

Report to: **Executive**  
Date: **22 November 2018**  
Title: **Public Toilet Project**  
Portfolio Area: **Environment Services**  
Wards Affected: **All**  
Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: following the Scrutiny Call-in period at 5.00pm on Monday, 3 December

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### **Recommendations:**

That the Executive resolves to proceed as per the recommendation in respect of each public toilet facility as follows:

1. Pay on Entry (PoE) to be installed at:  
**Dittisham** – The Ham.  
**East Portlemouth** – Ferry Steps.  
**Ivybridge** – Glanville’s Mill.  
**Salcombe** – Batson Creek, North Sands, South Sands and Whitestrand.  
**South Huish** – Hope Cove.  
**Totnes** – Civic Hall, Coronation Road and Steamer Quay (with code or card access permitted for staff from the nearby Riverside Café and Ferry Office).
2. Income to be generated in lieu of PoE through alternative charges:  
**Bigbury** – toilet service charges to be supported through a

review of Pay & Display charges.

**Kingsbridge** – Fore Street – Town Council to make annual payment in lieu of PoE.

**Stokenham** – Torcross – toilet service charges to be supported through a review of Pay & Display charges.

**Strete Gate** – toilet service charges to be supported through a review of Pay & Display charges.

3. Asset transfers to take place or facility to close in September 2019:

**Holbeton.**

**Kingswear** – Lower Ferry.

**Malborough** (asset transfer agreed).

**Newton & Noss** – Newton Ferrers.

**Salcombe** – Cliff House Gardens (to not be re-opened in Spring 2019 following winter closure).

**South Brent** (asset transfer agreed).

**Staverton.**

**Stoke Fleming** (Parish Council have confirmed that an asset transfer is not required).

**Thurlestone** (asset transfer agreed in principle).

**Ugborough** – Bittaford and Ugborough.

4. Other arrangements:

**Dartmouth** – Manor Gardens – to close in September 2019 with no asset transfer to the Town Council.

**East Portlemouth** – Mill Bay - to close in September 2019 unless a 75% contribution from a stakeholder is achieved next financial year, with an asset transfer to be completed by financial year 2020/ 21.

**Kingswear** – Higher Ferry – to close with no asset transfer to the Parish Council.

**South Brent** – Shipley Bridge – withdraw cleaning service.

**South Milton** – to close in September 2019 unless a 75% contribution from a stakeholder is achieved next financial year, with an asset transfer to be completed by financial year 2020/ 21.

**Wembury** – to allow the current lease with the National Trust to expire in June 2020.

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 This report requests that Members consider the above recommendations and resolve to proceed as recommended for each facility.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the public toilet service was previously considered, as part of the budget process, on 1<sup>st</sup> February and 26<sup>th</sup>

April this year, where decisions in respect of the way forward were resolved.

2.2 Appendix 3 gives Members some narrative behind the business case for each public toilet.

2.3 There are now some recommended amendments to previous resolutions in some cases, as a result of further consideration, as follows:

i. **Bigbury** – it was previously resolved that PoE be installed. However, the Parish Council would prefer that the anticipated revenue needed to support the service be generated from a review of the car parking charges. As the car park and public toilets support each other and the surrounding public realm, this provides a solution with minimal additional installation or maintenance costs.

ii **Dartmouth** – Manor Gardens – due to low footfall, the close proximity of three other public toilet buildings that have recently been transferred to Dartmouth Town Council, and the relatively high value of the site, it is recommended that the facility close in September 2019.

iii. **East Portlemouth** - Mill Bay – it was previously resolved that PoE be installed. However, further assessment of the facility at Mill Bay has shown that the installation of PoE equipment at this site is significantly more expensive than at other sites, is likely to prove unreliable, and will cause frustration for customers. This is because, due to the lack of electricity supply, the PoE would need to be solar-powered and the tree canopy surrounding the building means that we will not be able to rely on this to provide enough power to keep the equipment operating.

It is, therefore, now recommended that, unless a 75% contribution from a stakeholder is achieved next financial year, with an asset transfer to be completed by financial year 2020/21, it should close in September 2019.

iv. **Kingswear** – Higher Ferry – due to the exceptionally low footfall at this facility, and the relatively high value of the site, it is recommended that the facility not be re-opened after the winter closure.

v. **Kingsbridge** - Fore Street – it was previously resolved that PoE be installed. However, the Town Council would prefer to compensate the District Council, though a financial contribution, for the anticipated income from such a scheme, and for the toilets to remain free to use.

vi. **Salcombe** - Cliff House Gardens – there was previously no resolution made in respect of this facility, as it is one that fell

between high footfall (where PoE was resolved) and low footfall (where transfer or closure was resolved). However, due to the relatively close proximity of Whitestrand public toilets, and the requirement for money to be invested in Cliff House Gardens toilets to bring them to a reasonable standard, it is now recommended that they be transferred or closed.

Cliff House Gardens was gifted to South Hams District Council and is classed as 'Charity Land', which precludes a freehold disposal of the toilet building. However, it could be used in accordance with the provisions of the Charity, ie recreational use (or ancillary to). Options will be explored should it be resolved to close this facility.

- vii. **South Brent** – Shipley Bridge – as the building is the responsibility of Dartmoor National Park Authority, it is recommended that we cease our cleaning service with effect from September 2019. The District Council has no obligation to dispose of or demolish the toilet building, so it will be transferred back DNPA, who will then take on the responsibility for it.
- viii. **South Huish** - Hope Cove – following a Member request at the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April, officers have established that Hope Cove is suitable for a PoE scheme.
- ix. **South Milton** – as there appear to be several stakeholders with an interest in this public toilet facility, it is now recommended that, unless a 75% contribution from one or more of those stakeholders is achieved next financial year, with an asset transfer to be completed by financial year 2020/21, it should be closed in September 2019.
- x. **Stokenham** - Torcross – it was previously resolved that PoE be installed. This site is suitable for a similar solution to that proposed for Bigbury. A review of overall charges will also give the opportunity for the overnight charge to be reviewed, as this has not had the desired effect of reducing overnight camping in the area.
- xi. **Strete Gate** – as per Stokenham above.
- xii. **Wembury** – it was previously resolved that PoE be installed. However, it has since come to light that the current lease of the building expires in June 2020. In discussions with the National Trust, who own the land the building sits on, concerns were raised about a new lease due to coastal erosion. The National Trust anticipate that the current public toilet building will be impacted and will be at risk within 10 years. It is, therefore, now recommended that the lease be allowed to expire.

- 2.3 Financial information to support the recommendations above is attached at Appendix 1 and the business case narrative is attached at Appendix 3.
- 2.4 It should be noted that the figures for service costs set out in Appendix 1 are the costs for South Hams DC to provide services to each facility. If a facility is transferred to a parish council (or another stakeholder) then it is very likely that they can provide the service locally at a lower cost. If that is the case then the increase to the parish precept to fund the service would be less than that shown in the financial modelling.
- 2.5 Some key figures to note are as follows:
- i. Should it be resolved to install PoE equipment at the sites listed in Recommendation 1, the total capital cost of this will be £121,265. The budget approved in the 2018/ 19 Capital Programme for PoE equipment was £130,000.
  - ii. The net anticipated saving/ income from these PoE sites is estimated at £37,314 per annum (see Appendix 1, Recommendation 1) based on specialist site analysis from Healthmatic Ltd. This was previously estimated at £36,000 per annum.
  - iii. Further income will be generated from the sites listed in Recommendation 2, where officers have recommended an alternative option to PoE, in the sum of £16,200 per annum (see Appendix 1, Recommendation 2). This income will be generated through either a review of parking charges or, in the case of Kingsbridge, an annual contribution to the District Council.
  - iv. Service provision savings from the sites where facilities are to be closed or transferred, or have other arrangements in place will total approximately £184,501 per annum (see Appendix 1, Recommendation 3 and Recommendation 4). If the Council resolves to award a contract for waste and cleansing services approximately 20% of this saving would be achieved by a reduction in the cleansing contract as opposed to an operational saving (the £184,501 has been based on in-house costs).
  - v. From the financial year 2020/21 onwards, as a result of the Government's proposal in respect of 100% business rate relief on public toilets, a further saving of approximately £23,500 per annum will be made on the sites to be retained by the Council.
- 2.6 A Comprehensive Impact Assessment in respect of all facilities is attached at Appendix 2, and this includes the locations of alternative facilities where the proposal is that the District Council's public toilet should transfer or close.

2.7 Sites where no action has been recommended in this review are the ones which demonstrate medium usage levels so are considered relatively well used but do not demonstrate significant usage which would support a pay on entry scheme, and are:

- **Chivelstone** – East Prawle
- **Dartmouth** – Park & Ride
- **Ermington**
- **Kingsbridge** – Bowcombe
- **Loddiswell**
- **Modbury**
- **Newton & Noss** – Noss Mayo
- **Ringmore** – Challaborough
- **Stokenham** – Beesands.

Members may wish to consider these at a later stage.

### **3. Outcomes/outputs**

3.1 Consultation has already been undertaken with Towns, Parishes and other stakeholders, and this will continue as necessary in order to ensure the smooth completion of all recommendations.

3.2 Press releases have gone out and Towns and Parishes in particular have engaged in constructive dialogue with both Members and officers.

3.3 It should be noted that free access to public toilets will continue to be available for disabled customers, who are able to purchase a RADAR key. This is a national scheme allowing anyone who is registered as disabled to access disabled toilet facilities.

### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

4.1 Information to support each recommendation is provided at Appendix 1 and Appendix 3, and each facility above has been the subject of an individual Comprehensive Impact Assessment, attached at Appendix 2.

### **5. Implications**

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Included in Appendix 2.
Legal/Governance		
Financial		Appendix 1 sets out the annual savings from the proposals, being £144,275 in 2019/ 20, £256,328 in 2020/ 21 and £261,515 for 2021/ 22 onwards.
Risk		The closure of some public toilets is likely to result in adverse publicity for the District Council.

		However, there is sound information to demonstrate the requirement to make the associated financial savings and, where possible, alternative solutions have been highlighted in Appendix 2.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		A comprehensive impact assessment has been completed (Appendix 2) in respect of this each facility which shows that there are limited numbers of customers which are adversely by these recommendations.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		The implementation of PoE at the facilities above is likely to have a positive impact in respect of anti-social behaviour and vandalism.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		As per Appendix 2.
Other implications		None.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – financial information

Appendix 2 – Comprehensive Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 – Business case narrative