

Appendix E –Area Committee Feedback

CSWAC

35. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES REVIEW

The Head of City Works submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) and a review questionnaire (also previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to ask the Clerk of the Committee to pass on to the Review Team the following points raised by Councillors and members of the public:-

- Castle Street toilets would be closed because of impending redevelopment
- Disabled toilets should be accessible by Radar key and not locked shut
- Toilets were presently locked shut too early and sometimes before the advertised time.
- Ways and means both to achieve the saving, to upgrade and to preserve a maximum number of toilets should be pursued. It should not be assumed that the achievement of the saving required a diminution of toilet provision.
- Charging for use of public toilets was not necessarily popular. The experiences of other local authorities that had introduced a charge should be sought.
- Where toilets were closed at night the closing time should be flexible depending upon season and weather. For example, the Wolvercote public toilets were in demand during fine weather in the Summer season.
- Consultation should take place with, among others, the Pensioners' Forum and with young people.
- Has a survey been done of which toilets were most used by tourists?
- Consultation on possible closure of public toilets should be wide-ranging and not concentrated on those people living in the vicinity of the facility.
- Bus drivers / the bus companies should be consulted upon the future of the Speedwell Street toilets.

- Conservation aspects of toilets (eg those in St Giles' and Magdalen Street East) should be considered. The Council's Conservation Officer should be consulted.
- The provision of 'superloo' facilities at Gloucester Green was supported.
- The community toilet scheme should be pursued.
- If the use / future of particular facilities was marginal then, all things being equal, that facility should remain open.

CAC

29. REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Head of City Works submitted a report (previously circulated now appended), which had been considered by the City Executive Board. The report set out the quality rating, usage, opening times and refurbishment requirements and resale possibilities for each public toilet in the City.

The City Executive Board agreed a public consultation exercise, which would be reported back to the City Executive Board, and which focused on improvements (in the wider sense) to publicly available facilities and the closure of others. A questionnaire on the review was attached, which formed part of the consultation process.

In summary the following points were made by Councillors:

- (i) There was insufficient provision of public conveniences in the City Centre
- (ii) The public conveniences in St. Giles should be reopened and the ones in Magdalen Street should remain open as they were well used.

The Committee agreed to encourage everyone to complete the questionnaire as part of the review and return it to the Council.

NEAC

35. REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Head of City Works submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended), which provided a recommendation for delivering required savings and the utilization of facilities available within the City.

Councillor Tanner, Board Member responsible for Cleaner, Greener City, attended the meeting. He said that the City Council faced difficult decisions regarding its finances and had to make savings on the provision of public conveniences. He said that the Council spent £300k per year on providing 27 sites and the Council needed to save £50k. The Council was proposing to close 6 or 7 of these sites and remodel the way public conveniences were provided in the City, making the remaining ones more comfortable to meet the needs of the public. He said that the toilets in Gloucester Green were the most used and would be the first to receive refurbishment. He said that the consultation was wide open and that all views were welcomed and that the results would be presented to the City Executive Board meeting in October 2009.

Helen Burlingham said that she and the Oxford Rambles Association were opposed to the closure of the toilets at the Wolvercote Car Park in the winter. She said that the car park was an excellent focal point and well used. If these toilets were closed it would discourage people from taking recreation there, even charging for them would be considered as long as they remained open.

Councillor Darke said that the Headington Hill Park toilet which was a small facility would be closed as part of the programme.

A representative from the Friends of Bury Knowle Park said that they had just been informed of the consultation and were yet to meet, but they stressed that the Park was well used.

Councillor Sinclair said that there were some really good facilities which were not used as much as they should be and that better signage would help. She said that this applied to the toilets at the Town Hall. She also felt that the Community Toilets initiative was a good proposal. She further added that when a facility was permanently closed it should be demolished.

Councillor Wilkinson felt that there should be 24 hour facilities available in the district centres and that Headington required enhanced provision of these facilities. She agreed with Councillor Sinclair that closed sites should be demolished.

Councillor Wilkinson said that there should be an audit of all the closed sites. She further added that a number of residents in Headington had suggested that the location of the Bury Knowle Parks toilets should be redeveloped as a meeting place or piazza for the community, and a feasibility study might be carried out to see if this was viable, subject to the relocation and refurbishment of the existing public conveniences.

Councillor Clarkson said that the Headley Way site was still to be demolished. She added that the potential of each site needed to be looked at and any money received from disposing of sites should be used to enhance the remaining sites. Facilities for the disabled and parents was an important issue to be considered.

Steve Sprason in response to Councillor Clarkson said with regard to the Headley Way toilets, that their disposal had been brought forward and that the current review has highlighted existing closed facilities. He added that he was in discussions with Officers from City Works on the potential of each site.

In summary the following points were made by Members of the public and Councillors:

- (i) The toilets at Wolvercote Car Park should remain open
- (ii) No charge should be made for the use of toilets
- (iii) Tour Guides wanted more toilets provided
- (iv) Better signage require, especially for under used good facilities e.g. the Town Hall facilities
- (v) Toilets already closed should be demolished and the sites sold
- (vi) District Centres should have a minimum of one 24 hour, 7 days a week facility
- (vii) Would welcome enhanced provision in Headington, especially at the other side of Bury Knowle Park near the kiosk
- (viii) Potential of each site should be considered and if sold, the money should be invested in the remaining sites
- (ix) Need to encourage the Community Toilets Scheme and make better provision for the disabled and parents
- (x) The Pensioners Forum should be consulted

The Committee agreed:

- (a) To thank Councillor Tanner for attending the meeting;
- (b) To encourage everyone to complete the questionnaire as part of the review and return it to the Council.

SEAC

37. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES REVIEW

The Head of City works submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) that outlined the quality rating, usage, opening times, refurbishment requirement and resale possibility for each public toilet facility in the City. Councillor John Tanner, Board Member for a Cleaner, Greener City, presented this report to the Area Committee.

Councillor Tanner explained that the Council ran 27 public conveniences in oxford at a cost of £400,000 annually. It had been suggested that the sum of £50,000 could be saved by closing some, including those in Littlemore, Barnes Road and Knights Road. It was hoped to keep most within the city centre open, with significant improvements being made to some of them. It was also hoped to be able to establish a

“community toilet” scheme by involving shops and restaurants. Councillor Tanner asked for any comments and observations to be sent to him, and/or to City Works.

Councillor Craft explained that he opposed the closure of any toilets. He also thought that consultation would be a waste of money. Gordon Roper (Blackbird Leys Parish Council) was concerned about the proposal to close the toilets at Knights Road. Councillor Gill Sanders queried the description of the Littlemore toilets, which she felt were in a good condition. She opposed their closure and was concerned that other toilets may also have been inaccurately described. Dorian Hancock (Littlemore Parish Council) also opposed the closure of the toilets in Littlemore, and felt that as there were fewer such facilities in the suburbs it was they, rather than the town centre toilets, that should be kept open. Councillor Humberstone felt that there should be a charge for city centre facilities, which could go towards the cost of providing free toilet facilities outside the city centre. County Councillor John Sanders also felt that no toilets should be closed and/or sold.

Councillor Tanner felt that there was a strong argument for retaining toilets in the city centre as they were used most regularly. He would like to see facilities upgraded and made generally nicer. He had noted all comments and would take them into account.

Resolved to note the report and all comments made.

[NAC](#)

38. REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Head of City Works submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended), which had been considered by the City Executive Board, and set out the quality rating, usage, opening times, refurbishment requirements and resale possibilities for each public toilet in the City.

Councillor John Tanner attended the meeting and said that the City Council currently spent £400k per year on providing public conveniences and that this needed to be reduced to £350k per year. He said that the review would allow the Council to make the best use of facilities, close some and improve others. He said that the Gloucester Green and other city centre public conveniences would be improved to the standard of the facilities provided at the Town Hall. He added that the results of the review and consultation would be presented to and considered by the City Executive Board at its meeting in October 2009.

Councillor McCready said that the public conveniences in Summertown were well used, not just by local residents, but visitors to the area.

Councillor Armitage supported the idea of a Community Toilet Scheme and he felt that more imagination should be given to how other facilities could be included in this scheme and improved.

Councillor Campbell, felt that closing public conveniences was not the best way to save money and he was concerned at how any closures could impact on the tourist areas of the City.

Tony Joyce said that the public conveniences on Port Meadow should remain open during the winter months.

Graham Jones said that the facilities available in Cutteslowe Park were inadequate for the amount of people that use the park. He said that the provision of public conveniences was a front line services and should be maintained.

The Committee agreed to note the report and the following comments made by members of the Committee and the public.

- (i) The toilets in Woodstock Road and South Parade are well used, not just by local residents, but also by visitors to the area;
- (ii) Would support the Community Toilet Scheme;
- (iii) Should be further imaginative provision of facilities in Cutteslowe Park, not just renovation of the existing facilities;
- (iv) Closing public conveniences was not the best way to save money. Charging for the use should be considered and the extension of opening hours of existing facilities, e.g. the Market Street facilities which currently close at 5.00pm;
- (v) Public conveniences are a front line service and should be maintained.