

REPORT TO BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE – 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

REVIEW OF PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION IN TURRIFF

1 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- 1.1 **Agree to the replacement of the public convenience in the Turriff High Street public car park with the site at the Haughs as the permanent public convenience site for Turriff.**
- 1.2 **To declare the High Street Turriff public convenience site as surplus to requirements and available for disposal.**

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The Infrastructure Services Committee, which was the appropriate Service and Policy Committee at the time, approved a review of the Public Convenience Strategy in January 2016. The Strategy promoted the focus of facilities on major transportation and tourist routes. This Strategy also included the closure of 9 low use and/or poor condition conveniences. The site at Turriff Haughs was one. The site at the High Street public car park in Turriff was to remain as the only public convenience site in Turriff.
- 2.2 There is local desire to develop and enhance the wider Haughs area as a recreation, tourist and event related space. The Turriff Community Council completed a public consultation exercise the outcome of which was to retain the Haughs site as the preferred site for Turriff. This site had been a seasonal site, open only for the summer months.
- 2.3 To open the Haughs facility as a permanent site would require the closure of the High Street site. This would then be declared surplus to requirements and would be available for disposal. It is proposed that the Haughs site would remain open 12 months of the year. The annual cost of maintaining the site at the Haughs, will be in the region of £7,500, which is similar to the cost of maintaining the High Street site.
- 2.4 The Council continues to operate 50 public conveniences, although this is under review, with a further 19 sites operated as comfort partnership arrangements with local businesses and we also support 9 community run sites. Aberdeenshire has the second highest number of public conveniences in Scotland.
- 2.5 The Council does not have a statutory requirement to provide public toilets. The Service costs £886,000 nett (2016/17) to run, the Public Convenience budget page refers. With the financial challenges facing both the Service and Council it is still considered appropriate to continually review the level of service provision to allow resources to be focused in those areas where footfall and demand is more evident and prevalent.

- 2.6 The Service continues to believe it is appropriate to focus attention and resources on a reduced number of improved quality facilities and the accepted Strategy is predicated on a proposal to reduce the number of facilities overall, reduce costs significantly and allow the focus of the remaining resources to increase the quality of the continuing provision particularly on major transport corridors and major tourist routes. Officers also recognise the potential for local communities to take a responsibility for public toilets – both those that are earmarked for disposal and, indeed, those that may not be.
- 2.7 For Members information the Formartine Area Committee held on 22 August 2017 considered the proposal and agreed to recommend to Committee that the public convenience at Turriff High Street public car park be replaced with the site at the Haughs, as the permanent public convenience site for Turriff
- 2.8 Subsequent to the Infrastructure Services Committee considering the Public Convenience Strategy the Property & Facilities Management Service transferred to Business Services. The Business Services Committee is now the appropriate locus to consider any issues arising from the Strategy.
- 2.9 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Their comments have been incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Business Services Committee is able to take a decision on this item in terms of Section C.1.1.i of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance which relates to the functions of Property & Facilities Management.

4 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 4.1 An equality impact is not required because its purpose is to inform Committee of a proposed change of location of the toilet site and does not have a differential impact on anyone with any of the protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no specific staffing or financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 It is considered that there are no risks from a Corporate or Directorate level arising from this proposal.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Business Services