

District Executive – 2nd August 2007

Public Conveniences in Yeovil

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Purpose of the Report

To advise Members of Yeovil Town Council's proposal for provision of modular public conveniences in the town centre and to consider their request for joint funding.

Recommendation(s)

Members are requested to consider if they wish to jointly fund with Yeovil Town Council provision of modular toilet facilities in the town centre from November 2007 for a period of 3 years, subject to their Somerset County Council Area Working Panel bid being successful.

Background

In 2004 as part of the medium term financial plan agreed by District Executive, provision of public conveniences was to be based on the principle of maintaining one facility per town, but with two in Yeovil and Chard.

In November 2005 District Executive agreed the surrender of the lease of toilets at the Quedam Centre as part of the medium term financial plan budget savings whilst continuing to maintain town centre facilities at Petters Way and the Bus Station.

As a consequence of the Quedam Centre closure of their public facilities the Town Council arranged provision of temporary toilets for 7 weeks over the Christmas period 2006, with support from Area South, and a total of 3,762 users visited the facilities.

Report

Area South Committee requested a review of provision of public toilets in the town centre and officers have worked with the Town Council to consider a short/medium term solution to the withdrawal of public toilet facilities by the Quedam Shopping Centre last year.

The Quedam redevelopment plans include the provision of public toilets that will be operated and maintained by the Quedam owners. However the redevelopment project is subject to the normal planning process and it is likely to be 2 – 3 years before construction is complete. It is currently planned that the Quedam extension be open in Spring 2010.

The Town Council are taking the lead and have submitted a bid for £50,000 to the County Council - South Somerset Area Working Panel to fund the set up costs and first year rental for modular toilet facilities in the Town Centre. Provisional estimates for a leased modular building are £15,000 installation and £35,000 per annum running costs, including cleaning, based on a 3 year contract. The outcome of their application will be known in September but if it is unsuccessful they will have to reconsider their project.

In the meantime some work has been undertaken to look at the feasibility of three potential sites in the District Council's ownership to locate the modular unit, namely land at the corner of Bond Street/South Street, Peter Street car park and former Stars Lane short-term car

park. Peter Street is clearly the most suitable site for accessibility, for connecting to main services and CCTV coverage. There is little suitable public land available within the Town Centre for locating toilets other than public car parks and any loss of spaces will impact on the District Council's revenue income. The forthcoming town centre redevelopment schemes e.g. Foundry House/Mill Lane and Quedam will also require the District to maximise parking availability.

Financial Implications

Area South Committee has agreed to support a request to the Executive for a funding contribution to enable the Town Council to provide modular toilet facilities for a 3 year period.

There is no provision in the 2007/08 capital programme or revenue budget to contribute to the cost of new facilities. Funding for future years would require agreement to this growth bid now to enable the Town Council to sign up to the lease agreement.

The estimated revenue costs split between each authority, assuming the LAA bid is successful, are shown in the table below:

	07/08 (wef Nov.)	08/09	09/10	10/11 (to Oct.)
	£	£	£	£
SCC - LAA funding bid for £50,000 still to be determined	15,000 (capital) 14,600	20,400		
Town Council		7,300	17,500	10,200
District Council		7,300	17,500	10,200

In addition, the loss of up to 4 parking spaces to accommodate the unit in Peter Street short stay car park will incur an estimated loss of income of £8,760 per annum that will be an additional cost to the car park budget.

Background Papers: *Area South September 2006/July 2007*
District Executive November 2005
District Executive November 2004