

OPENING OF POOLES LANE PAVILION, HULLBRIDGE AS PUBLIC TOILETS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' views on a request from Hullbridge Parish Council, to re-open the toilets in the Pooles Lane Pavilion for public use.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A report was submitted at the request of Hullbridge Parish Council to Community Services on 2 March 2006 to open these toilets at the District Council's expense. Members declined due to the prohibitive cost, as public toilets were already provided at Pooles Lane car park.
- 2.2 A plan showing the relative locations of the public toilets to the Pooles Lane recreation grounds pavilion is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.3 A further letter was received on 21 July 2006, attached as Appendix B, from Hullbridge Parish Council formally asking Rochford District Council to reopen the toilets within the Pooles Lane pavilion. The Parish Council has now indicated that they would be willing to finance both the refurbishment and maintenance of these toilets.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 These toilets were originally open to the public but were closed following a spate of vandalism in 1989, which meant that they were not available to the footballers and visitors using the pavilion.
- 3.2 The toilets in question are only accessible from outside the building.
- 3.3 The District Council has not received any complaints or requests from the public regarding additional toilets in Pooles Lane recreation ground.

4 BRINGING THE TOILETS BACK INTO PUBLIC USE

- 4.1 The pavilion is managed by Serviceteam, the grounds maintenance contractor, who also arrange bookings for pitches and usage of the pavilion.
- 4.2 Maintenance of the pavilion is the responsibility of Rochford District Council and is carried out through the Property Maintenance Team.
- 4.3 Discussions have taken place with Hullbridge Parish Council, who have confirmed that they receive many requests for the toilets to be reopened, due to the distance between the recreation ground and the Pooles Lane car park. As part of those discussions, it has been suggested that the opening times should be restricted to 10:00 am to 4:00 pm between Easter and the end of

September, opening 7 days a week. This would coincide with peak usage of the recreation ground.

- 4.4 As with other public toilets in the District, the doors would be self closing and the Parish would be required to secondary lock the doors at night to provide additional security.
- 4.5 Hullbridge Parish Council have also enquired whether cleaning could be incorporated into the District Council public toilets cleaning contract. This would not cause any difficulty, other than the fact that the cleaner would have to open these toilets at the later opening hours, as other public conveniences are open from approx. 6am in the morning.
- 4.6 As part of the refurbishment, Hullbridge Parish Council would pay for a self-closing door, in line with the Council's other public toilets, and for the general refurbishment.
- 4.7 Estimated costs to bring the toilets back into public use would be approximately £7,000, plus the ongoing cleaning cost of £3,033 for the suggested opening times, based on the current cleaning contract. Any additional maintenance or remedying any potential criminal damage would have to be financed by Hullbridge Parish Council
- 4.8 This pavilion does not currently provide disabled facilities. A disabled toilet would be possible by converting the existing male toilet to a disabled toilet and using the existing female toilet as a unisex toilet. The disabled toilet would be operated by a "Radar" key, in line with other disabled toilets
- 4.9 No works would commence until the Parish Council sign an agreement to pay the costs of refurbishment, maintenance and cleaning, and agree to the additional locking at nights.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Opening these toilets with financial support from Hullbridge Parish Council does not expose Rochford District Council to additional capital costs or ongoing revenue costs.
- 5.2 Provision of a disabled toilet would enhance the facilities for all users.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Remedying any potential criminal damage would have to be financed by Hullbridge Parish Council.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Hullbridge Parish Council has indicated that it would finance this proposal, based on costs supplied by Rochford Officers. However the opportunity to provide a disabled toilet could be taken, if Rochford were to provide a sum of £2500 in the building works planned programme for 2007/08. Alternatively,

this could potentially be funded if savings became available from the 2006/07 budget. There would be some minor staff resource issues for maintenance and overseeing the cleaning contract, but these can be met from existing resources.

8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 With financial support from the Parish Council, there are no implications for Rochford District Council. The opportunity to provide a disabled toilet in this pavilion would provide a good example of partnership working between the Parish Council and the District Council.
- 8.2 The scheme would also demonstrate that the Council listens to the public and responds positively where it is possible.

9 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) To consider this request from Hullbridge Parish Council, to reopen the toilets in the pavilion, with the refurbishment, maintenance, cleaning and any potential criminal damage costs being met in full, by Hullbridge Parish Council.
 - (2) To consider contributing £2500 towards the scheme to enable provision of a disabled toilet in this pavilion either from savings in the maintenance budgets in 2006/7, or by a bid for the 2007/08 planned works budget.

Graham Woolhouse

Corporate Director (External Services)

Background Papers:-

Letter from Hullbridge Parish Council 21 July 2006

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APPENDIX A



HULLBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

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Mrs. L. Cowan – Clerk to the Council

Ref: 068118

21st July 2006

Mr. D. Timson,
Rochford District Council,
South Street,
Rochford, Essex,
SS4 1BW.



Dear David,

**Pooles Lane recreation ground
Public toilets at pavilion**

Further to your e-mail exchanges with Cllr. Mrs. Brown, this matter was discussed at the recent meeting of the Council.

I have been requested to formally write to you to request these two toilets be refurbished for general public use with electric locks and time controls on the doors and cleaned on a daily basis, opening times from Easter through to October. It was also requested that consideration be given to providing a nappy-changing unit if possible.

It was agreed this Council was prepared to finance the above and it would be appreciated if you could please put this proposal before the appropriate committee and let me know the outcome in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Cowan
Clerk to the Council