

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**16 DECEMBER 2021**

**UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION**

**REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**ABSTRACT**

It was agreed at the meeting of Angus Council on 24 September 2021 to set-aside £100,000 of funding available for COVID-19 response, recovery and renewal projects for the re-opening of community toilets that were previously closed. This report brings forward detailed proposals on how the set-aside funding will be used.

**1. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that Council agrees to:

- (i) the re-opening of the public toilet at Station Road, Inverkeilor;
- (ii) fund a partnership agreement with the Inch Maintenance Preservation Society to open and manage the public toilet at Bridge Street (Inch Park), Brechin;
- (iii) the installation of a Changing Places facility within the existing building at West Links, Arbroath;
- (iv) provide funding for community groups that currently open/manage public toilets to undertake infrastructure improvements to the facilities they manage, as detailed in paragraph 5.7 of this report; and
- (v) the Interim Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth bringing a further report to Communities Committee regarding a wider review of public toilet provision in Angus to encompass the expansion of the Toilet Comfort Partnership Scheme and an update on the funding provided to community groups to make improvements to the toilets they manage

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN**

The proposals contained in this report align with the following Council Plan priorities:

Priority 2: People – We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities

Priority 3: Place – We want our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Report [285/21](#) submitted to the meeting of Angus Council on 24 September 2021 set out an updated budget strategy for the Council in relation to the use of uncommitted funds and initial proposals for the use of some of those funds for COVID-19 response, recovery and renewal purposes.
- 3.2 When members considered Report [285/21](#) at the meeting on 24 September 2021, Councillor Salmond, seconded by Councillor Macmillan Douglas, moved the motion that the council use £1.0 million of the COVID-19 response, recovery and renewal uncommitted funds to deliver improved winter weather resilience measures and roads maintenance throughout Angus, ahead of the winter 2021/22.

- 3.3 Councillor Durno, seconded by Councillor Devine, moved as an amendment that, in addition to the above, the Council set aside £100,000 of the remaining £877,000 available for further COVID-19 response, recovery and renewal projects for the re-opening of community toilets to help with active travel, with a further report to be brought back to a future meeting detailing how the funds would be used.
- 3.4 As recorded in the minute of the meeting of 24 September 2021, the Council resolved to approve the contents of the motion and the amendment as detailed above.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 A review of previously closed public toilets identified that the opportunities to re-open facilities was limited due to the sale and change of ownership of former public toilet buildings. It was also identified that, although some facilities have closed, new facilities have become available, for example through partnerships with local businesses and public access to toilets at Council and Angus Alive buildings.
- 4.2 Council officers met with the elected members, who raised the motion and amendment at the Council meeting on 24 September 2021, to discuss the status of previously closed public toilets and how the set aside £100,000 could be used to improve access to community toilets in Angus.
- 4.3 There was consideration given to improving access to Changing Places facilities, which meet the needs of people with a disability that requires extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. Standard accessible toilets do not meet the needs of all people with a disability.

#### **5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the closed public toilet at Station Road, Inverkeilor is re-opened on a seasonal (Spring to Autumn) basis. It has been identified that the Council owned facility remains available and is in a reasonable, working condition.
- 5.2 It was agreed at Communities committee on 14 November 2013 (Report [611/13](#)) that the public toilet at Meikle Mill (Inch Park), Brechin would close. In recent years, the Inch Maintenance Preservation Society (IMPS) have leased facilities at Inch Park and have kept the public toilet open on a seasonal basis.
- 5.3 Angus Council have partnership agreements with community groups for the running/opening of 7 public toilets, which includes an annual grant contribution made to the groups. It is proposed that a similar agreement (and payment) is made with the IMPS group. This would more fairly recognise the work of the group and provide more assurance that the toilet facility will remain open to the public.
- 5.4 It is proposed that a Changing Places facility is installed within the building that currently houses the public toilets at the West Links, Arbroath. It has been identified there is a surplus room on the west side of the building that provides sufficient space and access for a Changing Places facility.
- 5.5 The West Links, Arbroath is one of our most visited destination parks in Angus and this year a new wheelchair swing and a wheelchair accessible crazy golf course at the park have been installed. It is considered that the introduction of a Changing Places facility will further assist access and enjoyment of the park by all visitors.
- 5.6 As referenced in paragraph 5.3, we currently have partnerships with community groups for the running/opening of 7 public toilets. An annual grant contribution is made to the groups to assist with operating costs, but no financial support is provided for improvements. For example, some of the facilities don't have heating or lighting, which prevents the groups from opening during the winter.
- 5.7 It is proposed that the remainder of the set aside £100,000 is used to provide funding for community groups to make improvements to the public toilets they currently manage. This would be based on an application process and funding awarded on a first-come-first-served basis, and conditional on meeting criteria as determined by the Interim Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth.

- 5.8 In addition to the above, Council officers have been in discussion with the Angus Tourism Co-operative regarding a joint initiative to promote a partnership scheme for local business to make their toilet facilities accessible to non-paying customers. It is proposed that the Interim Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth brings back a report regarding this initiative as part of a wider review of public toilet provision across the county.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The table below provides a breakdown of the estimated cost for each of the proposals contained within this report.

Proposal	Cost
Reopening of Station Road, Inverkeilor public toilet on a seasonal basis (annual cost that includes cleaning and miscellaneous property costs). Year 1 costs will be met from £100k funds set aside, costs thereafter will need to be contained in existing budgets	£3,200
Partnership agreement with IMPS group to open the Inch Park, Brechin public toilet (an annual payment would be made to the group following signature to a partnership agreement). Year 1 costs will be met from £100k funds set aside, costs thereafter will need to be contained in existing budgets	£1,800
Installation of Changing Places facility at West Links, Arbroath (cost estimate has been made based on feasibility drawings that have been prepared)	£53,000
Funding for community groups that currently manage public toilets to undertake infrastructure improvements (as detailed in paragraph 5.7, this will be provided on an application basis)	£42,000 (the actual will be what is left from the set aside £100,000 after the above proposals have been completed)

- 6.2 Reference is made to Report [285/21](#) and Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 24 September 2021. The above will be met from COVID-19 response, recovery and renewal uncommitted funds and the £100,000 that had been set aside for reopening of community toilets.
- 6.3 It is recognised that these are one-off funds and recurring costs associated with the continued opening of Inverkeilor public toilet and payment to the IMPS group for opening of the Inch Park, Brechin public toilet will require to be contained within the existing revenue budget of Environmental Services once the initial allocation from the £100,000 set aside has been used.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

## 8. CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and Director of Legal and Democratic Services were consulted in the preparation of this report.

**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report [285/21](#)  
Report [611/13](#)

**REPORT AUTHOR: Graeme Dailly, Service Leader – Environmental Services**  
**EMAIL DETAILS: [communities@angus.gov.uk](mailto:communities@angus.gov.uk)**