

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 AUGUST 2022

REVIEW OF PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION

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

ABSTRACT

This report details the current provision of publicly available toilets in Angus and proposes that existing Superloo premises are retained on the basis they become unattended facilities. It is also proposed that further consideration is given to increasing the number of public toilets through partnership agreements with businesses and group and consideration of areas of need for Changing Places toilets.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to:

- (i) the continued opening of the three Superloo facilities in Arbroath, Forfar and Montrose on the basis they become unattended facilities, subject to employee consultation as detailed in section 5;
- (ii) the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth bringing a report to Communities Committee on the options for increasing the number of public toilets through further partnership agreements with businesses and groups; and
- (iii) the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth undertaking an exercise to engage with relevant groups and organisations to identify the areas of greatest need for Changing Places facilities.

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 Reference is made to Report [394/21](#) submitted to the meeting of Angus Council on 16 December 2021. It was agreed at the meeting that the Interim Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth would bring a further report to Communities Committee regarding a wider review of public toilet provision in Angus.
- 3.2 There is no statutory duty for local authorities to provide public toilets, however it is recognised that provision of public toilets does matter and is particularly important for sections of our communities, including people with disabilities, older people and families with younger children. It is also recognised that toilet provision is important to tourists and visitors to Angus who make a significant contribution to local economies.
- 3.3 The non-statutory provision of public toilets needs to be balanced with the increasing financial pressure on the local authority to deliver a balanced budget. This increasing pressure has already seen previous reviews of public toilets and changes made to deliver savings and does require us to continue to rethink how we best meet the demand for public toilet provision.

- 3.4 The number of publicly available toilets has increased in recent years through enabling access to Council and Angus Alive buildings, introducing business comfort partnership schemes, and highlighting Changing Places facilities available in non-council buildings. As detailed in paragraph 4.1, the Council website currently references 51 public toilet facilities in Angus.
- 3.5 It was agreed at the Communities Committee meeting on 12 April 2016 (Report [144/16](#)) that the Superloos at Brechin and Kirriemuir would change from attended facilities (employee on duty to take payment from visitors and monitor the facility) to unattended facilities. There remains three Superloos (attended facilities) at Arbroath, Forfar and Montrose.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 A record of all public toilets in Angus listed by location is available on the Council website at www.angus.gov.uk/toilets. The table below provides a breakdown of the public toilets by category.

Type	Description	Number
Unattended Public toilets	Council managed facilities that are free to use and do not have an attendant on duty. Some are seasonal opening only.	14
Superloo (attended) toilets	Council managed facilities that have an attendant on duty and visitors are charged to use.	3
Council buildings with publicly accessible toilets	Council buildings that have made their employee/visitor toilet available for public use.	5
Angus Alive buildings with publicly accessible toilets	Angus Alive buildings, such as sports centres, museums and libraries that have made their employee/visitor toilet available for public use.	16
Community partnership toilets	Council owned facilities that are maintained by a community group. An annual grant contribution is made to the groups to assist with operating costs.	7
Comfort (business) partnership scheme toilets	Businesses make their toilet facilities accessible to non-paying customers. An annual payment is made to the business to assist with operating costs.	4
Changing Places facilities in non-council buildings	Premises make their facilities available to non-paying customers (no annual payment made).	2
Total		51

- 4.2 Included in the above are 9 RADAR key accessible toilets and 10 Changing Places toilets and their locations are shown on the Council website at www.angus.gov.uk/toilets. The RADAR national key scheme offers disabled people independent access to public toilets 24 hours/day with a special key that is readily available to buy. Changing Places facilities meet the needs of people with a disability that requires extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably.
- 4.3 There is a charge of 30 pence to use a Superloo facility and the table below shows the usage of the 3 Superloos. The table highlights that the trend has been for reducing usage of the facilities. There are no figures from 2019/20 as the charge at Superloos has been suspended since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Superloo	Number of paying visitors per year (1 April to 31 March)		
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Market Place, Arbroath	22,583	19,881	18,967
Buttermarket, Forfar	28,085	26,083	22,767
Baltic Street, Montrose	17,631	18,356	16,545

- 4.4 A costing exercise was carried out using paying visitor numbers and annual operating costs (staffing, utilities, rates, property maintenance) to calculate the actual cost per visit at each Superloo, and the results are tabled below.

Superloo	Cost per use/visit (2018/19)
Market Place, Arbroath	£2.21
Buttermarket, Forfar	£1.71
Baltic Street, Montrose	£2.41

- 4.5 There are currently only 4 businesses that have entered into the comfort partnership scheme, however Council officers have been in consultation with the Angus Tourism Co-operative (ATC) to discuss how the scheme could be developed further.
- 4.6 The ATC used their contact lists/channels to send a survey to business across Angus and received 23 responses. 16 replied to say that they would be willing to allow non-paying customers to use their toilet facilities as part of a scheme that provided a grant payment and would agree to display signage highlighting membership of the scheme to non-paying customers. The expectation for payment varies significantly from nothing to £3,000 per year and several did not state a figure.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Paragraph 4.4 highlights that the cost of operating Superloos is very high relative to the number of visitors using the facilities. It is recognised however that the three Superloos in Arbroath, Forfar and Montrose ensure there is adequate public toilet provision in the town centres.
- 5.2 The public toilets at Church Street, Brechin and Reform Street, Kirriemuir changed from Superloos to unattended public toilets during 2016. Since they became unattended there have been no significant issues or complaints regarding the facilities. It is proposed that the three existing Superloos follow the same approach and transition to becoming unattended facilities.
- 5.3 If the committee agree to the existing Superloos becoming unattended, the decision will only be finalised once consultation with the seven employees currently based at the Superloos has been undertaken. The Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth would bring a report back to Communities Committee if the consultation leads to new issues emerging that have not previously been considered and requires amendment to the proposals detailed in this report.
- 5.4 If following the employee consultation it is decided to proceed with making the Superloos unattended, the Council's policy on managing redundancy would be followed to implement the staffing reduction and we would seek to use such measures as redeployment and the use of the Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy (ER/VR) Scheme. These, and every other alternative option would be explored to avoid the need for compulsory redundancies. This will include considering the amendment of posts to cover cleaning and caretaking duties only.
- 5.5 The results of the survey undertaken by the Angus Tourism Co-operative, as detailed in paragraph 4.6, indicate there is the potential to increase public toilet provision via more comfort scheme partnerships with businesses. It is proposed that further consideration is given to how the comfort partnership scheme could be expanded using some or all of the savings from the Superloos becoming unattended, as detailed in section 6, and that a report is brought back to committee on the options for expanding the scheme.
- 5.6 It was agreed at the meeting of Angus Council on 16 December 2021 (Report [394/21](#)) to introduce a Changing Places toilet at West Links, Arbroath. The need to consider where future Changing Places toilet provision should be provided was also discussed following a deputation by a representative from PAMIS (Promoting a More Inclusive Society). It is proposed that we engage with PAMIS and other relevant groups to identify the locations of greatest need in Angus and to help identify funding for additional Changing Places facilities.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The change from attended to unattended facilities at the three existing Superloo facilities would generate an estimated net annual saving of £61,000 as shown in the table below.

Description	£'000
Staff saving from changing to unattended facilities	135
Loss of income	(30)
Additional cleaning costs	(44)
Net estimated total saving	61

6.2 As detailed in paragraph 5.5, it is proposed that a further report is brought to committee presenting the options for using some or all of the above saving to expand the comfort partnership scheme in Angus. The net saving from the review of public toilet provision will therefore only be finalised once the report has been brought back to committee.

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 [144/16](#)
- Report [394/21](#)

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Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

Step 1

Name of Proposal (includes e. g. budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions):

Review of public toilet provision.

Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment Yes/No

(A) If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people Yes/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics Yes/No

(iii) It is for information only Yes/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year Yes/No

(v) It is technical Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

(B) If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment Yes/No

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Yes/No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.
If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service:

Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth / Environmental Services

(ii)Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

No.

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

To sustain the provision of public toilets in Angus, making best use of available resources.

(iv)Is it a new proposal? Yes/~~No~~ Please indicate OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? ~~Yes~~/No Please indicate

Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees Yes/~~No~~

Job Applicants ~~Yes~~/No

Service users ~~Yes~~/No

Members of the public Yes/~~No~~

Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:

Internal data (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Usage figures for each Superloo were reviewed. A breakdown of all public toilets by type, including RADAR and Changing Places toilets, was collated and reviewed.

Internal consultation (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

External data (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

A survey was carried out by the Angus Tourism Co-operative to gauge interest from Angus members/businesses to join a partnership scheme allowing free public access to toilets. Results of the survey were reviewed.

External consultation (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Consultation took place with the Angus Tourism Co-operative regarding feasibility of a business partnership scheme for toilet provision in Angus.

Other (general information as appropriate).

Step 6: Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? Yes/No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups? Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.

Age

Impact

Neutral – all existing public toilet facilities would be retained.

Disability

Impact

Neutral – all existing public toilet facilities would be retained.

Gender reassignment

Impact

Neutral

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact

Neutral

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact

Neutral.

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

Impact

Neutral

Religion or Belief

Impact

Neutral

Sex

Impact

Neutral

Sexual orientation

Impact

Neutral

Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

No negative impacts have been identified.

Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?

Not applicable – no potentially negative impacts have been identified.

Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.

Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?

Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?

Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

Step 13(A) What evidence do you have about any socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome in relation to this strategic issue?

Step 13(B) Please state if there are any gaps in socio-economic evidence for this strategy and how you will take measures to gather the evidence you need.

Step 13(C) Are there any potential impacts this strategy may have specifically on the undernoted groupings? Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each grouping.

Low and/or No Wealth (e.g. those with enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.

Impact

Material Deprivation (i.e. those unable to access basic goods and services e.g. repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies).

Impact

Area Deprivation (i.e. where people live (e.g. rural areas), or where they work (e.g. accessibility of transport)).

Impact

Socio-economic Background i.e. social class including parents' education, people's employment and income.

Impact

Other – please indicate

Step 13(D) Please state below if there are measures which could be taken to reduce socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome.

Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?

Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?

On the Angus Council website alongside committee report.

Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation. Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Graeme Dailly, Service Leader – Environmental Services

Reviewed by: Susanne Austin, Team Leader – Waste Strategy & Compliance

Approved by: Alison Smith, Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth

NB. There are several worked examples of separate EIA and FSD Assessments in the Guidance which may be of use to you.
