

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Port Health & Environmental Services	24 November 2015
Subject: Public Conveniences Strategy – Update on Service Based Review Savings	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For information

Summary

This report is to update Members on the progress being made to achieve the savings agreed in the Service Base Review report 'Public Conveniences Strategy – Update & Proposed Savings Options', in November 2014. Target savings identified were £147k in 2015/16 and £320k in 2016/17. Savings are on target with actions detailed in the main report.

Attended Public Conveniences - Aldgate, Bishopsgate and Smithfield attended toilets were permanently closed by the end of March 2015 and declared surplus to committee's requirements. A review of Blackfriars will be undertaken in two years following re-development of the public realm around this area. Opening times have been standardised and working arrangements changed to implement single attendant working across the remaining attended toilets at Tower Hill, Paternoster Square, Royal Exchange & Eastcheap

There were no complaints relating to Aldgate, Bishopsgate or Blackfriars toilet closures however we did receive a number of complaints from taxi drivers when we sent notification out of our planned closure of Smithfield. Since the actual closure we have not received any further complaints.

Automatic Public Conveniences (APC) - Aldgate High Street & Monument Street APC's contracts were terminated and both units were removed during March 2015.

Proposals to modernise remaining APCs unfortunately cannot be progressed due to the design and size of replacement units as they are slightly bigger and site constraints are very limiting. The only unit that can be upgraded is the unit at Aldermanbury; this will be completed by the end of this financial year.

Members will recall that the Aldermanbury unit was to be looked at with a view to re-locate it to Smithfield however physical constraints and opposition to the only suggested location resulted in Members agreeing, at the last committee, not to pursue this any further.

Management - The management structure of the Cleansing Service is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year to achieve the required savings.

Other activity - Community Toilet Scheme – The toilets in the north & west wings of the Guildhall are now included in the scheme. CTS signs are now larger and promote the City Toilet Finder App. Various initiatives have been undertaken to promote the App in order to raise awareness of the City's toilet facilities. The App has been downloaded 5030 times.

Toilet Signage – Signage at the attended toilets has been standardised and is now ‘accessible compliant’. Street signage is currently being updated and where possible improved.

Recommendation:

For your Committee to:

1. Receive and note the updates in this report.

Main Report

Background

The Strategy

1. On 11 March 2008 your committee agreed a report titled ‘Public Conveniences Strategy’. The report proposed a framework and timescale upon which to review the provision of public conveniences within the City. Over previous years this Committee had reassessed the service’s provision of public conveniences which had resulted in modifying the opening hours of attended conveniences and reducing the provision of automatic public conveniences (APCs).
2. This Strategy aimed to ensure that toilets are provided, of a type and in locations that meet the needs of potential users. It recognised, for example, that staffed conveniences worked well during the day, but were not suited to night-time users. Its aims were therefore, through a variety of facilities, to provide adequate toilet provision for commuters, shoppers and tourists as well as address the additional needs of a growing night time economy.
3. The strategy provided daytime toilet provision delivered via the staffed facilities, and supplemented by provisions developed in the form of a Community Toilet Scheme (CTS), by which local shops and businesses make their toilets available to the public in return for a relatively modest financial reward. Night time provision is provided via ‘pop up’ style Urilift urinals with all provision being further supplemented by 24/7 Automatic Public Conveniences (APCs) which are a unisex facility.
4. On 18 November 2014 PHES Committee agreed a report titled ‘Public Conveniences Strategy – Update & Proposed Savings Options’. This report outlined proposed savings options for the delivery of the Public Conveniences Strategy 2014-17 in order to achieve the service based review targets set by the Policy & Resources Committee. It also detailed areas to be addressed following the commissioned satisfaction survey.

Current Position

Attended Public Conveniences

5. In accordance with the PHES Committee resolution on 18 November 2014; Bishopsgate, which only opened Sundays, and Smithfield attended toilets, were permanently closed at the end of March 2015. They were declared surplus to this committee's requirements and Officers are working with the City Surveyor's Department to facilitate the disposals.
6. Aldgate attended toilet, which only opened Sundays, was permanently closed prior to March 2015, with member approval, as part of the Aldgate project. This will be replaced by toilet facilities within the new Aldgate Pavilion.
7. Blackfriars attended toilet, which only opened in the summer, has also been closed pending review, in two years, to enable officers to understand how planned new developments in this area are going to impact on the public realm.
8. Revised alignment of opening hours were implemented from April 2015 at the remaining attended toilets, Tower Hill, Paternoster Square, Royal Exchange and Eastcheap and in most cases these were extended. All locations are now open 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 7pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays with the exception of Royal Exchange; these facilities are closed at weekends as they are predominately used by City workers. Additionally, revised staff working arrangements, single attendant working, were implemented to achieve the planned savings.
9. One month prior to the toilet closures, notices were erected notifying service users. During this period officers received 9 complaints about the closure of Smithfield, mainly from taxi drivers who pointed out that West Smithfield was one of the few places that they could park while they used the facility.
10. One of the complainants created an on-line petition at <http://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-west-smithfield-public-toilet-from-closure>). To date this has attracted 61 signatures, the last of which was added several months ago. By contrast no complaints were received about the closure of the toilets at Aldgate, Bishopsgate or Blackfriars. Since the closures no further complaints have been directly received.

Automatic Public Conveniences (APCs)

11. The City had 10 APC units. Six provided by J C Decaux and four by Danfo. While APCs are relatively expensive to provide and maintain their real benefit is that they provide a 24 hour, 7 days a week facility and are available for both men and women. This helps support the needs of the growing night time economy. The four units provided by Danfo are relatively new and are fully accessible for disabled use and are of an integrated design into a building structure. They can be found at; Aldersgate/ Long Lane, Tower hill, All Hallows Lane/ Watermark Place and a unit at Monument Pavilion.
12. The J C Decaux street sited units located at; Aldermanbury, Charterhouse St, Harrow Place, St Paul's Walk, Monument Street and Aldgate High Street are older and do not offer facilities for the disabled. The unit at Aldgate High Street was

already being considered for future removal because it was sited on land due for redevelopment as part of the Minorities project. The unit in Monument St was no longer required following the conversion of the nearby Monument Pavilion APC to be accessible to all. PHES Committee resolved on 18 November 2014 to terminate the contracts for both Aldgate High Street and Monument Street units. Contracts were terminated and Aldgate High Street & Monument Street automatic toilets were both removed from site during March 2015. The highway has been fully reinstated.

13. In an attempt to mitigate the closure of Smithfield attended toilet, paragraph 5, members were advised that officers would explore the possibility of re-locating the APC from Aldermanbury to a location within the vicinity of Smithfield toilet. With a view to upgrading to a fully accessible unit, this unit would be more modern unit and its design is more in keeping with the Smithfield area.
14. However, the presence of existing underground services and other constraints, such as the proximity of historic buildings, made it difficult to find a suitable site for an APC in West Smithfield. After consultation with Planning, Highways and J C Decaux only one viably suitable, but not ideal, location was identified for an APC in West Smithfield. Officers consulted on this and on 31/3/15 letters were sent to seventy five premises in the immediate vicinity of the proposed location of the APC. Thirty one letters were returned by the post office because a number of flats at 58 West Smithfield were unoccupied. From the remaining 44 letters, three letters objecting to the proposal were received. (Appendix 1, 2 & 3). Some Ward Members were also made aware of some disquiet over the proposal. It became apparent that there was significant opposition to the proposal. Planning Officers views were that they felt it would be regrettable to have an APC located in such an historic environment.
15. The cost of the project was likely to be in excess of £36K so with no further complaints from the public regarding the closure of Smithfield but very strong local opposition to the project it was decided, after consultation with the Chairman & Deputy Chairman, that this project should not be pursued further, this was presented to the September PHES committee and agreed.
16. Instead it was agreed that officers should explore the possibility of modernising the Aldermanbury APC at its present location. The Aldermanbury unit was used 13850 times during 2014/15 and is the most used J C Decaux unit in the City. Many of the users are taxi drivers so it was felt appropriate that it should remain on site given their opposition to the closure of Smithfield attended toilet.
17. The Aldermanbury APC has been surveyed for replacement with a more modern fully accessible unit (an image can be seen in Appendix 4), Officers are confident that the replacement will be completed before the end of the financial year. The remaining three J C Decaux APC's at; Charterhouse St, Harrow Place and St Paul's Walk have also been assessed for replacement with fully accessible units but, because the newer units are slightly bigger than the existing ones, site constraints have meant that it will not be possible to achieve this.

Management

18. As part of the Service Based Review it was agreed that the management structure of the Cleansing Service would be reviewed to achieve a savings. This is currently

underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year achieving the required savings.

Savings

19. The Service Based Review identified savings targets of £147k in 2015/16 and £320k in 2016/17 these are on target to be achieved.

Other activities arising from November report

20. Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) – Toilets in the north & west wing of the Guildhall are now included in the Community Toilet Scheme and are available for use by the public. The Visitor Services Manager has reported that the toilets in the west wing are particularly well used by the general public.
21. Following feedback from members that CTS signs were difficult to spot they have been made larger (A4 size) and the design has been amended to clarify what the CTS scheme is and to promote the City Toilet Finder App. (see Appendix 5)
22. City Toilet Finder App. – Various initiatives (see Appendix 6) have been undertaken to promote the App in order to raise awareness of the City's toilet facilities. This has included articles; tweets and the commissioning of an advertisement (see Appendix 7). The most recent publication which featured the advertisement was 'City of London in your pocket – A worker's guide to rest and play in the Square Mile'. This booklet was the work of the City's visitor marketing division, sponsored by Grange Hotels and distributed by City AM. 170,000 booklets were produced, 80,000 were distributed by City AM, 11000 in Commercial Property Register and 27,000 in City View during late September. The rest will be available in Grange Hotels, City Information Centre, Libraries and Guildhall Receptions. From 27th April 2015 up to the end of August 2015 the App had been downloaded 5030 times.
23. Toilet Signage – Signage at the attended toilets has been standardised and is now 'accessible compliant', featuring braille, and additional signs have also been installed. Officers from Cleansing are working with colleagues within City Transportation section of DBE to update street signage to reflect the revised provision of facilities since April 2015 and where possible it is being improved, especially in the area around Eastcheap & Royal Exchange attended toilets where signage was poor. This is also in response to the outcome of the satisfaction survey.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

24. This strategy supports tourism in the City.

H.R. Implications

25. The Service Based Review savings impacts upon the current establishment. Full consultation with staff affected has been/ will be undertaken.

Legal Implication

26. No legal implications currently.

Financial Implications

27. The Chamberlain has been consulted on these proposals.

Background Papers:

Public Convenience Strategy update papers to PHES committee

Contact:

doug.wilkinson@cityoflondon.gov.uk |0207 332 4998

Appendix 1

The Gatehouse, 57a West Smithfield, London EC1A 9DS

TEL 020 7606 3988

T Chown
Waste and Amenity Planning Manager
Department of the Built Environment
City of London
PO Box 270
Guildhall
London EC2P 2EJ

8 April 2015

Dear T Chown,

With reference to your letter of 30 March regarding the proposal to site an automatic public toilet on the pavement at the intersection of West Smithfield and Little Britain abutting the northeast corner of St Bartholomew's Hospital we, immediate neighbours of the proposed site, want to express our doubts as to the appropriateness of this location.

The site is on a fairly narrow walk- and cycle-way, which already gets perilous at busy times. It is immediately facing the front windows of the Barts Square marketing suite and opposite the entrance way to the oldest parish church in the City, not to mention the most prestigious restaurant in the area. The proposed design is quite out of keeping with any other structure in the vicinity. It is brassy and assertive and most emphatically not of a nature to blend in in a cluster of listed buildings.

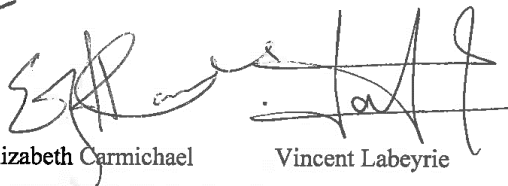
There would seem to be other more suitable locations for this facility where services for it are likely to be available and its presence is less likely to be obtrusive or disruptive. It might be possible, for example, to site it adjacent to the ambulance station or in the brick structure that housed the now closed disabled toilet.

We do hope you will find it possible to reconsider this and welcome the possibility of further discussion.

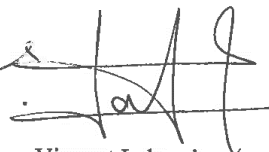
Sincerely,



Tony Kitzinger



Elizabeth Carmichael



Vincent Labeyrie

Appendix 2



9th April 2015

Mr T. Chown
Department of the Built Environment
City of London
PO Box 270
Guildhall
London
EC2P 2EJ

Your ref: 13055

Dear Terry,

Proposed Public Toilet – West Smithfield

We are writing on behalf of the owners of Barts Square in response to your letter of 30th March regarding a proposed new public toilet opposite our marketing suite at 56 West Smithfield.

We would like to lodge our strongest possible objection to this proposal for the following reasons:

1. West Smithfield is a narrow and busy thoroughfare. There is a regular, steady stream of pedestrian and bicycle traffic using the route which will increase considerably when the Farringdon and Farringdon East Crossrail Stations open in 2018. Indeed West Smithfield and Little Britain will be the primary route from Crossrail to St Paul's and the City beyond.

Please bear in mind that the NHS will be removing their construction stockade shortly which will enable West Smithfield to revert to its original width. The proposed location of the toilet would narrow what is already a constrained route.

2. The proposed location is immediately opposite the gatehouse of St. Bartholomew the Great Church. This Grade II* listed structure is one of the City's finest heritage assets and a rare survivor of medieval London which has stood since 1123, surviving nearly a thousand years. The gatehouse provides the entrance to London's oldest and finest church, visited by thousands of worshippers, tourists and film crews each year. The proposed toilet would seriously undermine the visual amenity of this fine part of London's history and the immediate surrounding area.

Helical Bar plc 5 Hanover Square London W1S 1HQ 020 7629 0113 info@helical.co.uk www.helical.co.uk
Chairman NG McNair Scott Chief Executive ME Slade
Directors MC Bonning-Snook GA Kaye TJ Murphy DCE Walker
Non-Executive Directors RD Gillingwater RJ Grant AEG Guilford MK O'Donnell
Company Secretary HJ Williams
Registered Office 5 Hanover Square London W1S 1HQ Registered in England and Wales No:156663



3. We believe the heading of your letter is somewhat misleading as we do not perceive there to be a particular problem with street urination or anti-social behavior in the immediate area and while we understand that such facilities are necessary, we would strongly urge you to find an alternative, more appropriate location that is not on a major pedestrian route. Indeed the installation of the toilet in this particular location could actually be the catalyst for an increase in anti-social behavior in the immediate area, being a potential draw for late night revelers coming from the bars and clubs of Smithfield and Farringdon.

Finally, we find it somewhat strange when we have been encouraged by your planning department to design to the highest standards a redevelopment of the 3.2 acres comprising Little Britain and Bartholomew Close, recently vacated by Barts Hospital, for a major mixed use redevelopment at a total cost of nearly £400m, that you then wish to despoil the area with a public toilet in such a prominent location.

Please may we urge you to reconsider your proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerald Kaye", with a small flourish at the end.

Gerald Kaye
Director

Cc Philip Everett – Director of the Built Environment, City of London

Flat 6
63 West Smithfield
London EC1A 9DY

23 April 2015

Dear Mr Varma,

Re: Closure of West Smithfield toilets and placement of pay toilet

Further to our emails I am writing on behalf of members of the 63 West Smithfield residents' committee to raise our concerns. We understand the current cost pressures, but are very saddened that longstanding and well maintained toilets used during daytime hours can no longer be funded. I have written to your recommended colleague regarding possible purchase of the facilities, so that they do not deteriorate as with the other Smithfield public toilet block. Unfortunately this is not possible and I worry about the potential delay in selling via a commercial agent. We will monitor the facility externally and alert the authorities if there are signs of refuse collecting on the steps or vandalism. If the closure cannot be challenged then we do not want the beautiful architecture in West Smithfield to be ruined by a pay toilet.

Your original letter title mentioned antisocial behaviour. As a former Consultant Addiction Psychiatrist my view is that those who will urinate in public are not the same people who would pay to use a facility. Nor would it be safe for intoxicated individuals to be locked in this type of facility.

If this truly is cost saving then please do not spend money on an eye-sore. This is a beautiful historic area and does not have the absolute need for a toilet block. Hospital visitors are provided for, pub goers can use pub facilities, clubbers have facilities on the other side of the meat market, most visitors will be going to a restaurant and taxi drivers will have other stopping places.

Many people do not like to use these facilities for fear of being locked in or the doors opening. The public toilets were perfect and served their purpose well: the proposed toilet will ruin the beautiful lanes from St Bartholomew's Church through Little Britain towards St Paul's.

I do hope the City of London will listen to its own residents, who value the area most and live there when all the passing traffic has gone home.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa

Dr Vanessa Crawford

Appendix 4





You May Use Our Toilets



Community Toilet Scheme

Get Our Free App – City Toilet Finder



Scan the QR Code or visit:
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/toilets
to download our free App or
view the interactive toilet map.

Appendix 6

Avenue for marketing	Date	Format	Nature of Promotion
Healthwatch	28-Apr	Newsletter	Article and advert
Marathon - tweets	26-Apr	Online	Tweets from COL, GreenSQMile, Square cyclists
City Resident Newsletter	28-Apr	Newsletter	Article and advert
Crohns and Colitus	21-May	Online	Link to toilet page for website
Open Gardens Weekend	13-Jun	Map	Map
Timeout	08-Jun	Online	Article
DBE News letter	09-Jun	Newsletter	Article and advert
Evening Standard	09-Jun	Online	Article
City AM	11-Jun	Newsletter	Article
Lonely Planet	11-Jun	Online	Article
IBS Network	28-Jul	Online	Article
Public toilets UK	05-Aug	Online	Article
CoL Ladies Cycling Event	25-Sep	Event	Stall - handed out maps
City in your pocket - worker guide	WC 21/9	Publication	Advert
Lord Mayors Show Maps	14-Nov	Map	Map
Lord Mayors Show Program	15-Nov	Publication	Advert



When nature calls

make a dash for our free app
City Toilet Finder



You May Use Our Toilets


CITY OF LONDON

Community Toilet Scheme



Find public toilets using the real time street view or interactive toilet map. Attended, community, automatic and accessible toilets, baby changing facilities and night-time urinals.

For more details visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/toilets.

Download on the  **App Store**

ANDROID APP ON  **Google play**