

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 21 MAY 2013
title: PUBLICALLY ACCESSIBLE TOILETS IN LONGRIDGE AND GISBURN
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: TERRY LONGDEN, HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider options for the improvement of the current provision on publicly accessible toilet facilities in Gisburn and Longridge
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
 - To be a well managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.
 - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley, encompassing our objective to encourage economic development throughout the borough with a specific focus on tourism.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Two of the three sets of public conveniences that were operated by the Council in Longridge and the one off the A59 in Gisburn were closed in February 2012 as part of a rationalisation of the 24 sets of conveniences that were operated by the Council, leaving 16 sets across the Borough. These toilets were selected for closure after careful consideration against a set of criteria, which included frequency of use and the availability of alternative facilities. The closure of these conveniences was preceded by the launch of a Community Toilet scheme where the public can use, without charge or the need to make a purchase, the toilets in a series of commercial premises such as in cafes, public houses, supermarkets, garden centres etc. A list of the current membership of the Community Toilet scheme is attached as Appendix 1, and is also available on the Council's website.
- 2.2 The closure of the facilities in Gisburn and Longridge caused considerable concern amongst the communities and hence a resolution of the January meeting of this committee was that options for the improvement of the current provision of publicly accessible toilet facilities in both Gisburn and Longridge be investigated.
- 2.3 Mechanisms to address the concerns were proposed. For Longridge, the Head of Engineering Services was to attend a working group to be established by Longridge Town Council that would explore issues relating to the provision of, and demand for facilities in Longridge.

- 2.4 In the case of Gisburn, a proposal to develop arrangements with a local business known to be interested in purchasing the former toilets for use by their customers and to have these facilities made available to the public was to be pursued.

3 ISSUES

Longridge

- 3.1 The Longridge working group has met on two occasions. Members of the group made inspections of the closed toilets. Detailed discussions on the demand for the facilities and how this was matched by the provision of facilities within the Community Toilet scheme followed.
- 3.2 Actions arising as a result of the first meeting were that signage to the modern facilities in the Old Station located near to the closed Berry Lane facilities was installed and the facilities in the local supermarket service station, available from 7:00AM to 10:00PM every day of the week, were welcomed into the Community Toilet Scheme.
- 3.3 Whilst it was recognised that the relatively low usage figures for the Berry Lane and Market Place toilets had underpinned the Council's decision to close these facilities it was now apparent from the public's response that the perception of the value of these facilities exceeds the use that was being made of them.
- 3.4 Various proposals to address the perceived need for additional facilities on Berry lane were discussed. A potential solution which could be managed locally in order to develop the flexibility to address local needs and variations, could be for this Council to make the disused Berry Lane facilities available to the Town Council, and that the Town Council or a body that it establishes, makes arrangements for the facilities to be made available on specified days and times each week and engages a local contractor or organises a local group who will ensure that the toilets are made available and cleaned appropriately. The opening days would include Sunday mornings when all but one of the Community Toilet premises in this locality are closed, and on other days or times when an additional or particular local demand was perceived. This Council would meet the costs of providing the facilities, to include the NNDR, electricity, water and sewage charges and provide the toilet requisites, which are purchased in bulk at advantageous rates. The overall costs to this Council, which could be accommodated within the current budget provision, would not exceed £2,500 p.a. for the limited hours of openings that were discussed. The Town Council however would fund the cleaning and opening / closing arrangements.
- 3.5 The arrangement would be managed by the Town Council and subject to their periodic review.
- 3.6 Members of the working group expressed hope that if the options outlined above is acceptable, that it will be possible to make the Berry Lane toilets available though these arrangements in time for summer events, such as the Longridge Field Day on the 8th June.
- 3.7 This potential solution gained the support of the Town Council when it had the opportunity to consider the matter at it's last meeting, which was on the 8 May. In order to complete this report in time for printing the Clerk to the Longridge Town Council confirmed in advance of the minutes of that meeting, that the Town Councillors agreed to commit to funding the costs of servicing the Berry Lane toilets if the Borough Council agree to make the facilities available as proposed.

Gisburn

- 3.8 The usage of the Council operated toilets in Gisburn was not high. It is recognised however that whilst there are premises in Gisburn that readily make their toilet facilities available to both their customers and visitors, no local premises are currently listed as being a member of the Community Toilets Scheme.
- 3.9 A proposal to address this position is to offer the former Council toilets for sale to a local business that is known to be interested in purchasing the facility in order to make them available to their customers but, with the condition that as long as the facility remains in use as a toilet it is included in the Community Toilet Scheme. It should be noted however that when the Council operated the facility it was available for use 24 hours per day. Whilst this was done for operational reasons this availability was no doubt a factor in the abuse that the facility suffered. Hence if an arrangement with a local purchaser is agreed the accessibility of the toilets would not match the original continuous opening.
- 3.10 This disposal is at an advanced stage and it is intended that a covenant be attached to the sale of the premises that ensures the facilities are included in the Community Toilet Scheme.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – The Council would be liable for the costs in making the Berry Lane facilities available to the Longridge Town Council, estimated not to exceed £2,500 p.a. for the limited opening times proposed. These costs can be accommodated within the existing budget provision.

The consideration received for the sale of the Gisburn premises will be adversely affected by the inclusion of the restrictive covenant.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Both the Longridge Town Council and the local business at Gisburn would be responsible for the provision of adequate 3rd party and insurance to cover the operation of the facilities.
- Political – No such implications arise out of this report
- Reputation - The proposed solutions to the issues are specific to each the site. In the case of Longridge, the proposed solution is a low cost joint arrangement between this Council and Longridge Town Council that is designed to serve a local need. This innovative and constructive approach will not adversely affect the reputations of the each Council.
- Equality & Diversity -There are no adverse Equality or Diversity issues arising from these proposals.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Agree that the facilities of Berry Lane be made available to Longridge Town Council so that they may in turn make arrangements to provide the facilities for public use on the days per week that the Town Council deem appropriate. The costs to be incurred by the Borough Council not to exceed £2,500 p.a.
- 5.2 Agree that the disposal of the facilities to the local business includes a covenant that stipulates that the facilities be included in the Community Toilet Scheme. The details of the terms should be agreed with the Corporate Management Team and reported to the Policy and Finance Committee

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JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: -

Full Council
Community Services Committee 15 January 2013 (min 558)

For further information please ask for Terry Longden, extension 4523

REF: TL/CS/21 05 13

RIBBLE VALLEY COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEME - MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Establishment Name	Location	Male, Female, Disabled, Baby Changing
Lower Buck PH	Edisiford Road, Waddington	M F D
Waddington Arms PH	Clitheroe Road, Waddington	M F D
Country Kitchen	Clitheroe Road, Waddington	MF
Emporium	Clitheroe (Moore Lane)	M F
Café Nero	Clitheroe TC	M/F
Tesco's	Clitheroe TC	M F D BC
Sainsbury's	Clitheroe (Moor Lane)	M F D BC
Homebase	Clitheroe (Moor Lane)	M F D BC
Atrium Café	Clitheroe Castle	M F D BC
Maxwell's	Clitheroe (King Street)	MFD
Swan and Royale	Clitheroe (Castle Street)	MFD
LCC Library	Clitheroe (Church Brow)	M F D
Callooh Callay	Clitheroe (Moor Lane)	MF
Brown Cow	Chatburn	MFD
The Black Bull Inn	Chatburn	MF
Shackletons	Chatburn	M D F
Sainsbury's	Inglewhite Road Longridge	MFD BC
Jay Z Bar	Berry Lane (mid) Longridge	M F
Booth's Service Station shop	Berry Lane (mid) Longridge	MFD
No.65 (café & deli)	Berry Lane (mid) Longridge	M F
Old Station Cafe	Berry Lane (mid) Longridge	M F
Bite 2 Eat (café)	Berry Lane (mid) Longridge	M F
LCC Library (Longridge)	Berry Lane (Top) Longridge	M F D
Durham Ox, Longridge	Berry Lane (Top) , Longridge	M F
White Bull	Market Place ,Longridge	M F
Bull and Royal, Longridge	Derby Road, Longridge	M F
The Corporation Arms	Lower Road, Longridge	M F
Old Oak, Longridge	Preston Road, Longridge	M F
Ye Horns Inn,	Horns Lane, nr Longridge	M F
Millstone	Mellor	M F D
Traders Arms	Mellor	M F
Sawley Arms	Mellor	M F D
Shireburn Arms	Hurst Green	M F D BC
LCC Library (Read)	41 Whalley Road, Read	M F
Blackbull Ribchester	Church St, Ribchester	M F
Ribchester Arms	Blackburn Road , Ribchester	M F
New Drop Inn	Old Clitheroe Road, Dutton	M F
Tosside Community Centre	Tosside	M F

Calves Head PH	Worston	M F
Bashall Barn	Twitter lane	MFDBC
The Plate Backridge Farm	Twitter Lane	M F D
MacDonald's	Barrow Brook Service area	M F D BC
Cooperative Service Station	Barrow Brook Service area	M F D
Primrose Service Station	Little Moor Clitheroe (South)	M F D
Black bull Old Langho	Old Lango	MFD
Broughton Inn, Broughton	Garstang Road Broughton	M F
Stags Head,	Whittingham Lane, Goosnargh	M F
Plough Inn, Grimsargh	Preston Road, Goosnargh	M F
Spring Wood Centre (LCC)	Spring Wood Whalley	M F
Beacon Fell Visitor Centre (LCC)	Beacon Fell	M F D
Pantry Café	A59 East Marton	MF
The Bull (Ribble Valley Inns)	A59 Broughton	M F D BC

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Correct as of 01/05/13