

## Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 16/17: Public Conveniences - Newbury		Paul Hendry - Countryside Manager	19 January 2016 Version 2 (Exec)
<b>Proposal:</b>	To reduce expenditure on the Newbury Public Conveniences by either transferring them to Newbury Town Council or closing them.		
<b>Total budget 15/16:</b>	£70,000	<b>Recommended officer saving 16/17:</b>	£70,000 (100%)
<b>Initial proposed saving 16/17:</b>	£70,000 (100%)	<b>Final recommendation to Executive 16/17:</b>	To proceed with this savings proposal, without any modifications.
<b>Nos of responses:</b>	We received 25 responses from individuals, one from Newbury Town Council, one from the Green Party and one from the Highways and Transport Service.		
<b>Key issues raised:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newbury Town Council stated that they are willing to work with WBC to look at the options. In their own consultations on becoming involved financially two out of three respondents said the PC's should be retained.</li> <li>• Closure of the Newbury public conveniences will impact on the elderly, those with small children and those with disabilities. The wharf toilets are the nicest to use in the town centre.</li> <li>• Closure of the Pembroke Road toilets will not present a problem at all as no one would choose them over the new facilities at Parkway.</li> <li>• The wharf toilets are essential for the visiting tourist buses. Their closure could result in less day visitors and coach visitors stopping in Newbury</li> <li>• Drivers and customers of the new relocated bus station will need to have toilet facilities unless new facilities are provided.</li> <li>• The Wharf toilets are used by the market traders</li> <li>• There will be an impact on the late night economy and those who use the burger vans and food outlets in the evenings.</li> <li>• Everyone who shops in Newbury will be impacted.</li> <li>• If Pembroke Road closes there will be an impact on the 'Shopmobility' service. Pembroke Road toilets is the only toilet facility they have access to.</li> <li>• It's a damning indictment at the state of our society that the Council is even considering the last public toilets in Newbury. The Kennet Centre and Parkway are not alternatives as these are privately owned.</li> <li>• It should be self evident to sensible people that public conveniences are part of a civilized society. There was no need to build elaborate wharf toilets, the Council must learn to provide sensible facilities at a reasonable cost. PC's are a basic human right.</li> <li>• Local businesses need to attract people into the town so give visitors the basic facilities they need.</li> <li>• There will be increased incidences of defecation in the street. Toilets are essential on public health grounds.</li> </ul>		

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<b>Equality issues:</b>	This proposal will impact on families with young children, the elderly and those with a disability. The Pembroke Road facility is used by the staff and customers of 'Shopmobility'.		
<b>Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:</b>	<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Council response</b>	
	Explore charging. Reintroduce the concept of 'spend a penny'.	This was previously considered but the income is minimal in comparison with the cost of provision. There are also structural adaptations required and therefore capital expenditure.	
	Find another organisation to provide the facilities such as the Town Council/BID. Approach local businesses to sponsor the facility.	This is being discussed although the Town Council has its own financial pressures. Discussions are ongoing.	
	Provide simpler automated facilities instead of 'superloos'.	This has been tried in other local authority areas but there is a varied level of success. There is other toilet provision in the Town Centre at Parkway and the Kennet Centre. Both of these facilities are of a higher standard.	
	Make sure that alternative facilities, such as the Newbury Library toilets are signposted and advertised/promoted.	This will be considered but there will be a one off capital cost.	
	Build a new facility in the new relocated bus station (and there was a related but separate suggestion that Wharf facility is too elaborate and that a more basic facility is all that's required).	The discussions over the relocated bus station are ongoing. The current proposal includes WC facilities for bus drivers.	
<b>Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:</b>	<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Council response</b>	
	Members allowances to go back at least to where they were before the Conservative group awarded itself a 16.5% pay rise in May 2015.	This is a matter for Members to consider.	

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	Keep these PC's open and use these instead of building a designated facility within the new relocated bus station.	The discussions over the relocated bus station are ongoing. The current proposal includes WC facilities for bus drivers.	
<b>Suggestions for how others may help contribute:</b>	Newbury Town Council has stated that they will explore options with WBC in order to keep the facilities open, but that they also have their own financial concerns to address. If an alternative solution cannot be found 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2016 the facilities will have to close.		
<b>Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:</b>	The exercise has not highlighted any impacts that have not already been anticipated. There are other alternative facilities elsewhere at the Kennet Centre and the new Parkway shopping facility. Plans for a relocated bus station are under consideration, if WCs are required there then I understand this will be for drivers only and is unlikely to include public provision. The Pembroke Road facility could close but there will be a negative impact on 'Shopmobility'. Tourist bus visitors may be impacted but there are alternatives and I would suggest that visitors could combine a visit with a refreshment stop as part of refreshment/shopping experience.		
<b>Officer recommendation as a result of responses:</b>	Undertake further discussions with NTC over the future of the Wharf but close the facilities on 1 April 2016, if an agreement on funding cannot be reached. Undertake further discussions required with 'Shopmobility' regarding the potential provision for staff and disabled users at the Pembroke Road facility and the relevance of any historic legal agreement which might exist. However, if the cost of operating the facility will not be covered, the WCs will be closed.  Subject to discussions with Shopmobility (Pembroke Rd) and Newbury Town Council (the Wharf) it is recommended that the facilities should close.		

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