

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF TECHNICAL SERVICES	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	4 JULY 2023	9
CHANGING PLACES UPDATE			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

In 2022 the Council was successful in applying for funding to install Changing Places facilities (larger accessible toilets for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets and those who require additional facilities) at three locations across the Fylde Borough. The first of these facilities was delivered at the refurbished North Beach Windsports Centre which opened in March 2023

The report updates members on progress to date, identifies higher than estimated costs for the construction of the facility at Kirkham Community Centre, requests an additional £40,000 in-year capital funding from the Council's Capital Investment Reserve and requests the drawdown of £127,300 and authorisation to proceed with the construction of two Changing Places Toilets – one at Fairhaven Lake and one at Kirkham Community Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is requested to:

1. Approve the change of location of one Changing Places Toilet from Lowther Gardens to Fairhaven Lake.
2. Approve a fully funded budget increase to the existing capital programme for Changing Places Toilets 2023/24 in the sum of £40,000 to be met from the Council's Capital Investment Reserve.
3. Approve the drawdown of £127,300 to construct two Changing Places Toilets.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[Full Council at its meeting on the 25 April 2022](#) resolved;

1. Approve a new fully funded capital scheme 'Changing Places' within the Council's Capital Programme for the sum of £120,000 (2022/23 - £40,000 and 2023/24 - £80,000) to be fully funded by Changing Places Grant funding of £108,000 and £12,000 to be funded from the Capital Investment Reserve.
2. Authorise the drawdown of expenditure of £40,000 in 2022/23 to install one Changing Places facility within the North Beach Windsports building as part of a proposed refurbishment works as detailed within the body of the report and note that a further drawdown report would be presented to the Operational Management Committee for the remaining £80,000.
3. Note the potential future costs for the Council for ultimately delivering the scheme which would be contained within the current budget provision.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	√
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	√

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. During summer 2021 the government, through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, sought applications for funding to create Changing Places facilities across the Country. These facilities are larger accessible toilets for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches, and space for carers. The fund is supported by Muscular Dystrophy UK (MDUK) who will supply specialist support to Local Authorities to ensure facilities meet user requirements.
2. Over 250,000 people in the country need these facilities to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted. Research indicates the locations where the facilities are most needed includes in shopping areas and at tourist attractions, such as beaches and parks which would enable users, their families, and carers to 'have a day out' and undertake more recreational activities with dignity, confidence, and freedom.
3. As of 2021 there were only two publicly accessible Changing Places Toilets within the Fylde Borough registered with www.changing-places.org; one at The Ormerod Home Trust on Headroomgate Road, St Annes and one at Jubilee House in Lytham. Both facilities are only open during the working week. In addition YMCA St Annes Pool and Gym on South Promenade, St Annes, also allow members of the public to use their facilities.
4. Following an application in September 2021, funding for 3 locations was approved in March 2022. Based on an estimated cost of £120,000 for the three locations, the grant allocated was £108,000 with a further £12,000 contribution from Fylde Council. Each location requires a room with internal dimensions of 4m by 3m. The locations were:
 - a. North Beach Windsports Centre, St Annes
 - b. Lowther Gardens
 - c. Kirkham Town Centre
5. On 25th April 2022 Full Council agreed to add the Changing Places scheme to the Council's capital programme and authorised the drawdown of an initial £40,000 to enable the creation of the Changing Places Toilet at the North Beach Windsports Centre.
6. The North Beach Windsports Changing Places Toilet was installed as part of the wider renovation works to the Windsports building. This was opened in March 2023 and cost £32,500, £7,500 less than budgeted for.
7. During 2022/23 discussions were ongoing with Lowther Trust and Kirkham Town Council to install the other two toilets with Lowther Pavilion and Kirkham Community Centre respectively. Both organisations were supportive of the principle of the scheme with designs subsequently developed.

LOWTHER GARDENS

8. With regards Lowther Pavilion, the proposal was to include the Changing Places Toilet as part of the planned extension to the building. As part of Lowther Trust's plans, the current public toilets would be demolished with alternative externally accessible toilet provision being located within the plans. The Proposal was to include the Changing Places Toilet as part of this public toilet provision, replacing the planned disabled toilet.

9. Unfortunately, due to the extra space required by a Changing Places Toilet, there would have been only space for one standard toilet cubicle rather than the two that is currently available. When these plans were presented to Lowther Trust in April 2023, they considered the negative loss of standard toilet provision outweighed the positive benefit of the Changing Places Toilet plus fit-out costs were higher than budgeted for. As such the Trust reluctantly informed Fylde Council Officers that they would no longer be able to support the inclusion of the Changing Places Toilet within their plans. Other options within Lowther Gardens were considered but were considered not to be viable.
10. Council officers have considered other locations where there may be a suitable location that has space to accommodate the toilet and is in an accessible location. The only viable location on Council-owned land is within the operational boathouse on Fairhaven Lake which is scheduled for refurbishment later this year. Although this may cause some operational issues to the Fairhaven Lake team, the Lead member of Customer and Operational Services was advised of the situation who, in consultation with the Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Culture supported the suggested variation.
11. Muscular Dystrophy UK have provided their support for the principle of transferring the location to Fairhaven Lake and authorisation from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is anticipated imminently.
12. The architect developing plans for the refurbishment of the Fairhaven Lake operational boathouse has been requested to incorporate a Changing Places Toilet within the designs. Once these have been prepared a Quantity Surveyor will provide a budget estimate for delivering the scheme. The current budgeted amount is £40,000.
13. To ensure the scheme is able to progress once designs and approvals are in place, The committee is requested to approve the change from Lowther Gardens to Fairhaven Lake for the location of this Changing Places Toilet. The committee is also requested to approve the draw-down of £40,000 for construction of the Changing Places Toilet at Fairhaven Lake.

KIRKHAM

14. A proposal to reconfigure the internal layout of existing toilet provision for the community centre was developed in conjunction with representatives of Kirkham Town Council. Unfortunately, the dimensions for this proposal were slightly less than the recommended amount set by MDUK and as such they rejected this option.
15. In early 2023 an alternative option to utilise an existing storeroom within the building was developed. This included slightly extending the building in the area where the toilet is proposed to be located by about 1m and relocating the storeroom to another area which would require the creation of a new fire escape as recommended by the Council's Building Control team. The outline designs for this proposal were approved by MDUK. This proposal is due to be considered by Kirkham Town Council to establish whether they support the current proposal. If the Town Council agree then a formal agreement will be entered with Kirkham Town Council for the Changing Places Toilet to be located here.
16. An architect has been instructed to develop plans for the changing places toilet to submit the scheme for planning permission. Plans have been produced and a quantity surveyor has developed a budget estimate to deliver the scheme as per table 1. The Council's Building Surveyor has reviewed these costs and believes them to be realistic. The fees quoted include oversight of the delivery of the scheme.

Table 1. Budget Estimate

Building Works including demolition and alterations, construction, finishes, Changing Places equipment, M&E etc	£59,965
Preliminary works	£8,995
Contingency	£6,896
Fees	£11,378
Total	£87,234

17. The current budget to deliver the Kirkham scheme is £47,500 (£40,000 of the original budget with an additional £7,500 of savings from the Windsports Centre location). The budget estimate for the scheme is £87,234, a difference of almost £40,000.
18. To proceed with installing the Changing Places Toilet at the Kirkham Community Centre, the Executive are requested to approve a fully funded budget increase to the existing capital programme for 2023/24 in the sum of £40,000 to be met from the Council's Capital Invest Reserve. The executive is also requested to approve draw-down of £87,300 so that construction can be initiated as soon as possible.
19. If the Executive Committee approve the funding for the Kirkham Changing Places Toilet the architect will progress the scheme to submit a planning application for the changes to the structure of the Kirkham Community Centre.

PROCUREMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

20. Once all relevant permissions are secured from planning, MDUK and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the work for both toilets will be put out to tender individually. Construction works, including mechanical, electrical and drainage works plus decorating will be procured separately from the Changing places equipment where quotes from specialist installers will be sought.
21. Proposals for the design of the Changing Places facility and the equipment to be procured will be referred to Muscular Dystrophy UK to ensure the facilities meet user needs.

FUTURE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

22. As part of Danfo's recent successful tender to clean Fylde Council's public toilets for the next 15 years they pledged to clean any Changing Places facilities for free. From Danfo's experience they have advised that costs to maintain the facilities should be minimal and will be contained within existing maintenance budgets. Bi-annual equipment service costs are about £180 per annum per facility will also be contained within existing maintenance budgets.

RISK ASSESSMENT

23. The main risk to the scheme is that both remaining Changing Places Toilets must be constructed, registered with MDUK and commissioned before 31st March 2024 to meet funding requirements. Any further delays may result in this not occurring.
24. At Fairhaven the exact location of where the Changing Places Toilet is to be located has yet to be confirmed. Once the design for the operational boathouse has been agreed then any issues, such as drainage, can be assessed.

VIABLE ALTERNATIVES

25. In Kirkham, the Community Centre was deemed the most suitable location as it is central to the town centre with level access onto Poulton Street and disabled parking immediately outside. Other locations, such as at Hillside where the Council's regeneration team are currently developing a scheme, were either too far out of town or located in less accessible positions.
26. Alternative locations to replace Lowther Gardens were considered including at Lytham Institute and Lytham Assembly Rooms. However, it would be premature to make significant decisions regarding the Institute while the charitable objects remain under consideration by the Charity Commission and the Assembly Rooms has access issues. At Fairhaven Lake there is an accessible car park close to the proposed location and is well used as a tourist attraction.

CONCLUSION

27. To ensure both Changing Places Toilets can be delivered before the end of March 2024 the executive is requested to approve the change from Lowther Gardens to Fairhaven Lake for the location of one of the Changing Places Toilets. It is also requested that the Executive Committee approve a fully funded budget increase to the existing capital programme for 2023/24 in the sum of £40,000 to be met from the Council's Capital Invest Reserve. In addition, the Committee is requested to approve the drawdown of £127,300.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The estimated cost for the construction of a further two 'Changing Places' facilities has increased by £40,000 since the report to Council in April 2022, as detailed in this report. Consequently, this report requests approval to a fully funded budget increase to the existing capital programme scheme for Changing Places for 2023/24 in the sum of £40,000 to be met from the Council's Capital Investment Reserve. The report also seeks approval to the drawdown of £127,300 to construct two Changing Places facilities and approval for a change in location for one of the facilities.
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	MDUK advise that '...some disabled people are unable to go out or take part in activities many take for granted because standard accessible toilets do not meet their needs – or the needs of their carers and families.' By providing Changing Places Toilets people with (but not limited to) profound and multiple learning disabilities, muscle-wasting conditions, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis and cerebral palsy, as well as people who have suffered major physical trauma, had a head injury or stroke as well as some older people will be able to access areas that have previously been inaccessible to them. These facilities will enable those who require changing by carers to be treated with dignity with changing beds and hoist facilities provided whereas otherwise they would need to be changed on the floor.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Andrew Loynd	Email & Tel 01253 658 527	20 th June 2023