

**Subject:** Portfolio response to the Public  
Convenience Task & Finish Group

**Status:** For Publication

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**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> July 2008

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**Report of:** Head of Financial Services

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**Portfolio**

**Holder:** Finance & Resources

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**Key Decision:** No

Forward Plan  General Exception  Special Urgency

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the response of the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources to the Task and Finish Group.

**2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on all of the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Quality Services to Customers (Customers, Improvement)
- Delivering Regeneration across the Borough (Economy, Housing)
- Keeping Our Borough Clean and Green (Environment)
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)
- Improving health and well being across the Borough (Health, Housing)
- Well Managed Council (Improvement, Community Network)

**3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Financial – Council needs to ensure that resources are targeted in line with the Councils priorities
- Reputational – Council needs to ensure that the provision of Council facilities enhances the reputation of the Council and its service provision

## **4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS**

- 4.1 A scrutiny form was completed by an Elected Member who raised concerns about public conveniences, following which the Executive Director of Resources presented a report to Policy Scrutiny in January 2007, which outlined options in respect of the provision of public conveniences in Rossendale.
- 4.2 The Policy Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to investigate current usage of public conveniences and consider how to take this forward. A copy of the Task and Finish Group's Report is attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 4.3 The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were as follows and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources has set out observations for each recommendation :

### **Recommendation 1**

That the opening times of public conveniences throughout the Borough be extended to include Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, where possible.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 1**

Weekend / Bank Holiday opening - No costing has been made in the report however this is estimated at £3,300 per annum per site being c. £20,000 per annum in total. It is appropriate that this matter be considered in line with the Council's annual Budget and Policy framework

### **Recommendation 2**

That consideration be given to the possible re-opening of Crawshawbooth, Edenfield and Bacup facilities, in the future.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 2**

Re-opening of 3 facilities – The cost is estimated at c. £38,000. It is appropriate that this matter be consider in line with the Council's annual Budget and Policy framework

### **Recommendation 3**

That consideration be given to asking the traders of Bacup Market to allow the public the use of their facilities.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 3**

Open Bacup Market to the public – In principle this would seem a reasonable recommendations initially for Market days only.

### **Recommendation 4**

That a six month pilot of the Community Toilet Scheme be considered for Bacup, to include developing the Scheme in buildings within the Council's remit, to include a retainer fee eg sport centres, libraries, in consultation with Lancashire County Council.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 4**

Community Toilet Scheme, trial at Bacup – This is supported on the grounds that this provides an alternative method of service provision at a potentially reduced cost and would recommend that the NEATs (supported as necessary by the Property Services Manager) implements a trial for say 4 months

### **Recommendation 5**

That consideration be given to a rolling programme of painting and upgrading of all public conveniences within the Borough, with a budget of £20,000 to be allocated to begin the upgrading of public conveniences and consider using the probation service as a form to assist with any work needed.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 5**

Rolling upgrade programme - It is appropriate that this matter be consider in line with the Council's annual Budget and Policy framework, the Council's asset management plan AMP) and the annual maintenance plan which is derived from the AMP.

### **Recommendation 6**

That consideration be given to the future management of these facilities with continuous resources being made available to improve and maintain the facilities.

### **Portfolio Holder's Response to Recommendation 6**

Future Maintenance and Resources – Members have already approved annual revenue budget resources of £22,600 for cleaning and maintenance.

## **Portfolio Holder's general observations**

- The Council is committed to the principle of the provision of Public Convenience as a front line service to support corporate priorities and its shared vision of "Rossendale – A Cracking Place to Live".
- The report of the Task and Finish Group recognised that what the Council does provide, when inspected, appeared reasonable.
- The 08/09 budget have provided a maintenance and cleaning budget of £22,600

### **COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

#### **5. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 5.1 The financial implications are documented and considered in both this report and supporting appendices

#### **6. MONITORING OFFICER**

- 6.1 The Council will need to consider all legal issues connected with any new arrangements. Advice will be sought from legal services.

#### **7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)**

- 7.1 There are no people and organizational development issues

#### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 That the Budget and Policy framework be the process by which members resolve the decision on further expenditure is resolved.
- 8.2 That officers investigate those suggested improvements to service provision where cost is deemed not to be significant.

#### **9. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 9.1 That the overview and scrutiny recommendations (1,2, 5 and 6 above) are deferred and considered as part of the 2009/10 budget process
- 9.2 That the Neighbourhood Environment Action Teams (NEATs) [supported by the Property Services Manager] are authorised to negotiate with appropriate Bacup business and government agency buildings with a view to implementing a Community Toilet Scheme for a 4 month trial period with any conclusions being reported back to Members as part of the Budget and Policy Framework for 09/10

9.3 That the NEATs (supported by the Property Services Manager) are authorized to investigate the logistics of opening the Bacup Market toilets to the public initially on market days and if feasible be authorized to do so.

## 10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 O&S Task and Finish Group

## 11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Yes / No

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes / No

## 12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes / No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached Yes / No

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Task And Finish Group Report	Appendix 1 (attached)