

Subject: Community Toilet Scheme –
Feedback on the Bacup pilot

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 17th June 2009

Report of: Chief Executive

Portfolio

Holder: Environmental Services

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the recommendation made by Cabinet on 30th July 2008 that consideration be given to asking the traders of Bacup Market to allow the public the use of their facilities and that a pilot of a Community Toilet Scheme is considered for Bacup.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities.
 - Promoting the Borough.
 - Delivering regeneration across the Borough.
 - Delivering quality services to our customers.
 - Keeping the borough clean, green and safe.
 - Providing value for money services.

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.
- The successful introduction of a scheme in one part of the Borough (in this case Bacup) does not guarantee a blanket adoption throughout Rossendale.
- The utilisation of business premises as a Community Toilet relies on the goodwill of the owner. Should the business change hands there is no guarantee that that goodwill will be replicated.

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.
- 4.3 In response to the recommendations by Cabinet on 30th July 2008 the Communities Team has piloted a Community Toilet scheme in Bacup utilising the Maden Centre, Carolines Café and Bacup Market.
- 4.4 It should be pointed out that a Local Authority has no duty to provide public conveniences, but if it does decide to provide public toilets this must be balanced against other services to avoid excessive burdens on the local taxpayers.
- 4.5 Research shows several local authorities have adopted a Community Toilet Scheme. These schemes utilise the bigger supermarkets i.e. Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrison's and fast food restaurants such as MacDonald's, Burger King, and Kentucky Fried Chicken. No local authorities researched have a Community Toilet Scheme in a public building.
- 4.6 Authorities who have introduced a Community Toilet Scheme have paid between £500.00 and £1,000.00 per participant towards maintenance and cleaning. The amount paid has been dependent on the facilities offered for example D.D.A. compliant.

5. Feedback on the Bacup Community Toilet Scheme

- 5.1 There were no public buildings within Bacup town centre willing to participate; those contacted all said it would pose security problems having members of the public entering building just to use the facilities.
- 5.2 Bacup Leisure Hall has toilets but would not consider allowing their use for members of the public because of the potential security risk. It is also away from the town centre and not easily accessible on foot.

- 5.3 Bacup Market Toilets did shut due to incidents of misuse but as part of the scheme they were reinstated as open to the public on market days Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.
- 5.4 There are no larger size supermarkets or any of the well known fast food restaurants mentioned at 4.5 located in Bacup, as research has identified that these are the most likely participants in a Community Toilet scheme. The one supermarket in Bacup, the Co-op is located near to the Bacup Market but has no customer toilet facilities. Its own toilets are in a position which precludes their use by the general public, due to security reasons.
- 5.5 The Community Toilet Scheme was introduced at the end of August 2008 for a six month trial period. Under that scheme members of the public could utilise the toilet facilities at Carolines Café, The Maden Centre and Bacup Market during the premises' opening hours and without the need to make a purchase.
- 5.6 The scheme was promoted through the web site, in the local press and through posters in areas like the notice boards. Participating premises also displayed a sticker in their window alerting the public that they were taking part in the scheme.
- 5.7 Both Carolines Café and the Maden Centre are happy to continue the scheme and have not experienced any problems such as vandalism etc. Bacup Market toilets have experienced a small amount of vandalism but are happy to continue participating. Although none of the participants have been able to calculate an exact figure they have all witnessed an increase in the use of their toilet facility.
- 5.8 The present public toilet facility on Burnley Road, Bacup has been shut during the length of the pilot scheme. Should it be reinstated it would result in a revenue cost of £5,000 per annum for day to day running cost including cleaning, opening up, rents and rates, utilities repairs and maintenance, insurance, supplies and transport. It would require a one off capital expenditure of £26,000 to bring the facility up to DDA compliance and £1,200 for general repairs of building. There would also be a one off revenue and capital recommissioning cost to reopen the facility of £12,000.
- 5.9 The cost for continuing the pilot scheme on a more formal arrangement would have a revenue cost of £1,700 per annum.
- 5.10 One shortfall in the pilot scheme is that facilities are closed on Sundays.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 Financial matters are detailed within the report. Funding is included in the Councils current year budget.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 No comments

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 No HR implications but Equality implications.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Community Toilet scheme pilot in Bacup clearly demonstrates that with the goodwill of participants in the scheme, the cooperation of local people and visitors you can run a scheme that is workable and cost effective.

9.2 The portfolio holder would like to place on record a sincere thank you to Carolines Café, The Maden Centre and the Market Management and Traders for their efforts in participating in this pilot. If a Community Toilet Scheme is successfully rolled out across the Borough it will be down to them for leading the way.

10. RECOMMENDATION(S)

10.1 That Cabinet ask Policy Overview and Scrutiny to oversee the development of a 'Public Toilet Strategy' for Rossendale which explores the potential for a phased role out of a Community Toilet Scheme.

10.2 That Policy Overview and Scrutiny refer the Strategy and any recommendations to Cabinet in October 2009.

10.3 That we continue to financially support those who are participating in the Bacup pilot until such time as Cabinet have adopted a 'Rossendale Public Toilet Strategy'.

11. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- Policy Overview and Scrutiny
- Public Convenience Task and Finish Group
- Portfolio Holder, Environmental Services
- Cabinet
- Local Businesses and Public Service providers in Bacup

12. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Yes

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes

13. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

Contact Officer	
Name	Mike Riley
Position	Communities Manager
Service / Team	Communities
Telephone	01706 252412
Email address	michaelriley@rossendalebc.gov.uk