

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public Toilets at Preston Park Rotunda</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>07 October 2014</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Jan Jonker</b>	<b>Tel: 29-4722</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Jan.jonker@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>Preston Park/ All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report is in response to the debate at Full Council on 17 July 2014 following submission of a petition organised by Francis Incorvaja, leaseholder of the Rotunda Café in Preston Park regarding the public toilets attached to the café. A copy of the petition is included in the reports pack for this meeting.
- 1.2 The resolution agreed at Council was that officers were to bring a report, with fully-costed options for improvements to the facilities at Preston Park Rotunda and a timetable for implementation.
- 1.3 A survey of the site has been undertaken as part of a wider survey of all public toilets which has been commissioned in response to the Toilet Scrutiny Report. This report summarises the findings of the survey of the Preston Park toilets and makes recommendations regarding next steps.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Committee notes the findings of the survey undertaken of the Preston Park Rotunda Toilets which has identified £11,200 of repairs and maintenance which should be carried out by 2016/17. More significant investment of up to £80,500 for refurbishment which should be carried out by 2018/19.
- 2.2 That Committee notes the findings of the survey undertaken of the Preston Park Chalet Toilets which has identified £8,200 of repairs and maintenance which should be carried out by 2017/18 and more significant investment of £69,000 for refurbishment which should be carried out by 2022/23.
- 2.3 That Committee agrees the short term repairs and maintenance up to a value of £11,200 are carried out at the Preston Park Rotunda Toilets in 2013/14 and £8,200 at Preston Park Chalet Toilets in 2014/15 funded through the Preston Park pay and display surplus fund. This time-scale is sooner than that recommended by the surveys.

- 2.4 That Committee notes there is no allocated capital budget for refurbishment works to public toilets. Any works would need to be considered as part of the capital works program as part of the annual budget setting process or through other funds such as the Preston Park ring fenced pay and display scheme.
- 2.5 In relation to the more costly refurbishment of the toilets in Preston Park Committee can either:
- (i) Agree to schedule the works in the years recommended by the surveys (2018/19 for the Rotunda and 2022/23 for The Chalet) from the Pay and Display Surplus with the rest of the fund ring-fenced to improvements identified in the Preston Park Management Plan;
  - (ii) Agree to explore with the leaseholder of the Rotunda to rationalise provision by providing an internal toilet in the Rotunda café itself, closing the public toilets and invest in the Chalet as the main public facilities for the park;
  - (iii) Defer a decision on the full refurbishment of both sites until the surveys of all sites have been analysed and recommendations developed taking a strategic approach to public toilet provision across the city with consideration given to the provision within the wider context of Asset Management across operational council owned buildings.
- 2.6 Committee agrees to a report to be produced for Policy & Resources Committee in early 2015 which updates members on the work done since the Toilet Scrutiny including the survey results of all sites. This report will form the basis for discussion and recommendations on future toilet provision in the city.

### **3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 At Full Council in July a debate on the condition of the public toilets adjacent to the Rotunda Café in Preston Park was triggered following the submission of a petition signed by over 1,250 individuals. At the meeting it was resolved that a report would be presented to this Committee which set out the costs and time-scales associated with refurbishing the Preston Park Rotunda toilets. During the debate the question was asked whether surplus income from the pay & display scheme in the park, which is ring fenced to park improvements, could be used to fund the works.
- 3.2 This report sets out the information requested following the debate at Council and provides context in relation to public toilet provision across the city and an update on work that is already under way in response to the Toilet Scrutiny in July 2013.

#### ***Toilet provision across the city/ Toilet scrutiny recommendations in relation to infrastructure***

- 3.3 Current provision of publically accessible toilets in Brighton & Hove consists of:
- 41 traditional council owned
  - 16 toilets in libraries, museums and leisure centres

- 17 toilets in the 'Use our Loo' community toilet scheme
- 3.4 Toilet provision in Brighton & Hove is recognised nationally through the independent *Loo of the Year Awards* run by the British Toilet Association (BTA). The awards won by Brighton & Hove in 2013 include:
- Overall UK Loo of the Year Winner
  - Public Toilet Entries UK Winner
  - Public Toilet Entries England Winner
  - Number one in the BTA Loo of the Year Awards UK Premier League of Local Authority public toilet provision for three years running
  - 35 of the council's toilets were entered, of which 19 were awarded 'platinum' and 16 were awarded 'gold'
- 3.5 A summary of the BTA findings is attached as Appendix 1. The report praises the council for its commitment to provision of public toilets at a time when many other councils have significantly reduced provision but it acknowledges the issues the council faces due to ageing infrastructure.
- 3.6 In 2013 the Overview & Scrutiny Committee conducted a Scrutiny Panel Report on publicly accessible toilets. The recommendations of the panel and the officer response is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.7 The scrutiny acknowledged that reducing budgets would put pressure on existing provision. In relation to the infrastructure the scrutiny noted that many of the public toilets were located in old buildings which would require significant investment too. The recommendation of the panel in relation to investment in infrastructure was that an Action Plan for public toilets be produced which:

*Contains, or is based upon a business plan for the toilets which are directly owned by the council. This business plan would need to:*

- *Clarify what revenue and capital expenditure is required per toilet for the next 15 years. This should cover as a minimum the cost of management and day-to-day maintenance (including responsive maintenance and cleaning) and future planned maintenance. This should include in-house costs and contractor costs. This would enable the council to identify the most cost-effective way of managing these assets.*
- *Clarify what was the cost of providing publicly accessible toilets in 2012/13, including both the capital and revenue expenditure and which service, and budget heading, is responsible for each key aspect of the service.*
- *Ensure a stock condition survey is carried out by Property & Design of all the toilets directly owned by the council to identify a plan of future maintenance.*

The information in the action plan would inform the strategic, and budget, decisions about publicly accessible toilets. It would enable decisions to be made in relevant areas such as:

- Investment
- Disposal of sites
- Change of use
- Alternative means of provision.

3.8 The stock condition surveys of each site commenced in May 2014 and have recently been completed together with suitability surveys. The remit of the surveys was to provide an indicative scope and cost for a future maintenance plan for the next five years. The information from the surveys is being used to develop recommendations as requested by the Scrutiny Panel in relation to investment, disposal of sites, change of use and alternative methods of provision. The Preston Park toilets have been surveyed as part of this work.

**Preston Park Toilets**

3.9 There are two public toilets in Preston Park, one set adjacent to the Chalet Café as well as those adjacent to the Rotunda Café. The toilets have a shared attendant during weekends, bank holidays and for six weeks during the summer. Outside of these periods the sites are cleaned by a mobile attendant three times per day.

3.10 The results of the condition surveys for both are summarised in the table below, further details are available in Appendix 3. The survey identifies repairs and maintenance of £11,200 by 2016/17 in the Rotunda site which would fund internal works and external repairs and decoration. Similar works in the Chalet toilets identified for 2017/18 would cost £8,200. More significant refurbishment works are identified for both sites by 2018/19 and 2022/13 respectively. The value of these more significant works may change.

	Preston Park Rotunda	Preston Park Chalet
Repairs/ redecoration	£11,200 by 2016/17	£8,200 by 2017/18
Refurbishment	£80,500 by 2018/19	£69,000 by 2022/23

**Initial survey results – all public toilets**

3.11 All 41 public toilets have been condition surveyed to identify the maintenance backlog for the next 5 years. The results are currently being collated and analysed to help inform future recommendations about the service.

3.12 Based on these initial results it is evident that significant capital investment is needed in public toilet infrastructure if the service is to be retained in its current format.

**Funding for maintenance works**

3.13 As part of the toilet contract, Wettons who are contracted to clean the toilets, carry out minor repairs and redecorate 10 sites per year. Sites which are redecorated are prioritised by officers working with the contractor based on inspections. The Rotunda Toilets are due to be redecorated this year but this work has been put on hold pending decisions made at this Committee.

- 3.14 There is no allocated capital investment budget for more significant improvements and structural works to public toilets.
- 3.15 At Council the option of funding improvements to Preston Park Toilets through surplus Pay and Display income from the parking scheme was raised. The parking scheme was introduced in Preston Park in 2012 with the agreement that any surplus pay and display income would be ring fenced to improvements to the park. In October 2013 a consultation was designed with Friends of Preston Park to seek views on how the surplus up to the end of 2013/14. At the time of the consultation £20,000 was available. The consultation set out four main areas for improvements informed by the Management Plan for the park consisting of Lovers Walk, the terracing around the cycle track, the coronation/ sensory garden and the area known as the ride.
- 3.16 The majority of respondents favoured expenditure on improvements to the cycle track area and based on these results and discussions with the cricket club, users of the cycle track and Friends of Preston Park the decision was made to:
- Contribute £3,500 towards a new artificial wicket
  - Fund £8,000 to improve fencing around the cycle track
  - Ring fence the remaining £8,500 of the funds accumulated to date to starting to repair the terracing and flint walls by the cycle track.
- 3.17 The current surplus (excluding the £8,500 for the repairs to the terraces) is £41,000 which is projected to increase to approximately £59,000 by the end of the financial year. The work on the terraces has not commenced yet, and the scope to improve this area is greater than originally anticipated but will require more significant resources to complete.
- 3.18 Given the increase in resource available and the availability of a more robust annual projection of income (approximately £37,000 per year) it is now proposed to work up a more strategic five year investment plan for the park in consultation with the Friends Group and other stakeholders, guided by the Management Plan for the park. This plan will be subject to a consultation with park users and will include the works to the terraces. Opportunities to use the funds as match funding for grants will be explored.
- 3.19 Within the surplus funding there is scope to carry out the improvements to the public toilets, but it would reduce the amount of funding available to other aspects of the park.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OPTIONS**

- 4.1 There are a number of options in relation to toilet provision in Preston Park. These are:

*Funding works through pay & display scheme*

- Carry out £11,200 repairs and maintenance works to the Rotunda toilets from the parking surplus in 2013/14. If this option is adopted it is

recommended that works are also undertaken to the Chalet toilets in 2014/15 to bring them up to the same standard.

- Allocating £80,500 to refurbish the Rotunda toilets in 2018/19 and £69,000 to refurbish the Chalet toilets in 2022/23 as recommended by the surveys from the Pay and Display surplus. The remainder of the fund would continue to be invested to deliver the Management Plan for the park.

#### *Rationalising public toilets in Preston Park/ providing bespoke toilets in the Rotunda café*

- Preston Park is the only park with two sets of public toilets (which are 500m apart) and provision could be rationalised by providing a new internal toilet for the Rotunda Café, closing the public toilets by the Rotunda and focussing investment in the public toilets by the Chalet. This would provide the café with its own toilets and result in a saving to the council as it would not need to invest in the Rotunda toilets or fund the ongoing servicing and cleaning. The toilets by the Chalet would be the main publically accessible toilets for the park and would be refurbished from the Pay and Display Surplus. This option would be subject to agreement of the leaseholder. Incorporating public toilets into the leases of cafes has worked well at other sites including Saunders Park and Wish Park and is one supported by the Scrutiny Panel.

4.2 Recommendations on future toilet provision are being drawn up in response to the Toilet Scrutiny, informed by the surveys referred to in the report. A decision on the Preston Park toilets could be deferred until this more strategic work is completed.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

5.1 The options considered in this report have not been subject to public consultation. They have been discussed with members of the Friends of Preston Park who support the short term improvements to the toilets and the development of and consultation on a longer term investment plan for the remainder of the surplus.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1 The petition debated at Full Council sought a commitment to improvements to the Preston Park Rotunda toilets. The site has been surveyed as part of works in response to the Toilet Scrutiny to survey all public toilets. The survey has identified approximately £11,200 of repairs and maintenance by 2016/17 and more significant investment of £80,500 for a refurbishment by 2018/19. £8,200 worth of repairs and maintenance are recommended to the Chalet Toilets by 2017/18 and £69,000 by 2022/23.

6.2 It is projected that there will be sufficient resources in the Preston Park pay and display surplus to fund the repairs and maintenance to both sites this year and next year and to fund the refurbishments in the time-scales set out in this report.

- 6.3 Provision of public toilets in Preston Park could be rationalised by providing an internal toilet in the Rotunda café and focusing investment in maintaining the Chalet toilets for public use. This would result in a revenue and capital saving.
- 6.3 In line with the recommendations from the Toilet Scrutiny officers are drawing up more strategic proposals for toilet provision in the city. A decision on the Preston Park toilets could be deferred until this work has been completed, which is expected to be reported to Policy & Resources Committee in January 2015.

## **7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The cost of short term repairs as recommended in this report are expected to be up to the value of £11,200 at Preston Park Rotunda Toilets and £8,200 at Preston Parks Chalet Toilets. This expenditure will be funded from surplus income generated from the Preston Park Pay and Display parking scheme. The Preston Park Pay and Display parking reserve was £39,416 at the beginning of the 2014-15 financial year and additional income of approximately £17,000 has been received up to August in the current financial year.

Funding for more significant improvements at public toilets has not currently been identified within revenue budgets or the councils capital programme. Agreement to carry out longer term refurbishment would therefore require consideration as part of the budget setting process or require Policy and Resources approval to be included within the councils capital programme. The annual recurring budget for public toilet cleaning, utilities, attendant and minor repairs and redecorations is approximately £980,000 in the 2014-15 financial year.

*Finance Officer consulted:* Steven Bedford

Date: 05.09.14

### Legal Implications:

- 7.2 As property owner the Council is required to keep its property assets in repair, the recommendations outlined in this Report would be in compliance with those obligations.

With regards to option 2.5(ii) and the lease for the Rotunda Café; appropriate terms would have to be agreed with the Lessee to enable alterations to be made to the café. The Lease terms would also need to be varied to ensure that members of the public had access to the toilets under the Council's "Use Our Loos" Scheme.

*Lawyer consulted:* Joanne Dougnaglo

Date: 29/8/14

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 Provision of high standards of public toilets is important for all residents and visitors to the city. It is particularly significant for people with certain medical conditions such as Crohn's or Colitis, who rely on access to these facilities to go

about their daily life. Any recommendations to changing toilet provision in the city needs to be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. British Toilet Association Report on Brighton & Hove Toilets in 2014
2. Toilet Scrutiny Recommendations and Officer Response
3. Survey Results Preston Park Toilets