

Report to: Policy & Resources Committee, 23rd May 2023

**Report of: Head of Property and Asset Management & Corporate Director –
Planning and Governance**

Subject: PROPOSED CHANGING PLACES TOILET AT THE CORNMARKE

1. Recommendations

That the Committee

- 1.1 recommends to Council the inclusion of the provision of a new Changing Places Toilet at the Cornmarket in the Council’s Capital Programme; and**
- 1.2 recommends to Council that the Capital Programme is adjusted to include £60k of grant funding for the project and £20k supported by borrowing.**

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2021, the Council was successful in any application for funding from the Government’s Changing Places Toilets Fund to convert vacant space at the Cornmarket Public Conveniences into a Changing Places Toilet. Changing Places Toilets are larger accessible toilets for people with disabilities, with equipment such as hoists, adult-sized changing benches and space for carers. Thousands of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well other disabilities that severely limit mobility, cannot use standard accessible toilets. In Worcester, currently there is a Changing Places Toilet in the Hive and also on the University’s St John’s campus.
- 2.2 The site at the Cornmarket was chosen following a review of possible City Council owned locations in the city centre. The location is indicated on the plan in Appendix 1. In its bid for Government funding, the Council outlined that this location was the most advantageous for the following reasons:
 - The site is in a central location with access to retail and grocery shopping and also entertainment such as cinemas, restaurants, pubs and cafes
 - The site is an existing public convenience with necessary services and utilities already available
 - It stands on a City Council operated car park with adjacent disabled parking spaces.
- 2.3 The Council consulted with other local authorities who have installed and manage Changing Places Toilets throughout the project planning and surveying processes as well as Muscular Dystrophy UK, which has been procured by the Government to

provide expertise in the design and delivery of these new facilities across the country.

- 2.4 Confirmation of a £60k Government grant was received in March 2022, including a contribution to servicing and maintenance in the initial years as well as conversion and fit out costs.
- 2.5 The work has now been designed and tendered and includes some structural remedial work to the building and repairs to drains. Building costs have risen significantly since estimates were provided for the original grant application and with the inclusion of the remedial work, the Government grant is insufficient to cover the cost of all items.
- 2.6 An additional £20k is therefore required from the Council's own funds, in order to be able to award the contract for works and successfully complete the project.

3 Preferred Option

- 3.1 The preferred option is to include this project in the Council's Capital Programme and for the Council to fund the additional costs by borrowing.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council could decide not to proceed with the project and return the Government grant funding. This is not the preferred option because the facility will meet an identified need in the city centre and the opportunity to deliver it, requiring only a modest contribution from the Council's own funds, is considered very beneficial to residents and visitors to the city.

5 Implications

5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

The Council has received a £60k grant for this project. The borrowing cost of an additional £20k has an annual revenue implication of £1,164. There will be some marginal costs incurred in maintaining and cleaning the facility in addition to the remainder of the Public Conveniences at this location.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

The Council has legal powers to provide Public Conveniences.

5.3 Risk Implications

None identified.

5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

The installation of the Changing Place Toilet supports the Council's Equality Objective of achieving Excellence in our equality practice, as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

5.5 Equality Implications

There are only a limited number of Changing Places Toilets in Worcester and this new facility will have a positive impact on people with disabilities and their carers, extending their access to city centre facilities and prolonging their stay.

A publicity campaign would be planned to raise awareness of the new facility with local people in Worcester and visitors.

5.6 Human Resources Implications

None.

5.7 Health and Safety Implications

None.

5.8 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

None.

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Background Papers: None.

