

To: City Executive Board

Date: 2nd December 2009

Item No:

Report of: Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (CALLED IN BY THE CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FROM THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD ON 14TH OCTOBER 2009)

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To request the City Executive Board consider the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on this matter.

Key decision - Yes

Executive lead member - Councillor Tanner

Report approved by:

Councillor Goddard – Chair of Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Policy Framework: Improving the local environment and quality of life, Stronger and more inclusive communities, Transform Oxford City Council by improving value for money and service performance

Recommendation(s):

That the City Executive Board consider the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on this matter as follows:

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee agreed to:

1. Uphold the call-in and request the Board to re-evaluate their original decision.
2. Welcome the good news that extra money expected from the Government to fund concessionary fares would allow the Council to reconsider the provision of public toilets.
3. Particularly welcome the Board Members commitment to providing more and better quality toilets for the future.

In the process of this re-evaluation the City Executive Board is recommended to:

4. Consider in more detail the value for money provided within the current City operations exploring particularly practices within those local authorities used for bench marking purposes and others recommended by best practice
5. Consider opportunities within the current fundamental review of City Works to provide for further value for money and financial gains within the operation of public toilets.
6. Move to the rationalization of public toilet provision and close toilets at Barns Road, Headington Park and Castle Street and that the winter closures of Abingdon Road and Wolvercote toilets also take place.

1. Introduction and Background

At its meeting on 16th November 2009, the Value & Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the report and decision of the CEB on the Review of Public Conveniences. The report had been called in for reconsideration by Councillors Goddard in his role as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee in the following terms: "I wish to call in the decision of the CEB at their last meeting on public conveniences to review the adequacy of the consultation in the most affected areas, the deliverability of the planned closures, the value for money of the whole exercise and the impact on the reputation of the city as a tourist destination". In discussing the matter further, Members discussed the City Executive Boards decision and in particular whether the decision taken by the Executive Board had made best decision in terms of providing for the best future service delivery.

During the discussion, Councillor Tanner, in his role as the relevant Board member, advised the meeting that extra money might be available from the Government to fund concessionary fares which would allow the Council to reconsider the provision of public toilets at the next meeting of the City Executive Board.

Members said that they would welcome the opportunity to re-consider the issues, particularly, the chance to consider in more detail:

- Whether the current arrangements for the provision of public conveniences represented value for money
- exploring the way in which public conveniences were provided within those local authorities used for bench marking purposes and others recommended by best practice.
- Consider opportunities within the current fundamental review of City Works to provide for further value for money and financial gains within the operation of public toilets.

2. Recommendations to City Executive Board

The recommendations of the committee are detailed in the header to this report.

3. Comments from the Board Member

The Board Member has seen the report and has no comments.

4. Comments from the Strategic Director

No comments were received from the Strategic Director.

5. Legal Comments

There were no comments from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

6. Finance Comments

Head of Finance has indicated that funding has been made available in the 2010 11 consultation budget (for approval at CEB on 2nd December) to allow the Council to re-consider the provision of public toilets.

Report Author: Colin Gregory on behalf of The Chair of the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee
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