responsibility to operate the public toilets which are a physical part of the new hall.

- 2.5 The parish councils at Melbourne and Etwall agreed in due course to take on the operation and cleansing of the public toilets in their villages with the Council funding service costs and repairs. Etwall Parish Council have recently reiterated their commitment to the partnership approach and have said they would wish to be consulted on any proposals to change the arrangement. All other parish councils declined to adopt this joint approach and the toilets at Overseal, Repton, Willington and Woodville were closed on 1st April 2000, together with the unparished toilet at Newhall.
- 2.6 It should be noted that the toilet at Overseal was used on a small number of Saturdays by the local bowls club, in the Summer of 2000, with an agreement by the club that they would carry out any required cleansing and pay all service costs. In due course they paid service bills to the value of £56 in respect of this agreement.
- 2.7 As part of the Council's involvement in the SRB initiative, there has been a project called "Life in the Town Centre". As part of this there have been ongoing meetings held with representatives and users of Swadlincote Town Centre including CVS, the Chamber of Trade, Market Initiatives Limited and the Southern Derbyshire Chamber.
- 2.8 In January 2000, as part of this project, a public survey was undertaken of town centre users to obtain their views on numerous aspects of their use of the town. One issue of common complaint and concern was the condition and maintenance of the town centre toilets.
- 2.9 Subsequently a successful bid was made, under the SRB project, to improve the fabric of one town centre toilet. Annexe B lists the improvements proposed using the £10,000 that the SRB project will make available; the work is intended to commence early this financial year. As a condition of approval the bid requires that the Council provides an improved level of maintenance at the toilet.
- 2.10 The SRB bid proposal was approved by the Planning and Economic Development Committee on 24th August 2000. In the report's financial implications, it was pointed out that the necessary increased level of maintenance of the toilets would require additional Council funding to be provided or, as a possible alternative the closure of the other town centre toilet, at East End Car Park so that the maintenance input there could be transferred to the Delph toilets.
- 2.11 As part of the budget process an item was submitted to obtain additional funding at the Delph toilets but was not approved. Therefore if these toilets are to receive the required additional maintenance, after their refurbishment, then either the East End toilets would need to be closed, as described above, or other committee services would need to be reduced to make the appropriate savings.
- 2.12 In the summer of 2001 a usage survey of the two town centre toilets was undertaken and the results are enclosed in Annexe C. It will be seen that both are well used at the moment.
- 2.13 It could be argued that for Swadlincote to have two public toilets is possibly an over provision, especially in a context where provision in the villages has recently been reduced with a number of toilets being closed. However, if the East End Car Park were closed the large number of visits by people with disabilities would require particular consideration and, at the least, it may be appropriate to increase the number of disabled parking bays in the Bus Station Car Park accordingly.

- 2.14 Although the closure of a number of toilets has saved money, the buildings represent an ongoing liability to the Council and staff time is still being spent on inspecting them and arranging for any necessary repairs. The ultimate conclusion to prolonged closure would be demolition and disposal of the land.
- 2.15 It should be noted that the toilet at Woodville also includes a bus shelter which would ideally need to be replaced if the toilet was demolished.
- 2.16 At the meeting of the Urgency Sub Committee, on 31st January 2000, Members expressed the view that there was a need for an overall review of what parishes might be asked to precept for in future, including the full costs of running village toilets themselves.
- 2.17 In the absence of any subsequent general action in this regard, in the meantime, enquiries were again made of those parishes with toilets which had declined to take on the running of toilets in partnership with the Council early in 2000. These parishes were Overseal, Repton, Willington and Woodville. Only one Council has replied formally; Willington Parish Council has advised it is not willing to enter such a partnership. Enquiries of the other three Councils indicate none are willing or able at present to do so either.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Financial information is enclosed at Annexe D which shows in summary
- The total savings made on operating toilets to reduced service levels last financial year were £20,767.
 - A further saving could be made this financial year of £5,602 if the toilets at East End Car Park, Melbourne and Etwall were closed. More than half this figure is due to be spent at East End Car Park and the pump there will soon need replacement at a further (unbudgeted) cost of around £2,000.
 - The approximate cost of demolishing all toilets, other than the Delph and Ticknall is £11,000.
 - After demolition, further and final annual savings of around £7,100 could be expected compared to a budget level similar to this year's.
 - The approximate cost of providing a new bus shelter at Woodville, to current County Council Standards, would be around £3,000, although the County may be able to grant half the total cost.

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 District Council's have powers to provide public toilets but are not legally required to do so.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Council has made significant savings by closing five out of its ten public toilets. In each case the affected parish councils expressed their concern, as did relatively low numbers of the general public.
- 5.2 At two villages, Etwall and Melbourne, the parish councils have taken on the opening, closing, cleaning and operation of the toilets whilst this Council has continued to fund service costs at a relatively modest level.

- 5.3 At the remaining four closed village toilets the parishes have now twice declined an invitation to enter such a partnership.
- 5.4 A usage survey of the two town centre toilets shows high levels of usage at each. However, a public survey shows high levels of dissatisfaction at their condition and levels of maintenance. An SRB bid has been successful in identifying monies to refurbish one of these toilets but requires improved maintenance to be provided.
- 5.5 Demolition of toilets would be required to realise fully the potential cost savings and would release staff time that could be used on other initiatives such as will be required to extend the compost scheme, for example. However, the approximate cost of demolition would have to be found from other budgets before the resulting savings in costs could be achieved.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 The views of Members are sought.

ANNEXE A
(of April report)

Ian Reid
Director of Services

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Our Ref: IR/SAC
Your Ref:

Date: 23rd February, 2000

Clerk to Parish Council

Dear

Changes to Service Levels

The Council is having to make reductions to a number of its services due to financial restrictions and I am writing to all Parish Councils to advise them of the effects in their areas.

A schedule is enclosed of the reductions in _____; where appropriate I have also included the cost of maintaining the service should your Council wish to fund it in the future.

To make the necessary financial savings the Council will need to make these changes effective from 1st April. I appreciate this is a short timetable and it may be difficult for your Council to consider its ability to fund the work itself by the deadline. If this is the case please advise my Secretary, Sally Cope on (01283) 595791, together with the earliest date by which you could advise me. I will then see if the existing service can be continued until that date.

You will see that it will be necessary for the Council to shut the public toilet on _____ to make savings on the costs of opening, closing and cleansing it, together with water and electricity bills. In due course the Council will have to consider demolishing it completely.

As an alternative, your Council may wish to consider taking over the operation and ownership of the toilet although I acknowledge this would require sufficient time for you to consider the cost implications and make budget provision.

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Within the next few weeks I must make arrangements to close the toilet to make the operational savings. However, if you felt able to open and close the toilet as well as cleanse it, from say May onwards, I could consider continuing to pay the service costs until March 2001 in anticipation of fully transferring the toilet to your Council thereafter. Please advise me as quickly as possible whether you would wish to explore such arrangements further, perhaps at a meeting.

If you have any queries or wish to receive any further information about this matter, please contact my Head of Engineering and Design, John Hansed, on (01283) 595770.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Reid
Director of Services

Enc.

c.c. Ward Member

SRB Life in the Town Centre Improvements to Delph toilets

Works proposed to refurbish and improve the toilets include

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Vandal proof fittings (4 no.) | 4,000.00 |
| Prepare and paint wall tiles in brighter colour | 1,400.00 |
| Repairs to wall tiles, floors and fittings | 1,360.00 |
| Mechanical ventilation | 1,120.00 |
| Electronic closing devices (2 no.) | 1,120.00 |
| Improved lighting | 560.00 |
| Baby changing unit | 440.00 |
| Total | 10,000.00 |

ANNEXE C
(of April report)

Week One Bus Station Toilets

| Date | Ladies | Gentlemen | Disabled Persons |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Monday | 286 | 312 | 15 |
| Tuesday | 303 | 197 | 19 |
| Wednesday | 415 | 214 | 25 |
| Thursday | 335 | 180 | 65 |
| Friday | 141 | 204 | 12 |
| Saturday | 255 | 321 | 18 |
| Sunday | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 1735 | 1428 | 154 |

Week One Civic Way East End Toilets

| Date | Ladies | Gentlemen | Disabled Persons |
|--------------|-------------|------------|------------------|
| Total | 1100 | 757 | 216 |

Week Two Bus Station Toilets

| Date | Ladies | Gentlemen | Disabled Persons |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Total | 1422 | 2423 | 55 |

Week Two Civic Way East End Toilets

| Date | Ladies | Gentlemen | Disabled Persons |
|--------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| Total | 785 | 1211 | 107 |

PUBLIC TOILETS - COSTINGS

ANNEXE D
(of April report)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|--------------------------------|------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|----------------------------------|---|
| | 1999/00 | 1999/00 Maintenance costs (see Note 2) £ | 2000/01 Status of toilets | 2000/01 Maintenance costs £ | 1999/00 - 2000/01 Operational Savings due to closure £ | 1999/00 - 2000/01 Maintenance Savings due to closure £ column 2 - column 4 | 2001/02 Potential further savings £ | 2001/02 demolition costs £ | Potential further savings after demolition £ |
| Location of toilets | see Note 1 | | see Note 3 | see Note 4 | see Note 1 | | see Note 5 | see Note 6 | see Note 7 |
| Delph / Swadlincote East End 7 | 4660 | normal | 6630 | | | | | | |
| Swadlincote | 2675 | normal | 3412 | | | | 2992 | 1700 | |
| Etwell | 1118 | partnership | 2104 | | | | 1854 | 1200 | |
| Melbourne | 1254 | partnership | 1006 | | | | 756 | 1400 | |
| Newhall | 1708 | closed | -497 | | approx. | YES | | 1700 | |
| Overseal | 433 | closed | 42 | | £11230 | YES | | 1100 | |
| Repton | 1042 | closed | 34 | | | YES | | 1300 | |
| Ticknall | 4752 | normal | 2502 | | | | | | |
| Willington | 1473 | closed | 343 | | | YES | | 1500 | |
| Woodville | 6143 | closed | 145 | | | YES | | 1100 | |
| | 25258 | | 15721 | | 11230 | 9537 | 5602 | 11000 | 7100 |

Savings made in 2000/01 against budget (columns 5 +6) 20767

Note 1 Cost shown based on tendered price. Actual operating costs are unknown, however approximate operational savings can be stated based on reductions made in cleansing workforce payroll

Note 2 costs include : water and electric charges, business rates (NDR), insurance and building maintenance

Note 3 Partnership with village parish council who have arranged to open, close, clean and supply consumables to toilets

Note 4 Negative figure at Newhall on account of rebate on NDR

Note 5 Estimate based on closing East End, Etwell and Melbourne and essential maintenance only. Further operational savings could only be made by additional redundancies

Note 6 Approximate demolition costs only. Quotations would need to be sought to confirm

Note 7 Compared to financial estimate for 2001/02 and assumes all maintenance costs reduced to zero, following demolition. Ticknall operated as at present and improved maintenance at Delph toilets

Savings potential greater at East End toilets in that new pump (at approx. £2000) required

Information on toilets for which a charge is made

ANNEXE D

| Local Authority | No. of pay toilets | Total cost of pay toilets £ | Cost per toilet £ | Charges | Income from pay toilets |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | 3 | 159,000 | 53,000 | 10p | approx. £17,000 unknown |
| 2 | 2 | 48,500 | 24,250 | 10p 5p for OAP's and children under 16 free for children under 5 | |

The two local authorities providing this information were Melton Borough Council and North West Leicestershire District Council, figures are for 2000/01

Approximate costings for options for variation to service delivery levels

ANNEXE E

1. Additional expenditure required to continue current service provision

| Item | Cost - £ (recurring) | Cost - £ (one off) | Comments |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Increased maintenance at Delph Toilets Provision of replacement pump at East End Toilets | 7,500 | £2,000 | As required by SRB scheme - see also * below |

2. Potential Service Amendments / Developments

| Item | Cost - £ (recurring) | Cost - £ (one off) | Comments |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Accept offer from Overseal for partnership arrangement | 750 | | |
| Demolish Toilets | | | |
| Etwell | | 1,200 | |
| Melbourne | | 1,400 | |
| East End | | 1,700 | |
| Newhall | | 1,700 |) |
| Overseal | | 1,100 |) |
| Repton | | 1,300 |) savings arising after demolition of £4500 p.a. |
| Willington | | 1,500 |) |
| Woodville | | 2,600 |) (includes for replacement bus shelter at £1,500) |
| note that Overseal Toilets are part of the Village Hall | | | |

3. Potential Service Reductions

| Item | Saving - £ (recurring) | Cost - £ (one off) | Comments |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Terminate partnership agreement with Melbourne PC | 590 | | further saving after demolition of £630 p.a. |
| Terminate partnership agreement with Etwell PC | 960 | | further saving after demolition of £280 p.a. |
| Close East End Toilets - all | 1500 | 1000 | would preclude need for new pump and (*) cleaning activity could be transferred to Delph. Further saving after demolition of £1480 p.a. £1000 one off cost of providing more parking bays for disabled people in Bus Station Car Park |
| Close East End Toilets - leave disabled facility open | 600 | | |

Note that savings made after demolition include approximately £2000 in NNDR