

# NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

**at 10.00 am**

**in Committee Room “B”**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors S Allison, Brash, Clouth, R Cook, Gibbon, Hall, Henery, Lilley, Rayner, Rogan and D Waller.

Resident Representatives: Allan Lloyd and Linda Shields

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

4.1 Final Report: Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision – Response from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation (*Joint Report Head of Technical Services and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation*)

**5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No Items

**6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No Items

**7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

7.1 Scrutiny Referral: Hartlepool's Public Convenience Provision - Scoping Report  
(*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

7.2 Scrutiny Referral: Hartlepool's Public Convenience Provision

(a) Setting the Scene (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

(b) Presentation by Neighbourhood Services Department

(c) Evidence from the Regeneration, Housing and Liveability Portfolio Holder

**8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

**FOR INFORMATION**

Date of next meeting Wednesday 9 August 2006 at 2.00pm in Committee Room B.

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES**

13 June 2006

### **Present:**

Councillor: Gerard Hall (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jonathan Brash, Steve Gibbon, Gordon Henery and Geoff Lilley

Resident Representatives: Linda Shields

Officers: Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager  
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Stephen Allison, Harry Clouth and Rob Cook.

### **2. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2006**

Confirmed.

### **4. Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair, Councillor Gerard Hall welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Scrutiny Forum in the new Municipal Year and his first meeting as Chair. Councillor Hall welcomed those newly appointed Councillors and the newly elected Councillors to the Forum. The Chair also welcomed Joan Wilkins, as the newly appointed Scrutiny Support Officer, to the Forum.

### **5. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum**

None.

**6. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

None.

**7. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents**

None.

**8. The Role of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer submitted a brief report outlining the background to the approach to overview and scrutiny in the Council. The key roles of Scrutiny were detailed as:

- Policy development and review
- Holding the Executive to account
- Investigating issues of local concern

The role of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee was set out with a detailed description of the role and functions of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum. The report highlighted that the strategic direction of the Scrutiny Forums was to assess, monitor and advise on the Council's progress towards the seven priority aims. The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum's remit was specifically to consider issues relating to property, technical services, environmental services, emergency planning, public protection and housing. A schedule of the Forum's meetings dates was also set out in the report.

**Recommendation**

That the report be noted.

**9. Determining the Scrutiny Forum's Work Programme for 2006/07** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report that requested the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum to identify a Work Programme for the 2006/07 Municipal Year, together with a timeframe for each review, for consideration by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 30 June 2006. The Head of Procurement and Property Services; Head of Environmental Management; Cabinet Members for Regeneration, Liveability and Housing, Culture, Leisure and Transportation and Adult and Public Health; Local Public Service Agreement (PSA10); Corporate Performance Plan (BVPP); and the Viewpoint Surveys had been the foundation sources for the report to enable the Forum to compile its Work Programme.

From these sources and the work programme from 2005/06, the following list of potential subjects for investigation had been identified: -

Public Conveniences (2005/06 Work Programme)  
Registered Private Landlords Scheme  
Highways Maintenance  
Dog Fouling  
The Authorities new Gambling Policy  
Transport (Viewpoint)  
Night Time in Hartlepool Town Centre (Viewpoint)

In setting the Work Programme for 2006/7, Members were advised that consideration would also need to be given to Budget and Policy Framework documents which the Forum would need to consider throughout the year and the following 6 Monthly Progress Review reports. These included 20mph Speed Limit Zones Outside Schools in Hartlepool and Hartlepool Local Bus Service Provision which would be considered at the meetings in August and November respectively.

The Forum was advised to be cautious in setting an overly ambitious Work Programme for which it may be unable to deliver and the Scrutiny Support Officer recommended that only two issues should be listed for investigation at this time. This approach had proved to be very successful in the previous municipal year. The Forum could revisit the potential list of investigations should time allow later in the Municipal year. As the investigation into Public Conveniences was already listed for the Forum, Members were asked to identify one other subject to be submitted to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

Members discussed the potential areas of investigation and considered that after the public conveniences investigation was completed they would wish to investigate the 'Registered Private Landlords Scheme'. Members considered that this was an issue that was frequently raised with them by constituents and warranted a detailed investigation.

### **Recommendation**

That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee be advised that this Forum wished to investigate Public Conveniences and the Registered Private Landlords Scheme during 2006/07.

GERARD HALL

CHAIRMAN

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

**12 July 2006**



**Report of:** Joint Report of Head of Technical Services and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Transportation.

**Subject:** **FINAL REPORT: HARTLEPOOL'S LOCAL BUS SERVICE PROVISION – RESPONSE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND TRANSPORTATION**

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### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum with feedback on the recommendations from the investigation into Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision, which was reported to Cabinet on 15 May 2006.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The investigation into Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision conducted by this Forum falls under the remit of Neighbourhood Services Department and is, under the Executive Delegation Scheme, within the service area covered by the Culture, Leisure and Transportation Portfolio Holder.
- 2.2 On 15 May 2006 Cabinet considered the final report of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision. This report provides feedback from the Portfolio Holder for the issue following Cabinet's consideration of, and decision in relation to, Scrutiny's recommendations.
- 2.3 In addition to this report a further progress report will be produced for Member's consideration six months after the Final Report went to Cabinet to enable Members to monitor the implementation of their recommendations.

### **3. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND EXECUTIVE DECISION**

Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet approved the Forum's recommendations in their entirety. Details of each recommendation and

proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet were provided in the Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

**Contact Officer:-** John Lewer, Public Transport Co-ordinator  
Neighbourhood Services Department, Traffic and  
Transportation Division  
Hartlepool Borough Council

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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum Final Report 'Hartlepool's Public Transport Provision' considered by Cabinet on the 15 May 2006.
- (ii) Decision Record of Cabinet held on the 15 May 2006 (minute number 242)

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
<p>(a) That work be undertaken by the Authority to improve the infrastructure of the bus network in Hartlepool, with particular reference to:-</p> <p>(i) improving the provision of bus stop shelters to ensure better waiting facilities (with a consideration of lighting and CCTV in shelters should resources be available);</p> <p>(ii) new and innovative means of providing up to date timetable information and ensuring that such information is co-ordinated in a timely manner (with a consideration of the provision of information for blind individuals);</p>	<p>Review infrastructure at all bus stops to ensure it meets the requirements of bus users and operators. Commence a rolling programme to replace bus stop poles, flags and bus shelters according to route priority. Provide CCTV at key town centre stops.</p> <p>Continue to review issues relating to timetable information. Improve clarity and presentation of at stop timetable information. Provide Real Time information at selected stops and through the internet, WAP and SMS.</p>	<p>Geoff Knowlson (Transportation Team)</p> <p>Geoff Knowlson (Transportation Team)</p>	<p>September 2006</p> <p>2006/07</p>



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
	(iii) future improvements to the highways within Hartlepool to improve bus punctuality, for example bus priority lanes, where appropriate; and	Implement traffic management measures identified through the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership. Provide selective detection at traffic signal controlled junctions.	Peter Frost (Traffic and Transportation)	2006/07 to 2010/11
	(iv) the compilation of a rolling programme for the implementation of measures to aid easier access to buses for disabled users.	Continue rolling programme of raised kerbs to enable level boarding of buses.	Geoff Knowlson (Traffic and Transportation)	2006/07 to 2010/11
(b)	That the Authority enforces parking restrictions at bus stops to allow easier access for bus operators and disabled users;	Review Traffic Regulation Orders at bus all bus stops. Enforce parking restrictions using Hartlepool Borough Council Parking Wardens. Allow Wardens to travel on buses to assist enforcement. Identify trouble spot locations.	Phil Hepburn (Traffic and Transportation)	2006/07

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(c)	That the possibility of utilising the Council's current transport provision, Dial a Ride and the voluntary sector provision, be explored as an alternative to subsidising individual routes, where appropriate;	Maintain current funding for the Dial a Ride service. Expand existing Hartlepool Borough Council Dial-a-Ride service. Liase with the voluntary sector on the options for public transport service provision.	Jayne Brown (Transport Services)
(d)	That the Authority, in partnership with bus operators, promote the Tees Valley Wide free concessionary fares scheme and progress aspirations to extend the scheme to County Durham in the future;	Publish a Borough wide and Tees Valley wide concessionary fares leaflet. Support government plans for UK wide concessionary fares in April 2008, including County Durham.	Geoff Knowlson (Traffic and Transportation)
(e)	That the town's commercial operators, in partnership with the Authority, be encouraged to invest in marketing and publicity campaigns to improve the image of bus travel in order to increase bus user patronage;	Develop a Borough wide promotional strategy for buses, involving bus operators and other stakeholders. Continue to build on existing joint publicity campaigns with operators including the Hartlepod timetable map.	Geoff Knowlson (Traffic and Transportation)
2006/07	2006/07 to 2007/08	2006/07	

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(f)	That a formalised mechanism be established to engage the Authority, commercial operators and developers in early discussions of future planned developments within Hartlepool, to establish how the bus network may be extended to areas of new development prior to approval of planning applications, such as the Victoria Harbour Development;	Review accessibility by local bus services as part of the consideration of planning applications. Ensure the successful implementation of Section 106 agreements to secure funding towards improving the bus service network where appropriate.	Chris Roberts (Traffic and Transportation)	2006/07
(g)	That a mechanism be established to enable the Authority and commercial operators to consult with Elected Members in advance of the withdrawal of and/or major changes to bus services within Hartlepool;	Produce a bus registration circular for members detailing changes to bus registrations.	John Lower (Traffic and Transportation)	August 2006

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION		EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(h)	That the Authority, through negotiation, awards future subsidised bus contracts that are mutually beneficial to the Authority and bus operators (with particular reference to the major tendering round in 2007);	Produce a bus-tendering programme for 2007, including a review of existing supported services and involvement of operators and communities, which are mutually beneficial to the authority and bus operators.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)	August 2006
(i)	That a reduced fares scheme to enable access to education and employment across the Tees Valley area for 16-18 year olds be explored;	Review provision for a 16-18 Borough wide and Tees Valley wide concessionary scheme. Identify potential funding sources. Liase with other Council departments and Tees Valley authorities on such a scheme.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)	December 2006
(j)	That the discontinuation of individual services, together with a lack of provision in particular areas of the town, (paragraph 15. 4 refers) be addressed by the Authority in negotiation with commercial operators in order to reinstate or introduce services, where funding allows;	Review bus provision in Hartlepool as part of the Borough Council supported bus contracts in 2007. Review under provision of bus services in negotiations with bus operators. Reinstate services where funding permits.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)	March 2006

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENQUIRY ACTION PLAN

**NAME OF FORUM:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY:** Hartlepool's Local Bus Service Provision

**DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT:** Cabinet on 15 May 2006

RECOMMENDATION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE / PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE
(k)	That the Authority explores a mechanism by which to lobby Central Government in relation to regulating the local bus service provision (that was de-regulated under the Transport Act 1985);	The authority will lobby Central Government on greater bus regulation, through the Government Office for the North East, membership of the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO) and other regional groupings.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)
(l)	That the findings of the Tees Valley Quality Bus Network Review and their implications for Hartlepool be assessed; and	Assess the impact of the recommendations of the Tees Valley Bus Network Review on Hartlepool. Take account of recommendations as part of the major bus tendering round undertaken in 2007, and in future negotiations with bus operators.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)
(m)	That the Authority submits a progress report on the recommendations contained within this report, within six months, to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.	A progress report will be produced within six months to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.	John Lewer (Traffic and Transportation)
2006/07	March 2007	December 2006	

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

12 July 2006



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SCRUTINY REFERRAL: HARTLEPOOL'S PUBLIC  
CONVENIENCE PROVISION – SCOPING REPORT

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for the undertaking of the scrutiny topic referral 'Hartlepool's Public Convenience Provision'.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The provision of public conveniences in Hartlepool became the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Services Department in 2003. Budget restrictions have on a regular basis resulted in the provision of funding for public conveniences that is insufficient to ensure the maintenance of buildings and equipment to an appropriate standard.
- 2.2 The provision of inadequate maintenance over time has resulted in a deterioration of buildings and equipment to a point where some sites have been restricted, minimised or closed. Prolonged inadequate maintenance and ever-increasing vandalism has also resulted in increased annual maintenance costs, which can not be met, from this year's current £110,000 budget.
- 2.3 The provision of public conveniences has until this point been undertaken without the benefit of a sustainable policy for its operation and maintenance. The benefits of the formulation of such a policy have, however, been recognised in terms of the effective operation of the service and a number of options and proposals developed to form the basis of a policy for the future.
- 2.4 Details of the options and proposals for the development of a policy were presented to Cabinet on the 12 April 2006 (minute number 230 refers). At this meeting, in recognition of the importance of the issue, approval was given for the referral of the options and proposals to the Neighbourhood Consultative

Forums and Scrutiny for further consideration within the prescribed timescale. Details of the referral and prescribed timescale are outlined in section 4.1 of the report.

### **3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY**

- 3.1 To examine public convenience provision in Hartlepool and express, within the prescribed timescale for the referral, a view on the options and proposals presented to Cabinet for the formulation of a sustainable operation and maintenance policy.

### **4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY**

- 4.1 The Terms of Reference for the investigation/review contained within the Cabinet referral are as follows. The timescale set by Cabinet for consideration of the referral requires that the Forums report be submitted back to Cabinet by September 2006, in time to feed into next years budget process:-

- (a) To express a view on the options and proposals outlined in the report considered by Cabinet on the 12 April 2006. A copy of the report is attached at **Appendix A**.
- (b) To look at where public conveniences are needed across the town to enable Cabinet to make an informed decision.
- (c) To identify the estimated cost of replacing all public conveniences with new facilities along with the cost of bringing existing conveniences up to an acceptable standard to enable a comparison to be made by Cabinet; in time for the 2007/08 budget setting process.

- 4.2 To assist with the formulation of a response to the Cabinet referral it is suggested that it would be useful to establish a number of additional Terms of Reference for the inquiry. These are as follows:-

- (d) To gain an understanding of Government policy in relation to the provision of public conveniences and the position nationally;
- (e) To gain an understanding public convenience provision in Hartlepool, i.e. demand, condition, location and costs;
- (f) To examine the condition and location of public conveniences in Hartlepool and compare;
- (g) To compare Hartlepool's service provision with that of another Local Authority and where examples of good practice exist examine how they could be used to improve provision in Hartlepool;

- (h) To seek the views of residents and representatives from Parish Councils, Residents Associations and the Access Group on issues including:
  - i) The quality of existing provision;
  - ii) Suggestions for how they would like to see it improve in the future; and
  - iii) Where public conveniences are needed across the town.
- (i) To consider public health, safety and equality issues relevant to the provision of public conveniences, including the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act;

## **5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF EVIDENCE**

- 5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny referral.
- 5.2 The Forum can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-
  - (a) Cabinet Member with Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Housing and Liveability;
  - (b) Head of Environmental Management;
  - (c) Local residents;
  - (d) Representatives from Parish Councils, Residents Associations, Hartlepool Access Group and the 50+ Forum;
  - (e) A representative from the British Toilet Association; and
  - (f) Ward Councillors.
- 5.3 The Forum may also wish to refer to a variety of documentary /internet sources, key suggestions are as highlighted below:-
  - (a) Public Conveniences Condition Surveys Report – 2004;
  - (b) Public Conveniences Condition Surveys Report – Rocket House;
  - (c) Parks – Public Conveniences Report;
  - (d) Viewpoint
  - (e) Public Health Act 1936



- (f) The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- (g) Feedback from the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums on the options and proposals (meetings held on the 14, 15 and 16 June)

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and paragraph 5.2, details who the Forum could involve. However, thought will need to be given to the structure in the way that the Forum wishes to encourage those views.

## **7. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

- 7.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the 'referral' to be undertaken, in light of the completion date prescribed by Cabinet:-

**12 July 2006 – 'Setting the Scene'** – Formal meeting of the Forum to receive a presentation from the Head of Environmental Management in relation to an overview of public convenience provision within Hartlepool and evidence from the Regeneration, Housing and Transportation Portfolio Holder.

**w/c 17 July 2006 – Site Visit** - To a selection of public convenience sites in Hartlepool.

**w/c 24 July 2006 – Site Visit** - To another Local Authority's Public Conveniences to compare their service provision.

**9 August 2006** – Feedback from the Site Visits and the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums; Evidence gathering and consideration of the options and proposals contained within the Cabinet report of 12 April 2006

**w/c 14 August** – Informal meeting to consider the content of the Draft Final Report.

**w/c 28 August 2006** – Consideration of Draft Final Report (proposed additional meeting).

**15 September 2006** – Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

**25 September 2006** – Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 Members are recommended to agree the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forums proposed Terms of Reference, together with the suggested timetable, for the undertaking of this 'referral' as outlined in paragraphs 4 and 7 within this report.

**Contact Officer:** - Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executives Department – Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: - 01429 523339  
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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services entitled 'Public Conveniences' to Cabinet on the 12 April 2006.

# CABINET REPORT

12 April 2006



**Report of:** Director of Neighbourhood Services

**Subject:** PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

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## SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide information to Members to enable them to formulate a policy in respect of public convenience provision.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

A comprehensive, detailed analysis of all public conveniences throughout the Borough, with recommendations regarding their future and proposals to invest in new facilities.

### 3. RELEVANCE TO CABINET

This is a matter that affects all the population of Hartlepool and visitors.

### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key decision (tests (i) and (ii) apply).

### 5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Cabinet on 12 April 2006.

### 6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To determine a policy in respect of public convenience provision throughout the Borough in light of recommendations contained within the report.

**Report of:** Director of Neighbourhood Services

**Subject:** PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide information to members to enable them to formulate a policy in respect of public convenience provision.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 It is fair to say that over a long period of time the Council has not developed a sustainable policy in respect of public conveniences and, following officer recommendations, has determined, in the main, various closures with the occasional new facility being provided.

- 2.2 Various departments of the Council have, at one time or another, been given the responsibility of managing public conveniences and in 2003 Neighbourhood Services took over responsibility for public conveniences not associated with parks or the Historic Quay.

- 2.3 The current budget for public conveniences is £110K made up as follows:

	£
Wages for Clock Tower attendants	55K
Mobile attendant	20K
York Road contract	13K
Repairs and maintenance	22K

- 2.4 As members are aware, the York Road facility has been removed but, as the contract still had several years to run, there was no saving in 2005/06.
- 2.5 Because of the condition of the toilets the annual repair bill always exceeds the budget and, therefore, there is always an overspend.
- 2.6 In general, due to low budget provision, the buildings and service have not been maintained to the appropriate standards.
- 2.7 As a result, the condition of the buildings, the equipment, and the service in general, has deteriorated over the years to such an extent that facilities in some sites have had to be restricted, minimised or closed.

- 2.8 However, due to the prolonged inadequate maintenance and the ever-increasing vandalism, even the reduced service cannot be maintained using the current resources.
- 2.9 One of the greatest problems common to all facilities is the problem of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. This problem is of a lesser extent at the Clock Tower due to the presence of attendants. However, even here recent acts of anti-social behaviour are a major cause of concern.
- 2.10 Only the facilities at the Lighthouse, Middlegate, Albert Street car park, and the Clock Tower sites, provide disabled persons facilities. These, however, are below the required standards, particularly at the Clock Tower. None of the facilities provide adequate baby changing facilities.
- 2.11 The facilities at Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and Seaton Baths are not connected to the main drainage system due to their low level or the absence of a drainage system in their locality. Thorpe Street is connected to a septic tank, the Pilot Pier and Seaton Baths sites are connected to cesspits. Northumbria Water is responsible for the Pilot Pier cesspit, while the Council is responsible for emptying of the cesspit at Seaton Baths. All other facilities are connected to the main drainage system.
- 2.12 It is estimated that a realistic annual maintenance figure would be £50K which would allow for reactive and planned maintenance.
- 2.13 Viewpoint 1000 Survey

The latest survey showed the following results:-

- (a) Nearly half of all respondents had not used any Council owned public conveniences in the last 12 months
- (b) Of the respondents who expressed an opinion over 70% felt that there should be more Council owned conveniences across the town
- (c) Nearly a third of Viewpoint 1000 members who had used the Council owned conveniences said that the condition and standard was poor
- (d) 60% of Viewpoint 1000 members felt that the Council should commit more financial resources to improve the standard or the number of public conveniences

2.14 Parks, Historic Quay and Cemeteries

In the parks there are public conveniences in Ward Jackson, Seaton, Rossmere and Burn Valley. In addition, Adult & Community Services are also responsible for the Hartlepool Maritime Experience toilets. Neighbourhood Services is responsible for the facilities at Stranton and West View Cemeteries.

**2.15 Current condition of all public conveniences**

The provision of public conveniences in each of the Forum Areas is as follows:

In the North there are five sets of toilets: Thorpe Street, the Lighthouse, the Pilot Pier, Middlegate Bus Station and West View Cemetery.

In the Central Forum area there is the public convenience in the Albert Street car park, together with facilities in Ward Jackson, Burn Valley, Stranton Cemetery and the Hartlepool Maritime Experience.

In the South there are five current facilities: the former baths site, the Clock Tower, the Rocket House, Seaton Park and Rossmere Park.

**3. NORTH FORUM AREA**

**3.1 Thorpe Street and Pilot Pier:**

The condition of the facilities at the Thorpe Street and Pilot Pier sites is extremely poor, therefore their immediate closure is proposed. Part of the closure would consist of disconnection of services and the bricking up of the doors and window openings.

**3.2 Middlegate:**

The condition of the Middlegate facilities is moderate to poor, nevertheless, with adequate maintenance resources they could have remained. However, now the decision has been made in respect of the Town Square development, the toilets have been closed. New facilities are being provided as part of the Town Square Scheme.

**3.3 Lighthouse (Heugh Battery):**

The condition of the Lighthouse (Heugh Battery) facilities is moderate to reasonable, although essential maintenance, some upgrading and refurbishment work is required. The facility has hand-washing and disabled facilities.

**3.4 West View Cemetery:**

The condition of the facilities is poor and very basic, although they are currently functional, and in need of maintenance.

It is recommended that the current arrangements continue. It is also recommended that essential maintenance be carried out to bring the facilities to the required standards, and for provisions to be made for adequate future maintenance.

Consideration needs to be given to the long-term level and extent of the service.

#### **4. CENTRAL FORUM AREA**

##### **4.1 Albert Street car park:**

The condition of the facilities at Albert Street car park is of moderate standard, although essential maintenance and upgrading is required. In addition, these facilities have seen acts of anti-social behaviour and staff are constantly removing hypodermic needles from within the block.

In addition the land upon which the facility stands is the subject of discussions with the College of Further Education with a view to disposal of the site.

##### **4.2 Ward Jackson Park:**

These facilities are both male and female, without hand-washing facilities or disabled person facilities.

Whilst still operational, the overall condition of the building and the fixtures and fittings is poor.

##### **4.3 Burn Valley Gardens:**

There are two sets of conveniences in Burn Valley, upper and lower.

The upper facility is closed and has been for a number of years. The main reasons being the high costs of vandalism and serious anti-social behaviour. Users of the gardens and nearby residents also requested closure.

The condition of the fabric of the building is extremely poor.

The use of the lower facility is restricted to users of the bowling green and club members. Therefore the facilities are only used during the outdoor bowling season.

The facilities are without hand-washing or disabled facilities and are restricted to male use as the female toilet is used for storage.

The condition of the building and facilities is very poor.

##### **4.4 Stranton Cemetery:**

The main public conveniences are situated within the crematorium building. There is also an external open roof structure housing a urinal, near the crematorium at the centre of the cemetery.

The condition of the facilities at the crematorium is reasonably good, although the facilities would benefit from some essential maintenance and improvements.

**4.5 Hartlepool Maritime Experience:**

These facilities are greatly under-used. They only open during Easter and August Bank Holidays when there is a fair in the car park, the two days of the Maritime Festival and, occasionally, when other special events take place.

The building is designed to be manned by an attendant and the number of cubicles is high compared to modern anti-vandal public conveniences. There are disabled and hand-washing facilities but no baby changing facility.

Although the building is relatively new, the overall condition of the building shows signs of prolonged neglect and lack of adequate maintenance.

As a result, a considerable number of the building elements, equipment, fixtures and fittings are in extremely poor condition and many would need replacing.

The roof has a number of open holes. Roof tiles are missing and many are loose. It also appears that the roof has no roof tile underfelt.

There are numerous cracks to walls, which suggest movement and settlement.

A number of windows are heavily decayed and in need of extensive repairs or replacement. This is mainly due to lack of maintenance.

Many of the equipment, fixtures and fittings are in need of replacement. For example, the taps and soap dispensers need replacing due to the oxidation of the chrome finish and the corrosion of the metal parts.

There are signs of dampness to the walls due to roof leaks and rain penetration. As a result the plaster and wall paint is peeling off.

There has been no external painting since the building was built. As a result the external doors, handrails, windows and other external painted surfaces are in very poor condition and some may need replacing.

The frost protection heaters in the service duct also need replacing due to extensive corrosion.



## **5. SOUTH FORUM AREA**

### **5.1 Former Baths Site - Seaton Carew:**

There are both male and female facilities on this site with hand-washing facilities but no disabled or baby changing facility.

The general condition of the building and facilities is poor, with the roof being a particular cause for concern.

### **5.2 Clock Tower - Seaton Carew:**

The condition of the facilities at the Clock Tower is moderate to poor. Although they are currently operational, nevertheless extensive and essential maintenance and refurbishment works are required.

Due to the building being listed, the extensive structural problems and the difficulties associated with split-level of the site, combined with the layout restrictions, create severe technical, economical and operational limitations. For these reasons the long-term viability of the facilities is questionable in their present layout and the current economic climate.

### **5.3 Rocket House - Seaton Carew:**

The condition of the building and facilities is extremely poor and beyond economic repair. At the moment the facilities are not operational.

### **5.4 Seaton Carew Park:**

For the last two years the public conveniences in Seaton Carew Park have been closed. This came about as a result of the continuous heavy vandalism, the high activity of anti-social behaviour and the installation of high level lockable security fence around the bowling club complex, thus creating a lockable enclosure.

As a result, access to the enclosure was restricted only to the members of the bowls club and the park's personnel.

It is worth noting that, since the new arrangements were introduced, the rate of vandalism and anti-social activities to the bowls pavilion complex were reduced by more than 95%.

Both disused/closed public conveniences (Gents and Ladies) are now used by the parks section as stores.

These end sections, forming the public conveniences, are in poorer condition than the centre section occupied by the bowling club.

The bowling club look after their part of the building well. They keep the site clean and tidy. They have decorated the internal of the building as well as the front external elevation. They also removed the window boards. In addition they have hung external flower baskets. Generally they have greatly enhanced and improved the outlook of the building.

Within the bowling club building there are separate toilet facilities for gents and ladies, however there are no disabled facilities.

**5.5 Rossmere Park:**

There are both ladies and gents provision but no disabled or hand-washing facilities.

At present the facilities are operational, however, the overall condition of the building and the fixtures and fittings is very poor.

**6. OPERATION & MAINTENANCE**

6.1 The daily operational management and cleaning of the public conveniences, not including those in the parks, is limited to 3 hours per day including travelling time.

6.2 Every morning, starting at 7.30 am, an operative attends each facility in turn and opens, cleans, fills up the soap and toilet paper dispensers, checks the facilities and reports any obvious defects. At about 3.00 pm the operative begins his round to close the facilities. This level of service is inadequate.

6.3 Apart from some very basic maintenance, e.g. replacement of toilet seats, etc, the facilities do not receive the required maintenance nor do they have a planned maintenance programme.

6.4 The parks facilities are usually opened/closed and cleaned by the parks operatives. Also the facilities are opened during the park's opening hours.

**6.5 Attendants service:**

Only the facilities at the Clock Tower has full-time attendants. There are two attendants, male and female

The facilities are usually open at 10.00 am until 7.00 pm (Wednesday 6.30 pm). There are some variations during the summer and school holidays

Lunchtime is 1.5 hours. During lunchtime there are no washing facilities as these are located in the attendant's room

**7. COSTED OPTIONS**

- 7.1 For public conveniences not associated with Parks - see **Appendices 1–3**.
- 7.2 For public conveniences associated with Parks - see **Appendices 4 and 5**.
- 7.3 For cemeteries - see **Appendix 6**.
- 7.4 Hartlepool Maritime Experience - see **Appendix 7**.

**8. PROPOSALS**

- 8.1 Close the Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and Rocket House facilities and secure them in aesthetic materials.  
**Cost: £4,500**
- 8.2 Build a new facility adjacent to the old Rocket House site and close the Clock Tower site.  
**Cost: £228,500**
- 8.3 Carry out only essential maintenance to Clock Tower facility to keep them functioning until the new facilities are up and running.  
**Cost: £1,500**
- 8.4 Refurbish and upgrade the Lighthouse (Heugh Battery) facilities.  
**Cost: £6,000**
- 8.5 Consider what, if any, maintenance ought to take place to the Albert Street facility or whether it ought to be closed prior to any future land sale.  
**Cost: £8,000**
- 8.6 Consider the building of a new facility at the former Seaton Baths site, with closure and demolition of the existing facility.  
**Cost: £233,000**
- 8.7 Take no action in respect of the Seaton Park facilities other than essential maintenance. The new facilities at the Rocket House are in close proximity.  
**Cost: £5,000**
- 8.8 Demolish and make good the site at the Ward Jackson Park facilities. The toilets at the café to be made available to all public during opening hours. Consider extending the café opening hours to accommodate need.  
**Cost: £6,000**
- 8.9 Maintain and improve the facilities at Rossmere Park.  
**Cost: £50,000**
- 8.10 Demolish and make good the site in the Upper Bum Valley.  
**Cost: £6,000**

- 8.11 Maintain the Lower Burn Valley facility.  
**Cost: £10,000**
- 8.12 Introduce adequate heating, together with routine and planned maintenance to the Stranton Cemetery main facility.  
**Cost: £5,000**
- 8.13 Maintain existing facilities at West View Cemetery.  
**Cost: £1,500**
- 8.14 Consider the options in respect of the Hartlepool Maritime Experience.
- 8.15 In the light of the increased revenue costs, it is recommended that this building be either completely refurbished to make it as anti-vandal proof as possible, or closed and marketed, or continue with its current limited use.
- 8.16 It is also recommended that all Council owned buildings should provide, wherever possible, toilet facilities for the public. In addition, town centre landlords need to be encouraged to make their facilities available to the public during normal, now extended, opening hours.
- 8.17 It is recommended that full consultation take place on these proposals, with the three Forums, the Headland Parish Council, resident associations, the access group and, if felt appropriate, the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

## **9. OVERALL COST OF PROPOSALS**

- 9.1 £565,000 + £30,000 provisional sum, together with:

Hartlepool Maritime Experience options	£15,000 (Capital)
or	£100,000 - £200,000 (Capital)
plus added revenue costs of	£50,000

- 9.2 If the Cabinet decided to accept these recommendations, then the capital costs would total between £595,000 and £795,000.

The current revenue budget could be reduced by the cost of the two full-time employees at the Clock Tower and the refurbishment works funded through prudential borrowing and financed from this saving over a 20 year period.

At the lower end of the possible costs, this would leave some revenue to fund proper and adequate cleaning, as well as essential maintenance.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 Cabinet are asked to give their views on the options and proposals contained in the report.
- 10.2 Cabinet is recommended to approve that full consultation is undertaken on the options and proposals as described in paragraph 8.17.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Public Conveniences Condition Surveys Report - 2004  
Public Conveniences Condition Surveys Report - Rocket House  
Parks - Public Conveniences Report

Copies of which are available in the Members' Library

Letters relating to the termination of the Maintenance Agreement in relation to the  
York Road APC

Schedule showing estimated costs to:

- (a) Close the Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and the Rocket House facilities
- (b) Carry out essential and backlog maintenance to the remainder of the facilities over the next 12 months, and bring these to the minimum acceptable standards

Estimated Costs:

Item	Site	Description of work	Cost
1	Thorpe Street	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
2	Pilot Pier	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
3	Rocket House	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
4	Lighthouse (Heugh Battery)	Maintenance	£6000
5	Seaton Baths	Maintenance	£24,000
6	Clock Tower	Maintenance	£28,000
7	Provisional sums	Provisional sums	£1,500
8	<b>Total</b>		<b>£64,000</b>

Advantages:

- 1 Minimum maintenance costs
- 2 Minimum disruption during maintenance works
- 3 Early completion of works can be achieved
- 4 Brings facilities to the minimum acceptable standards
- 5 Provides breathing space to seek long-term solutions

Disadvantages:

- 1 Does not address the underlying problems
- 2 Does not provide for medium or long-term improvements
- 3 Does not address the access for disabled persons' requirements
- 4 Does not address the baby changing facilities requirements
- 5 In some cases it can be seen as wasted resources

Schedule showing estimated costs to:

- (a) Close the Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and Rocket House facilities
- (b) Carry out essential and backlog maintenance to the remainder of the facilities over the next 12 months and bring these to the minimum acceptable standards
- (c) Carry out some improvement work to Seaton Baths and Clock Tower, including the provision of disabled facilities at the Seaton Baths site

Estimated Costs:

Item	Site	Description of work	Cost
1	Thorpe Street	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
2	Pilot Pier	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
3	Rocket House	To close (mothball) the facilities	£5,000
4	Lighthouse (Heugh Battery)	Maintenance	£5,000
5	Albert Street Car Park	Maintenance	£7,000
6	Seaton Baths	Maintenance & Improvements	£70,000
7	Clock Tower	Maintenance & Improvements	£90,000
8	<b>Total</b>		<b>£180,000</b>

Advantages:

- 1 Relatively low maintenance costs
- 2 Acceptable level of disruption during maintenance works
- 3 Relatively early completion of works can be achieved
- 4 Addresses some of the highlighted problems
- 5 Improves and brings facilities up to more acceptable standards
- 6 Provides longer breathing space to seek long-term solutions

Disadvantages:

- 1 Does not address all the underlying problems
- 2 Does not provide long-term solution of the highlighted problems
- 3 Does not completely address the access for disabled persons requirements
- 4 Does not completely address the baby changing facilities requirements
- 5 Does not provide long-term solutions to some of the underlying problems
- 6 Spend may not provide value for money



Schedule showing estimated costs to:

- (a) Close the Thorpe Street, Pilot Pier and Rocket House facilities
- (b) Carry out essential and backlog maintenance to the Lighthouse and Albert Street facilities subject to discussions with the College of Further Education
- (c) Demolish the facilities at Seaton Baths
- (d) Build two new facilities. One at Seaton Baths and a new one at the Seaton Carew front
- (e) Facilities at Seaton Baths to incorporate a new cesspit if the existing one is not suitable

Estimated Costs:

Item	Site	Description of work	Cost
1	Thorpe Street	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
2	Pilot Pier	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
3	Rocket House	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
4	Lighthouse (Heugh Battery)	Maintenance	£6,000
5	Albert Street Car Park	Maintenance	£8,000
6	Seaton Baths	Demolish & Rebuild	£233,000
7	Clock Tower	To close (mothball) the facilities	£1,500
8	Seaton Carew front (Rocket House)	Rebuild new facilities	£227,000
9	Provisional sums	Provisional sums	£30,000
10	<b>Total</b>		<b>£510,000</b>

Advantages

- 1 Improves the service considerably
- 2 Acceptable level of disruptions during maintenance works
- 3 Addresses many of the highlighted problems
- 4 Improves and brings facilities up to more acceptable standards
- 5 Improves longer term solution
- 6 Provides better value for money

Disadvantages

- 1 Does not address all the underlying problems
- 2 Does not provide comprehensive long term solution of the highlighted problems
- 3 Does not completely address the baby changing facilities requirements

Schedule showing estimated costs to:

- (a) Carry out repairs and limited improvement works at Rossmere Park, including the provision of basic facilities for the disabled
- (b) Carry out essential maintenance to the lower Burn Valley facilities
- (c) Carryout essential maintenance to the buildings at Seaton Park
- (d) Close (mothball) the facilities at Ward Jackson Park

Estimated Costs:

Item	Site	Description of work	Cost
1	Ward Jackson Park	To close (mothball) the facilities	£2,000
2	Seaton Carew Park	Building Maintenance	£5,000
3	Rossmere Park	Maintenance & Improvements	£31,000
4	Lower Burn Valley	Building Maintenance	£10,000
5	Upper Burn Valley	Keep building safe	£2,000
6	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£50,000</b>

Advantages:

- 1 Minimum maintenance costs
- 2 Minimum disruptions during maintenance works
- 3 Early completion of works can be achieved
- 4 Brings facilities to the minimum acceptable standards
- 5 Improves breathing space to seek long-term solutions

Disadvantages:

- 1 Does not address all the underlying problems
- 2 Does not provide long term improvements
- 3 In view of the solution being a short term one, it can be seen by some as wasted resource

Schedule showing estimated costs to:

- (a) Carry out complete refurbishment works at Rossmere Park, including the provision of facilities for the disabled
- (b) Carry out essential maintenance to the lower Burn Valley facilities
- (c) Carry out essential maintenance to the buildings at Seaton Park
- (d) Demolish existing facilities and make good site at Ward Jackson Park and the upper Burn Valley

Estimated Costs:

Item	Site	Description of work	Cost
1	Ward Jackson Park	Demolish and make good site	£6,000
2	Seaton Carew Park	Building Maintenance	£5,000
3	Rossmere Park	Maintenance & Improvements	£50,000
4	Lower Burn Valley	Building Maintenance	£10,000
5	Upper Burn Valley	Demolish and make good site	£6,000
6	Provisional sums	Provisional sums	£3,000
7	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£80,000</b>

Advantages:

- 1 Relatively moderate maintenance costs
- 2 Acceptable level of disruptions during maintenance works
- 3 Relatively early completion of works can be achieved
- 4 Brings facilities to decent standards
- 5 Provides medium to long-term solutions
- 6 Provides better value for money in the long term

Disadvantages:

- 1 Does not address all problems
- 2 Due to the age and design of the buildings, further and higher maintenance costs than those associated with modern anti-vandal buildings, will continue to occur

(i) West View Cemetery

- (a) To maintain existing facilities at their present level, with minimum reactive maintenance. Estimated required budget £1,500, and thereafter an annual maintenance budget of £1,500
- (b) To improve the existing facilities by adequate reactive maintenance, including the replacement of defective items. Estimated required budget £3,000 and, thereafter, an annual maintenance budget of £1,500
- (c) To build new facilities, incorporating disabled facilities. The estimated building costs are £30,000 - £50,000. An additional annual maintenance budget of £3,000 would be required

(ii) Stranton Cemetery

- (a) Repair roof, redecorate, carry out routine maintenance, point brickwork  
Cost: £2,500
- (b) As above plus the introduction of heating and planned maintenance.  
Cost: £4,500 - £7,500
- (c) Complete refurbishment and planned maintenance.  
£7,500 - £9,500

**Hartlepool Maritime Experience**

**OPTION 1**

To continue with the current arrangements.

Advantages:

None, apart from the minimum running costs

Disadvantages:

- 1 Extremely poor return on initial investment
- 2 Waste of valuable resources
- 3 Extremely poor public service
- 4 Further rapid deterioration of the condition of the building and fixtures and fittings would necessitate extensive and expensive repair costs

Costs:

Repairs	£10,000 - £15,000
Annual Maintenance Budget	£3,000

## **OPTION 2**

To carry out essential and appropriate maintenance to bring the existing facilities up to acceptable standards and to reopen them as regular public conveniences, with or without attendant service

### Advantages:

- 1 Less expensive than the option of a complete refurbishment
- 2 Early completion with short term delays
- 3 ***With attendant*** - the attendant would provide a daily housekeeping service, on-hand assistance to users, friendlier service, minimise vandalism

### Disadvantages:

#### (i) Without attendant service (**Not Recommended**)

- 1 Very short-term benefits
- 2 Potentially high risk of vandalism
- 3 High repair costs
- 4 Continuous vandalism
- 5 Difficult to match replaced fixtures and fittings, therefore poor appearance of facilities
- 6 Regular disruption to the service
- 7 High public perception of poor service

#### (ii) With attendant service - High wage bill and personnel problems

### Costs:

Repairs	£10,000 - £15,000
Annual Maintenance Budget	£3,000
Attendant's wages	£50,000

### **OPTION 3**

To carry out complete refurbishment. This will include structural modification, the reduction of cubicles and the introduction of anti-vandal measures, and to reopen the facilities on a regular basis, as public convenience without attendant's service.

#### Advantages:

- 1 Almost completely new and modern facilities
- 2 As far as practicable the new facilities, incorporating anti-vandal properties, would minimise vandalism and significantly reduce repair costs
- 3 Offer of high quality service of public conveniences
- 4 Long term benefits and good return on proposed and past capital investment

#### Disadvantages:

- 1 High initial refurbishment costs

**Note:** It should be noted that any anti-vandal measures would only reduce the extent of vandalism. Taking into account the current high anti-social problem and phenomenon of vandalism, it is anticipated that vandalism would still continue to be a major problem and a drain on scarce resources.

#### Costs:

Refurbishment costs	£100,000 - £200,000
Annual maintenance budget	£5,000
Attendant's wages	£50,000

### **OPTION 4**

Close the building as a public convenience and either use it for Council storage or market it.

Costs for mothballing	£2,000
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## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

12 July 2006



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SCRUTINY REFERRAL: HARTLEPOOL'S PUBLIC  
CONVENIENCE PROVISION – SETTING THE  
SCENE

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Members that the Regeneration, Housing and Liveability Portfolio Holder and Head of Environmental Management have been invited to attend this meeting to respond to questions in relation to the Scrutiny Referral relating to Public Convenience in Hartlepool and the options/proposals put forward for the development of a policy for the operation and maintenance of the service.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 As Members will be aware that Cabinet on the 12 April 2006 referred consideration of options and proposals for the development of a policy for the provision of public conveniences in Hartlepool to Scrutiny (minute number 230 refers).
- 2.2 A scoping report was considered by the Forum earlier in this meeting and the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for the inquiry approved. As part of the first stage of the inquiry arrangements have been made for the Head of Environmental Management and Regeneration, Housing and Liveability Portfolio Holder to be in attendance at this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the Cabinet referral and the level and condition of public convenience provision in Hartlepool. A presentation will be given by the Head of Environmental Management.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the Head of Environmental Management and Regeneration, Housing and Transportation Portfolio



Holder, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following questions:-

**Operational**

- (a) Is there a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to provide public conveniences? If yes, is there a minimum level of provision and standard of repair?
- (b) How many public conveniences are there in Hartlepool and how does this compare to numbers in previous years?
- (c) Does the authority have a criterion against which the need for public conveniences and their location is assessed?
- (d) Does the authority have a policy for dealing with vacant buildings following the closure of conveniences to prevent those becoming magnets for vandalism and anti-social behaviour?
- (e) What are the main factors resulting in the closure of conveniences or reduction in opening hours?
- (f) Do you feel that the level and condition of public convenience provision in Hartlepool is detrimental to the town's image and its attractiveness as a tourist destination?

**Health and Safety/Equality Issues**

- (g) What is your view of the current level of provision, the condition of buildings and levels of cleanliness?
- (h) Do our public conveniences comply with current health and safety legislation and will there be any implications as a result of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995?
- (i) How does the Council through its public convenience provision provide for disabled residents and those with young families?

**Public Convenience Provision In the Future**

- (j) What do you feel are the main areas of concern for service users?
- (k) In your view where should public conveniences be positioned, when should they be opened and should attendants be provided?
- (l) How do you see public convenience provision in the future?

### **Financial Issues**

(m) How much would it cost to:

- (i) Bring existing public conveniences up to an acceptable standard?
- (ii) Replace all conveniences with new facilities?

(n) Has partnership working, sponsorship and charging for the use of facilities been explored as a way of funding the provision of public conveniences?

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1** That Members receive the presentation from the Head of Environmental Management and take into consideration as part of the Forum's inquiry the views expressed in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

**Contact Officers:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Referral – Hartlepool's Public Convenience Provision – Scoping Report presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum held on 12 July 2006.
- (ii) Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services entitled 'Public Conveniences' to Cabinet on the 12 April 2006.
- (iii) Minute number 230 of Cabinet held on the 12 April 2006.