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Public Toilets Task Group

'A Matter of Convenience'

Final Report and Recommendations

September 2007



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Task Group Members

Councillor Michael Bray (Chair)
Councillor Stan Pajak
Councillor Sinead Darker
Councillor John Ballman
Councillor Eric Shaw
Councillor David Glaholm
Councillor Melanie Duff

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Recommendations

1. That officers develop a business case for the implementation of a Swindon Community Toilet Scheme Pilot in Old Town, based on the model implemented by the London Borough of Richmond. The Scheme to be introduced across the Borough if the pilot is successful enhancing provision and allowing the closure of failing toilets, subject to approval of a full business case by Cabinet.
2. That all future planning developments must take into account the provision of public toilets in accordance with the vision suggested by the Task Group (see Section 4.0)
3. That where finance is available, including the identification of external funding sources, automatic or semi-automatic toilets should be installed as part of a 10 year rolling programme, subject to approval of a business case case on a site-by-site basis. The viability of all current toilets should also be reviewed taking into account all options, including closure.
4. That all options should be explored to deter and take action against vandalism and anti social behaviour in and around existing public toilets in conjunction with community safety partners, for example the use of CCTV and Neighbourhood Policing Teams being proactive in tackling identified problems.
5. That the Council should become a member of the British Toilet Association and that officers should improve the information available to the public in relation to the location, opening hours, cleaning and maintenance and facilities available at toilets operated and maintained by the Council both on the Council's website and in the form of maps and leaflets.
6. That an annual review of public toilet provision in the Borough is carried out that involved Members to consider the level and quality of provision.

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1. Executive Summary

The provision of clean, safe, accessible public toilets affects all local people and visitors to Swindon. For older people, those with medical conditions such as diabetes and parents with young children, public toilets are an important factor for quality of life. They also play a major role in the image of a town.

There is no statutory obligation for local authorities to provide public toilets but many people perceive that this is the responsibility of local authorities. The 2007/08 budget for maintaining this vital service is only £149,000 with £9,000 allocated for repairs and no capital budget for improvements. Frequent vandalism has put immense pressure on the limited budget, resulting in reduced opening hours and many toilets are no longer fit for purpose.

We have concluded that any new or refurbished public toilets operated by the Council must be designed to prevent vandalism and anti social behaviour as far as possible. The installation of automatic or semi-automatic toilets is the preferred option to ensure the delivery of a high quality service that will reduce cleaning and maintenance costs in the long-term, although a rolling programme of capital investment will be required.

In the short-term, the implementation of a Community Toilet Scheme, initially as a pilot in Old Town, would significantly increase the level and quality of provision in the Borough by inviting local businesses to allow members of the public to use their public toilets for free in return for an annual fee from the Council. Toilets that are sub-standard and with low usage of could then be closed without reducing provision. Savings resulting from reduced maintenance costs and capital receipts from the sale of any of the closed sites must be reinvested in the operation of the Scheme and to upgrade the remaining Council facilities. Current gaps in the provision of facilities in the evenings would also be addressed without the need for capital investment. It is estimated that a scheme involving 75 businesses would cost £80,000 per annum.

Some councils have introduced hydraulic urinals that are stored underground during the day and raised in the evening to reduce street urination. The Task Group has concluded that such a facility would benefit the Fleet Street area, even if a Community Toilet Scheme were introduced. Funding from community safety partners, the Business Improvement District and through sponsorship or advertising would make this a viable option.

The Council must be proactive in working with community safety partners to take decisive action against criminal activity and anti social behaviour in and around public toilets.

We have been surprised by the strength of feeling in relation to this issue. Our toilets are a matter of significant *inconvenience* in terms of location, accessibility and condition, which impacts on public health, the image of the town and limits the quality of life for many people. For Swindon to become a major leisure destination, our public toilets must meet the standard expected

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by service users. Many local people see this as a priority and this must be a priority for Swindon Borough Council.

We have heard evidence from a wide range of stakeholders, visited several toilets operated by Swindon Borough Council, other local authorities and other providers and considered national best practice. We would like to thank everyone who has participated and the officers who have assisted the Task Group throughout the review.

In addition to the recommendations listed at the beginning of this report, the Task Group has made the following suggestions for consideration by the Council:

- Urgent action is required to significantly improve the standard of facilities provided by the Council as part of an 'invest to save' approach to make them accessible to all. An options appraisal should be carried out for each current site, including cost implications to be presented to Cabinet for consideration
- Toilets in Evelyn Street (Old Town), Rodborne Road (Cheney Manor), West Swindon District Centre, Victoria Road (Old Town) and Dorcan Way (Covingham) are in a poor condition, with low usage and must be considered for closure following public consultation
- All of the toilets that are currently closed remain closed
- Alternative service providers must be supported by the Council to increase the number and quality of toilets available, through Community Toilet Schemes and by incorporating the long-term vision for public toilets as part of the planning process
- Capital receipts received by the Council as the result of the sale of any current toilet sites must be ring-fenced for reinvestment to improve toilets. Interest has previously been expressed in relation to Faringdon Road and Highworth Road (Stratton) and the Task Group would like to see potential sale or lease of these sites progressed
- Alternative funding streams through the Business Improvement District, Local Area Agreement Partners and opportunities for selling advertising space inside and outside toilets must be explored as no capital is currently assigned for investment in public toilets
- The long-term strategy must incorporate the needs of the night time economy and the need to tackle street urination in the town centre

Councillor Michael Bray
Chair, Public Toilets Task Group

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2. Introduction

2.1 Rationale for the Review

The Environment and Leisure Overview Committee established the Task Group for the following reasons:

- This is an issue of significant importance to the public
- There are no aims or objectives for the provision of public toilets
- The service does not appear to provide value for money
- Links with the service improvement theme of the Corporate Plan, the Streetscene Strategy and Promise 35 (regenerating the town centre).

The review was carried out under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, which sets out the power of local authority scrutiny committees to, "...make reports or recommendations to the Authority or executive on matters which affect the Authority's area or the inhabitants of that area".

2.2 Report Overview

The report is divided into the following sections:

Summary	Provides an overview of the review
Introduction	Background for the review and structure of the report
Evidence Gathering	Outlines the approach taken to gather evidence
Conclusions	Details the conclusions from the review
Recommendations	Outlines the Task Group's recommendations
Appendices	Contains appendices referred to in the main report

2.3 Review Structure

The review was carried out in three phases as outlined below:

Phase	Timescales	Activities
Phase 1 – Consolidation and Work Plan	January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Task group established• Chair appointment• Setting of Terms of Reference• Identification of internal advisors and witnesses• Identification of existing consultation and information
Phase 2 – Evidence Gathering	January – June 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Desk based research of national best practice• Meetings with internal advisors and witnesses• Site visits
Phase 3 - Recommendations	June 2007 – August 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of final report and recommendations prior to presentation to the Environment and Leisure Overview Committee

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2.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Task Group was to conduct an objective investigation into the provision and usage of public toilets within the Borough. This included:

- Analysis of whether toilets provided by the Council are in the correct location
- Ways to increase usage and cost effectiveness
- Investigate alternative options for the provision of this facility, taking into account best practice and innovation in the UK and abroad

See Appendix 2 for the Terms of Reference of the Task Group.

2.5 Methodology

Evidence was gathered during the course of the review through:

- Desk based research of best practice nationally in relation to the provision of public toilets
- Interviewing identified advisors/witnesses
- Site visits

2.6 Acknowledgements

During this review the Task Group has heard evidence from a wide range of witnesses from inside and outside of the Council. The Task Group is grateful to everyone who contributed.

3. Evidence Gathering

3.1 The State of Public Toilets in Swindon

There are 23 public toilet sites in the Borough, 6 of which are closed mainly due to vandalism.

The Task Group visited a selection of public toilets maintained by Swindon Commercial Services. Feedback from the visits:

- Although generally clean, none of the toilets were appealing to use
- Many of the toilets were not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act but some did have dedicated disabled facilities
- Opening times are generally limited to 8.30-16.30 Monday- Friday
- There is only one toilet open in the evening and this is not near the majority of pubs and clubs
- Some of the toilets displayed signs of vandalism, graffiti and drug use
- Features such as poor lighting, obstructed entrances and stainless steel doors with padlocks may make users feel unsafe
- Many of the toilets were located near shops with their own public toilets, often with longer opening hours

Swindon Commercial Services has a budget of £149,000 for the operation of public toilets. Only £9,000 is allocated to building maintenance. There is no

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capital budget. A break down of the budget for 207/08 is attached at Appendix 5.

A large proportion of Swindon Commercial Services' time is spent repairing the damage caused by vandalism such as super-gluing locks, kicking cubicle and external doors off their hinges, breaking toilet seats, putting used syringes in toilet paper dispensers, blocking the toilets, graffiti etc. Opening hours have been limited to deter anti social behaviour as a result. Many of the toilets also require urgent repairs to allow their continued use.

One member of staff is responsible for opening, closing and cleaning all of the toilets. Members of staff have volunteered to open and close some of the toilets on their way to and from work.

3.2 National Best Practice

The London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee conducted a review into public toilets in London in March 2006. The attributes of a good public toilet were identified as:

- Open - if it's not open it's no use
- Clean – especially clean porcelain. Dry floors are a priority for wheelchair users
- Safe – good lighting, a location that feels safe and busy and no visible signs of anti-social behaviour. An attendant, up to date cleaners' 'tick-sheets' or CCTV can also give reassurance that someone is 'keeping an eye out'. The 'vandal-proof' stainless steel appearance of some automatic toilets are sometime viewed as a good response to vandalism but sometimes as 'giving in' to antisocial behaviour
- Well stocked – with toilet paper, soap, water, and towels for reasons of public health and hygiene but also to show the toilets are looked after.

Other important factors included:

- Location including demand for the service, duplication of facilities, proximity to bars and clubs to reduce street fouling
- The more toilets the better but they should be of a usable standard
- The service provider, i.e. local authority, shopping centre or managed by a private company does not matter to the service user
- 24 hour provision depending on need and toilets should be designed to deter vandalism and anti social behaviour
- Many people would be willing to pay to use a toilet of a higher standard but this may deter other service users, resulting in maintenance costs not being met
- Actively seeking regular feedback from service users is vital
- Considering what additional facilities are required. Wolverhampton City Council opened new public toilets including a quiet area for parents, showers, access to the Council's website, a free telephone line to the

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Council's call centre, a multi-media screen displaying Council information and CCTV

A recent report published by Help the Aged carried out consultation with over 1000 older people in relation to their views on local authority public toilets. The key findings included:

- 80% did not find it easy to find a public toilet
- 78% found that toilets are not open when they need them
- 79% said that safety concerns made public toilets unappealing
- 74% are frequently disturbed by the lack of cleanliness of public toilets
- 52% said that the lack of public toilets in their area stops them from going out as often as they would like

Mencap's national 'Changing Places' campaign aims to increase the facilities available for carers to change continence pads of family members with profound and multiple learning disabilities or to assist them to use the toilet. Changing Places toilets include an adult-sized height adjustable bench, a hoist, and a toilet with space either side for a carer and plenty of space. Without such facilities carers are forced to change family members on dirty floors or outings are limited to a couple of hours, if at all. Changing Places toilets cost in the region of £8-10,000 and detailed information is available on the Changing Places website. A member of the public has also written to her Ward Councillor and Cabinet Members raising awareness of the need for such facilities in Swindon.

Many authorities which are innovative in service delivery are members of the British Toilet Association, a campaign group aiming to improve the standard of 'away from home' toilets. An annual subscription costs £460. To date, 76 out of 468 local authorities are members. The Association operates the annual 'Loo of the Year Awards'.

Authorities that have been successful in the 'Loo of the Year Awards', have taken an 'invest to save' approach, upgrading existing facilities in key locations with technological solutions such as automatic toilets which are accessible, clean, safe, designed to deter vandalism and available on a 24 hour basis where required. Maintenance costs are also reduced.

'Pop-up' urinals have also been used in a wide range of authorities to target the needs of the nighttime economy and reduce street fouling.

Working in partnership with businesses can increase the choice of facilities available but there are limitations in terms of opening hours and sustainability. Authorities using this approach have recognised that it compliments, not replaces the provision of public toilets by Councils.

3.3 The Views of Local People

The review has generated significant public interest. The Evening Advertiser published a letter from the Chair of the Task Group inviting members of public to provide their views.

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Members of the Swindon Borough Council Equality & Diversity Coalitions, Swindon Primary Care Trust Public and Patient Involvement Forum and Wroughton Parish Council also made representations.

The key issues raised by local people were:

- There is a need for more public toilets in Swindon
- Public toilets contribute to the image of Swindon The Council should be responsible for providing high quality public toilets
- Disabled people and older people expressed the importance of public toilets in the right locations, which are accessible, clean and safe and how this impacts on their quality of life. Facilities in shops are often hard to access and alternative facilities are vital
- Toilets in rural areas are important to people who participate in leisure activities, such as rambling and cycling but the current opening hours render them useless
- Toilets should be open for longer, especially those in the bus station to ensure that the needs of service users are met
- There are concerns about anti social behaviour taking place in some public toilets, which make them feel unsafe to use to many people. Such activity also has an impact on the surrounding area, making areas in close proximity to public toilets 'no go' areas
- Any improvements to public toilets should be designed to deter vandalism and anti social behaviour
- A high standard of public toilets has a significant impact on public health

3.4 Review of Current Provision

The Task Group carried out an initial needs assessment against each of the toilets using the following criteria (See Appendix 3):

- Usage levels
- Whether 24/7 provision is required
- Whether there are alternative facilities available in close proximity
- Accessibility of the toilet
- Local demand for a toilet in the area
- Whether significant repair/ maintenance is likely to be required in the next 6 months

Using these criteria, the following toilets have been identified as a priority for investment:

- Chapel Street, Gorse Hill
- New Road, Highworth
- Bus Station (as part of the development of a new bus interchange)

A counter is being installed at the Wharf Road, Wroughton site to determine actual levels of usage. The Task Group would encourage the Council to consider all options in relation to the future of these toilets once accurate usage levels are available, including installing a semi-automatic toilet,

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discussing the possibility of transferring responsibility for maintenance to the Parish Council and closing the toilets if a Community Toilet Scheme could be introduced which would provide sufficient operating hours for users.

The Task Group has also carried out research in relation to the types of public toilet available, which is summarised at Appendix 4. The Task Group has concluded that automatic or semi-automatic toilets would be the preferred option when upgrading existing toilets as they are designed to deter vandalism and anti social behaviour, are cost effective to maintain, are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and can facilitate flexible opening times, including 24 hour provision as they can be opened and shut remotely. The Task Group has made suggestions regarding the type of toilet that may be suitable at each location after seeking advice from Healthmatic. These suggestions, capital cost and maintenance costs are included in the table in Appendix 3 and a more detailed report in relation to the suggestions for each toilet are available from the Scrutiny Unit.

The toilets in Cavendish Square and the Market Place, Farnsby Road are currently being refurbished as part of the redevelopment of Swindon. Due to the advanced stage of the plans, the Task Group has been unable to directly influence the design, although some suggestions have been made to the New Swindon Company regarding the Farnsby Street toilets to limit vandalism. Limited capital has also meant that automatic or semi-automatic solutions have been discounted. Proposals are also being considered for the termination of the lease at Riverside Park, Lechlade. If approved, the Council will no longer be responsible for the provision of toilets on this site.

The Task Group suggests that opportunities for sale should be explored for all of the sites that are currently closed and any capital receipts reinvested in the remaining facilities. In addition, several toilets have low levels of usage and many are in a poor condition. The Task Group recommends that the Council should consider all options in relation to their future, including closure:

- Evelyn Street (Old Town)
- Rodborne Road (Cheney Manor)
- West Swindon District Centre
- Dorcan Way (Covingham)

Although reasonably well used, the toilets in Victoria Road, Old Town are not fit for purpose as the male toilets can only be reached up a steep flight of stairs. The toilets also require investment to repair damage to the ceiling. The Task Group recommends that a pilot for a Community Toilet Scheme should be implemented in Old Town and if successful, these toilets are closed (See Section 3.5 below).

3.5 Community Toilets

Many service users choose to use public toilets provided by shops and cafes rather than those provided by the Council. They are often of a higher quality, offer disabled and baby changing facilities and are open longer.

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The London Borough of Richmond introduced a Community Toilet scheme in 2005. The scheme is a partnership between the council and local businesses to provide access to clean, convenient and safe toilets. A network of 75 sites participate in the scheme ranging from council premises to cafes, shops and pubs. All the sites meet a specific standard, giving free access to the public and are clearly identified by special signage, leaflets and on the Council's website. Significantly a third are DDA compliant. The businesses receive an annual grant of £600.

A community toilet scheme may provide benefits such as:

- Increasing the number of toilets available without capital investment
- Address the perceived 'gap' in provision within the town centre by some service users
- Provide additional facilities for service users and longer opening hours
- Potential to extend the scheme to urban and rural areas
- Significant benefits for visitors to the town, older people and those with medical conditions to allow them to plan their visit to the town
- Involve local businesses in the local community

However, there are also several issues:

- Attracting and retaining businesses to participate, especially as many are likely to have concerns in relation to security
- There would be an annual revenue cost for the fee payable to businesses, marketing and managing the scheme
- Authorities that have implemented such schemes acknowledge that they should compliment, not replace local authority provision

Members of the Task Group attended a seminar organised by Richmond in July 2007. One business visited was a pub/night club that was the first pub to join the scheme in 2004 and provides a toilet until 1am. The owner saw the benefits of participating in the scheme as making a positive contribution to the local community and demonstrating to customers that the pub is 'family friendly'. The owner had not experienced any expressed problems as a result of their involvement and a real support for community toilets.

Before the introduction of the scheme, Richmond had 12 public toilets of which 5 were APTs (automatic public toilets – one person toilets with access through payment for a limited time before automatic cleaning which are provided by a private company through a contract). The Council now has 5 public toilets and is committed to closing all of its APTs which have proved very unpopular and expensive, at a cost to the Council of £8 per visit.

An element of the Richmond scheme worth noting is the involvement of the community. Areas were assessed in terms of need; time of operation etc and meetings took place with residents groups and organisations such as Age Concern, disability groups and the Chamber of Commerce. Significantly the link with the media was fostered throughout the process.

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Waltham Forest Council commenced their own scheme in April 2007 with 17 community toilets who are given a fee according to provision:

- £800 – single toilet
- £900 – two toilets
- £1000 for if additional baby changing and disabled provision

Grants are also available for disability adaptations. In both authorities it has allowed the closure of some very poor public toilets and the reconsideration of the use of expensive and unpopular automatic toilets. Camden Council is currently operating a pilot scheme and Two Rivers is about to launch its own community toilet programme.

A clear feeling at the seminar was the benefit of a national scheme for community toilets allowing the creation of uniform signage and founding principals.

The Task Group has concluded that the implementation of a Community Toilet Scheme would provide a cost effective solution to dramatically increase the number of public toilets available across the Borough. As such, the Task Group recommends that a pilot scheme be introduced in Old Town, which is evaluated prior to rollout across the Borough.

The details of the proposed pilot are summarised below:

- Within the Wood Street, Victoria Road, Croft Road and Hoopers Place area there are numerous cafes, bars, restaurants and pubs that all have public toilets and could be approached to participate in the pilot. In addition, the Arts Centre could participate in the scheme, which has the potential to increase the number of customers using its other facilities, such as the cafe
- 10-15 businesses are required to participate for the pilot to be meaningful
- Businesses would be charged £600-£800 per annum pro-rata, depending on the length of the pilot
- As an example of costs, it is estimated that a 6 month pilot would require a maximum of £20,000, including £8,000 for marketing
- A part time project manager would be required to set up, monitor and evaluate the pilot
- Richmond are willing to share all documentation for their Community Toilet Scheme, which can be used to set up the pilot

If the pilot was successful:

- The public toilet operated by the Council in Victoria Road could be closed, as it is not fit for purpose. Annual review to determine if a replacement facility is required in the Old Town area. Any capital receipts arising from the sale of the site reinvested in improving the standard of remaining toilets

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- Rollout to 75 business across Swindon (current number of businesses participating in Swindon) would cost a maximum of £60,000 per annum
- A part-time resource would be required to manage the scheme
- An estimated £15,000-20,000 would be required for marketing and operating costs per annum
- Sub-standard toilets currently operated by the Council and not deemed suitable for investment due to low levels of usage could be closed without reducing provision
- Savings resulting from closure of failing toilets, due to reduced maintenance and repair costs, used to operate the scheme

3.6 Street Urination

One of the challenges of a thriving nighttime economy is to prevent street fouling. Around the bars and clubs in Fleet Street, there is only 1 public toilet that is operated by Adshell. It's location down a side alley; lack of signage, unclear opening hours and the charging system suggests that it has limited success in reducing street urination in the area. There is a Service Level Agreement with the Council that states that the toilet should be open 0700-1900.

Evidence from a representative from Wiltshire Police, the Town Centre Manager and the Managing Director of Healthmatic Ltd a company that installs public toilets suggests that:

- Street urination is a significant problem in the Fleet Street area
- Women are more likely to use the toilets in pubs and bars. Door security staff are often more reluctant to let men back into bars
- Due to the demands placed on police resources on busy Friday and Saturday nights, it is not always appropriate for officers to take action in response to individuals urinating in the street
- The provision of an open-air urinal in the Fleet Street area in a prominent location may have a positive impact on the immediate area
- Although less of a problem, there is a need for a public toilet to be available in the evenings and night-time in Old Town

Reading Borough Council was the first local authority to install a Urilift rising urinal to address problems with street urination, which is widely used throughout Holland. The unit consists of three urinals around a central cylinder that is installed underground and is raised by remote control. The unit may be moved to another location, although the installation costs form a large part of the capital cost. The individual urinals can be set to flush on a timer and the system carries out a deep clean when it is lowered. It is also made of materials that are difficult to vandalise. The Task Group visited Reading and saw the Urilift in operation.

The Urilift is located at the centre of the thoroughfare to reach many of the bars and pubs in the town centre, directly outside a department store that suffered severe problems with urination in their doorway on a nightly basis. The Council and police have been pleased with the results, seeing a reduction

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in street urination and disorder in the area. Another Urilift has been installed at the opposite side of the town centre. The Council has a maintenance contract with Healthmatic Ltd, the company that installed the unit, that provides for maintenance, deep clean and repair on a 24-hour basis.

Urilift capital cost (including installation) - £40,000

Urilift cleaning & maintenance (per annum) - £2,500

The Task Group also met with the Managing Director of Healthmatic to discuss the feasibility of installing a Urilift in Fleet Street. He suggested that to determine the potential usage levels, that temporary urinals could be moved to different locations along Fleet Street to measure where the usage is greatest. It must also be noted that one of the proposed routes for a canal in Swindon is through Fleet Street and this must be taken into account in any future business case.

Town centre businesses have recently formed a Business Improvement District (BID) to oversee the management of the town centre. Businesses pay an additional levy on top of business rates to fund the BID.

The implementation of a Community Toilet Scheme (see Section 3.5 above) would go some way to increase the provision of public toilets in the evenings, especially in the town centre and Old Town. However, this may not fully address the problem of street urination as many people currently choose to urinate in the street rather than using a toilet in a pub or club. As a result, it is suggested that officers develop a business case to install a Urilift in the Fleet Street area and that opportunities for funding in conjunction with the BID should be explored due to the potential savings in cleaning shop doorways etc. and the significant improvement to the area as a result. Sponsorship or selling advertising space on the urinal may also generate additional revenue.

3.7 Links with the Planning Process & Regeneration

The Task Group acknowledges that many people expect local authorities to provide high quality public toilets and supports this view but in order to provide a service that fully meets the needs of service users, the role of other service providers must be central to any long-term vision.

The regeneration of Swindon provides a unique opportunity to increase the number and quality of toilets available throughout the Borough. The New Swindon Company has not developed a strategy in relation to public toilets. The Task Group has commented on proposals for the replacement of toilets as part of the Wharf Green development and has discussed its vision for public toilet with the New Swindon Company.

The Developer Contribution Policy is also currently under review. It is proposed that the Public Realm tariff should include information on the vision for public toilets.

In order to ensure that public toilets are given the priority they deserve and that a consistent approach is taken to their location and design, the Task

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Group recommends that vision identified by the review (see 4.0 Conclusions) is incorporated as part of the planning process and shared with developers at an early stage to ensure that they are aware of the requirements of the Borough regarding the provision of public toilets.

4.0 Conclusions

As a result of the evidence gathered during the course of the review, the Task Group has identified the following principles that should underpin the long-term vision for the provision of public toilets in Swindon:

- The standard of public toilets in Swindon contributes to the overall image of the town and represent a vital service for local people and visitors
- Swindon Borough Council should aim to provide high quality, safe, accessible public toilets in key locations in the Borough that are automatic or semi-automatic where possible
- The location of toilets should take into account potential usage levels, the specific needs of service users in the area e.g. shoppers, bus station customers and alternative provision within the immediate proximity
- All public toilets should be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and take into account the need for Changing Places toilets in key locations
- New toilets should be designed to deter vandalism and anti social behaviour and officers from Swindon Commercial Services who are responsible for maintaining public toilets consulted at an early stage of the planning process
- Unisex toilets should be considered as an option
- Opening hours should be determined by need and usage levels, including 24 hour provision where appropriate
- Dedicated provision should be made for the night-time economy
- The decision whether to charge for the use of public toilets should be informed by projected usage levels, consultation with the public and the practicalities of managing such a service
- The location of public toilets and the facilities available should be widely promoted through maps, leaflets and clear signage to enable local people and visitors to Swindon to easily find public toilets
- Service users should be able to easily provide feedback to service providers
- Capital funding should be available for the repair and upgrade of toilets on a rolling basis

The Task Group recommends that this vision should be incorporated as part of the planning process to ensure that developers make adequate provision, which is in line with the requirements of the Council.

The Task Group hopes that this vision will ensure that over the next 10 years, Swindon will have public toilets that it is proud of and that meets the needs of the people who use them.

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APPENDIX 1

List of Evidence Sources Used by the Task Group

Reports/ Briefings Produced for the Task Group

Strategic Review for Swindon Borough Council, Healthmatic Ltd, April 2007
The Provision of Public Toilets by Local Authorities, Scrutiny Unit, December 2006
Community Toilet Schemes, Scrutiny Unit, December 2006
Options Appraisal for Public Toilets in Swindon, Scrutiny Unit, April 2007

Minutes of Meetings

Evidence was heard from the following witnesses during Task Group meetings. Copies of the minutes are available from the Scrutiny Unit

- Steve Harcourt, Director Environment & Leisure
- Paul Gregory, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender & Bisexual Coalition (PG)
- Norma Thompson, Women's Coalition (NT)
- Gilly Lambert, Race Coalition (GL)
- Beryl Markham - Older Peoples Coalition (BM)
- Jan Wilson, Swindon Commercial Services
- George Walker, Swindon Commercial Services
- Rob Richards, Group Valuer, Property
- Oliver O'Dell, Town Centre Manager
- Pc Sheikh, Wiltshire Police
- Piers Dibben, Managing Director, Healthmatic Ltd
- Chris Hitchings, New Swindon Company
- Councillor David Wren, Cabinet Member Local Environment

Site Visits

Copies of pictures and notes produced following site visits are available from the Scrutiny Unit:

- Visit to Reading Borough Council Urilift, February 2007
- Visit to a Selection of Public Toilets in Swindon, March 2007
- Visit to a Healthmatic Semi-Automatic Toilet in Cirencester, May 2007
- Visit to Richmond Borough Council Community Toilet Seminar, July 2007

National Reports & Briefings

How to Manage Town Centres, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, March 2005
Investigation into Public Toilets in London, London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee. March 2006
Nowhere to Go: Public Toilet provision in the UK, Help the Aged, May 2007
Review of Toilet Provision, London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, March 2007
Public Toilet Questionnaire, Brighton & Hove City Council, 2005
Women and Public Toilets in Bristol Survey, Bristol City Council 2006

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Public Conveniences Survey Results, Kennet District Council 2006
Review of Public Conveniences, Malvern Hills District Council, 2004
The Public Loo Review, Bath and North East Somerset Council, 2003
The Underground Solution....Urillift, Urilift B.V, 2007
Community Toilet Scheme, Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee,
Hertsmere Borough Council, July 2007
www.britloos.co.uk
www.mencap.org.uk/html/campaigns/changingplaces.asp

APPENDIX 2

Public Toilets Task Group Terms of Reference

<u>Aim</u>	To conduct an objective review into the provision and usage of public toilets within the Borough. The review should include an analysis of whether the current toilets provided by the Council are in the correct locations and ways in which usage can be increased to make them more cost effective. In addition, the task group should consider whether the Council should provide public toilets and investigate alternative options for the provision of this facility, taking into account best practice and innovation in the UK and abroad.
Rationale	The Environment and Leisure Overview Committee established a Public Toilet Task Group at its meeting on 1 November 2006. The Committee felt that this is an issue of significant importance to the public that has not been subject to scrutiny for several years. There are currently no published aims or objectives for the provision of public toilets by the authority and the current service does not appear to provide value for money. This service also links to the service improvement theme of the Corporate Plan, the emerging Street scene Strategy and Promise 35 (regenerating the town centre).
Scope	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the current provision of public toilets in the Borough including those provided by Environment & Health and Leisure • Are the facilities currently provided in the right locations? • Investigate how the usage of public conveniences can be increased to make them more cost effective such as increasing awareness of their locations through better signage and use of the Council's website • Investigate security issues in relation to public conveniences including links with anti social behaviour and drug use • Consideration of whether the Council should be providing this facility • Investigate ways in which other Councils provide public toilets • Investigate whether automatic toilets should be considered as part of a future strategy • Explore opportunities for partnership working in the provision of public toilets, including with local businesses and sponsorship

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of possible aims and objectives for this service 				
Resources	<p>Public Toilet Task Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Michael Bray (Chair) Councillor Sinead Darker Councillor Stan Pajak Councillor Mel Duff Councillor Eric Shaw Councillor David Glaholm Councillor John Ballman <p>Officer Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emma Powell, Scrutiny Support Officer 				
Timescales	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Start</td> <td>First meeting of Task Group 18 December 2006</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Finish</i></td> <td>Final report presented to the Environment & Leisure Overview Committee at its meeting on 6th September 2007.</td> </tr> </table>	Start	First meeting of Task Group 18 December 2006	<i>Finish</i>	Final report presented to the Environment & Leisure Overview Committee at its meeting on 6th September 2007.
	Start	First meeting of Task Group 18 December 2006			
<i>Finish</i>	Final report presented to the Environment & Leisure Overview Committee at its meeting on 6th September 2007.				
Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chair of the Task Group to provide an update to the Environment & Leisure Overview Committee on 21 March 2007 Chair of the Task Group to outline the review findings and recommendations to the Environment & Leisure Overview Committee at its meeting on [insert date] 				
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk based research of documentation (as detailed below) Interviewing identified advisors/ witnesses Considering best practice from other authorities Conducting consultation/ research Site visits 				
Expert Witnesses/ Advisors	<p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steve Harcourt, Director of Environment & Health Oliver O'Dell, Town Centre Management George Walker, Swindon Commercial Services Jan Wilson, Swindon Commercial Services Rob Richards, Group Valuator, Property <p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coalition of Disabled People Older People's Coalition Women's Coalition Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Coalition 				

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Race Coalition• Wiltshire Police• Druglink• Richmond Borough Council• Reading Borough Council• Piers Dibben, Managing Director, Healthmatic
Evidence Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report to Environment & Leisure Overview Committee by Steve Harcourt, 1 November 2006• Investigation into Public Toilets in London, London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee. March 2006• How to Manage Town Centres, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, March 2005• Swindon 2010, Promise 35
Site Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urilift rising urinal operated by Reading Borough Council• Visit to a selection of public toilets in Swindon