

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 26 MAY 2015

EASTHAVEN TOILETS – VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

REPORT BY STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT

This report seeks homologation of the decision to give the keys to Community of Easthaven to operate the toilets on a volunteer basis for a trial period of one year from 1 May 2015, with support and assistance from Angus Council, and seeks approval to transfer the resources outlined in this report.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) homologates the decision of the Convener and Vice Convener of the Communities Committee, in consultation with the Strategic Director – Communities, to agree to the Volunteer Management of the toilets with support and assistance from Angus Council from 1 May 2015;
- (ii) agrees provision of financial resources on a pro rata basis as outlined in the report;
- (iii) commends the Easthaven Community for their continued efforts in volunteering and enhancement of their community.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Communities that are prosperous and fair
- Communities that are learning and supportive
- Communities that are safe and strong
- Communities that are caring and healthy

3. BACKGROUND

Members will be aware of the extensive efforts of the Community of Easthaven to enhance their community, make use of the cycle path that runs along the costal path, encourage responsible dog ownership and tackle littering in their community. These efforts have seen them achieve national prominence through their work on the Easthaven Garden, the Easthaven 800 project and receive numerous awards and commendations.

The Community of Easthaven have also secured significant resources to enhance the exterior of the toilet block and surrounding area within the village including the provision of tourist information screens and detail about the history of Easthaven. Flowers are placed in to toilets and there is an opportunity for donations and comments to be left by patrons. The toilets are well used both in terms of Easthaven being a destination area but also as the village is on the main cycle path between Carnoustie and Arbroath.

4. CURRENT POSITION

Angus Council operated the toilets through Tayside Contacts with the toilets opening between April and October. Annual costs are made up of water charges, maintenance charges and the cost of opening, closing and cleaning along with necessary supplies. In 2013/14 the total cost of operation was £4362 and in 2014/15 the total cost was £7,218 with the key difference being maintenance costs alongside an increase in water and opening and closing charges. The maintenance costs were largely down to additional painting caused by vandalism. Breaking the costs down the charges for the last year were Water, £736, Maintenance £1,610, Cleaning £4,827. There is no electricity charge for this facility.

The community have expressed a desire to have more control over the opening and closing of the toilets and a desire to see the facility add to the community and not detract from it, especially given the Community Funded enhancements to the external fabric of the building.

To achieve this Community have agreed to open, close, clean and stock the toilets and deal with issues such as any painting during the season. In return it is proposed that Angus Council will provide a sum £2,500 to the community which is roughly half the opening, closing and cleaning etc costs. This will enable the community to properly run the facility and also ensure there is a genuine sense of this being a partnership. Angus Council will continue to take care of maintenance and the septic tank as normal to make the project more deliverable for the volunteers.

Following discussion with the community it has also been agreed that in the first year, and in response to community wishes, that the Council use the balance of the overall cost (less existing costs paid to Tayside Contracts) to explore the possibility of installation of enhanced lighting round the toilets and the installation of electricity, either to the toilets or the area in general, as part of a longer term goal of securing suitable refreshment provision in the area in partnership with the local community and enhance some elements of security signage.

Members are asked to note that the necessary insurances are in place and Tayside Contracts have been given a month's notice in accordance with the current contract arrangements.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the arrangement will be contained within existing budgets.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The development of this partnership represents an enhancement of partnership working and further demonstration of the Council's commitment to working with local communities ahead of the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill requirements.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

REPORT AUTHORS: Alan McKeown – Strategic Director Communities

EMAIL DETAILS: Communities@angus.gov.uk