

Committee: Community and Housing

Agenda Item

Date: 18 June 2009

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Title: **FELSTED PUBLIC TOILETS**

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Summary

- 1 At the previous meeting held on 19 March 2009, the Committee noted that the Felsted public toilets were in need of renovation. Although the toilets are managed by this Council, it was reported that they are owned by a third party, thereby restricting any repairs the Council could reasonably be expected to carry out. Officers proposed alternative arrangements for provision of public toilets in Felsted, and Committee Members resolved that further consultation with stakeholders be undertaken and reported back.

Recommendations

- 2 A pilot Community Toilet Scheme is pursued as an alternative to existing public toilets in Felsted and;

Members confirm that the Council will withdraw its management and maintenance of the existing public toilets in due course.

Background Papers

- 3 Agenda item and minutes from the Community and Housing Committee held on 19 March 2009.
Improving Public Access to Toilets, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008.

Impact

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Communication/Consultation	Felsted Parish Council, owners and tenant of affected local business, ward members, scrutiny members, Strategic Management Board.
Community Safety	Potential for reduced vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
Equalities	Potential for improved accessibility.

Finance	Potential for on-going revenue savings. Annual payment to local business or organisation.
Human Rights	None identified.
Legal implications	Notice to owner/tenant. Notice to cleaning contractor. Pilot scheme subject to agreement and negotiation.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	Impact on Felsted ward.
Workforce/Workplace	None.

Situation

- 5 Officers have consulted further with the owners of the public toilets in Felsted. They have now written to the Council stating they have no interest in renovating the toilets, that they themselves are concerned about a number of issues, and consider alternative arrangements may now be the best way forward.
- 6 Officers have contacted Felsted Parish Council and invited them to provide further views in order that the Committee may consider them. A further meeting with the Parish Clerk and one of the ward Members has subsequently taken place. The prevailing concern was to ensure ongoing public toilet provision in Felsted.
- 7 In light of the above position, Officers have concluded that the best way forward is for the Council to pursue alternative arrangements based on a Community Toilet Scheme and withdraw from managing and maintaining the existing public toilets in due course. Such a scheme would allow members of the public to use the toilet facilities of an approved local business or organisation. The service would be made available for free and without expectation that users purchase goods or services. Participating premises would need to undertake to keep their toilets safe, clean, hygienic, easily accessible and well stocked. Participating premises would also display window stickers showing male, female and wheelchair accessibility. Appropriate signage would also direct members of the public to the conveniences. Participating premises would in return receive an annual payment from the Council. Such a payment is known to be typically £600 plus VAT at other councils, where the scheme has reportedly proven very successful.
- 8 Other alternative options may have to be generated and pursued in the event that no expressions of interest are forthcoming from local

businesses or organisations. The outcome will in any event be reported back to the Committee.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Expressions of interest are not forthcoming from local businesses.	2 (There are a relatively small number of businesses in the centre of Felsted).	2 (Any scheme will need to be sufficiently advantageous).	Provisional expression of interest from local business.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.