



Draft Denbighshire Local Toilets Strategy: Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number: 1406

Brief description: The Welsh Government agreed the adoption of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 (Act) in 2017. This Act brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces the provision of toilets and specifically local toilet strategies. The overall aim of the legislation is to ensure that all local authorities assess the need of its community in relation to the provision of public conveniences and that it takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need. The Act places a duty on local authorities to prepare and publish a Local Toilets Strategy which must include an assessment of need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for disabled people. Each local authority in Wales must: Assess the need for toilet provision for their communities; Plan to meet those needs; Produce a Local Toilets Strategy; and Review the strategy, update and publicise revisions. Denbighshire County Council is conducting a comprehensive review of its public toilet facilities to ensure they align with our current budget. This is a long-term process aimed at trying to meet all identified needs. There is no statutory requirement for local authorities to provide public toilets, however the Local Toilets Strategy must provide details of how the local authority proposes to meet the identified need. Each local authority must also consider all available options for providing public toilets through direct provision or working with private businesses to make facilities available to the public.

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Responsible Service: Highways and Environmental Services

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? All members of the public, local communities, and tourists. Toilets for public use matter to everybody and remain a high-profile issue. They are, however, even more important to certain groups within society, including older people, people with disabilities, people with particular needs (including certain medical problems), women, children and young people and their families.

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? Yes

Who has been involved in the development of this impact assessment? HOS, other DCC officers, Corporate Project Team, Strategic Planning Team.

Summary and Conclusion

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

3 out of 4 stars

Actual score : 32 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

Securing the future provision of toilet facilities requires a strategic approach that maximises available provision across the public and private sector. The Council's management of public conveniences is not sustainable within the current financial climate and a Local Toilet Strategy identifies other available facilities. This document will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Prevention

In the writing of the strategy, we have considered the importance of toilets in relation to social isolation and physical activity. We will also be looking working with partners, Town, City and Community Councils and businesses to ensure that we can make as many facilities available to the public across the county.

Integration

The strategy has been written taking into account other aspects of the council's services, existing provision in our Council owned buildings together with facilities provided by Town, City and Community Councils. The review of the strategy will need to integrate with other existing strategies, policies and plans of the Council. Modern toilet provision provides hygienic facilities for residents and visitors and improves the experience of visiting towns, communities and tourist attractions.

Collaboration

A full and proper consultation of the strategy will be carried out with Town and Community Councils, local Members, residents, businesses, and visitors. We will explore options where there is interest in alternative delivery methods for providing toilet facilities. The Council continues to work with some local businesses to provide a Community Toilet Scheme which allows the public to access toilets other than those managed by the Council in towns and villages across Denbighshire.

Involvement

In the creation of the strategy, through consultation, we aim to involve a diversity of population in the decisions affecting them, to find out their views, and any solutions they might have to offer. The Local Toilet Strategy will be regularly reviewed and requires the Council to engage with the public, Community and Town Councils and interested bodies to encourage greater access to toilet provisions within the Council's boundaries.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Negative
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

The Denbighshire Local Toilet Strategy will provide positive outcomes for the residents of and visitors to Denbighshire, whilst bringing very little risk to the Council. Adopting the Denbighshire Local Toilet Strategy will enable the strategy to be published, meeting the requirements of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Securing the future provision of toilet facilities requires a strategic approach that maximises available provision across the public and private sector. The Council's management of public conveniences is not sustainable within the current financial climate and a Local Toilet Strategy identifies other available facilities within the Council's boundaries. This document will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Further actions required

The review will need to consider the impact of the Strategy on the economy and in particular the importance of tourism. The availability of clean, accessible public toilets can make a positive difference and improve the quality of the visitor experience, thereby growing the local economy and tourism.

The financial climate means that it is important to consider now how local toilet provision can be maximised for existing and future generations.

The installation of a contactless payment system will be considered along with retaining cash payments where possible.

The provision of public toilets is not a statutory service and can be withdrawn at any time. There will be a negative impact on all groups but the provision of a Community Toilet Scheme will mitigate the impact. A successful Community Toilet Scheme could have a positive impact on community relations if people see businesses taking part in something that contributes to the public good. People going into businesses to use toilet facilities regularly may have conversations with and get to know staff and could purchase goods or use services although this is not a requirement of the scheme so could be beneficial to the business as well.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

As part of the strategy, an action is to consider the installation of contactless payment system in public toilets to reduce cash collections across the county

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

No known impact

Economic development

Adoption of the Community Grant Toilet Scheme (CTS) extends the public toilet availability within an area and contributes towards the health and social inclusion of residents and visitors alike. It also supports local businesses economically, by making areas more accessible and allows visitors to increase their length of stay. Feedback from the Public Consultation on the Needs Analysis shows there is clear evidence to suggest that people would support businesses/service providers who are providing facilities as part of the Community Toilet Scheme, even if this is not a requirement.

The hours of opening of the alternative facilities may offer a variety of opening hours which would not cause significant disadvantage.

Quality skills for the long term

No known impact

Quality jobs for the long term

No known impact

Childcare

Utilising existing facilities in council buildings and the Community Toilet Scheme.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Review of staffing, risk of redundancies

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Digital exclusion issues should a decision be made to only have contactless card payments in public conveniences rather than cash

Economic development

No known impact

Quality skills for the long term

No known impact

Quality jobs for the long term

If a review of staffing is undertaken to make the cost of running the facilities more sustainable, cleaners may be at risk of redundancy. This could also place a greater burden placed on cafes and restaurants.

Childcare

Possible reduction in child changing facilities, this is mitigated by utilising existing provisions in Council Buildings and the Community Toilet Scheme.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

Public toilet provision has no direct impact on the biodiversity and ecosystems of Wales, although some investment when maintaining and servicing toilets can reduce carbon emissions where they reduce electric and water usage. The provision of public toilet facilities will therefore need to minimise the impact on the environment.

Further actions required

Opportunities for more eco-friendly toilets available within the community through the Community Toilet Scheme will be explored as part of the review, as well as continued investment across all services that will reduce energy or utility costs. Opportunities for more eco-friendly toilets in the future will be explored e.g. rainwater harvesting, living roof/wall.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No known impact

Biodiversity in the built environment

No known impact

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No known impact

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

No known impact

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No known impact

Flood risk management

No known impact

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No known impact

Biodiversity in the built environment

No known impact

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No known impact

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

No known impact

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No known impact

Flood risk management

No known impact

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The strategy aims to provide a sustainable approach to public convenience provision in Denbighshire that positively contributes to public health. The provision of public conveniences by third parties will encourage more hygienic and convenient toilets, accessible to the public.

Further actions required

The Denbighshire Local Toilet Strategy promotes the facilities available throughout the county, and will therefore encourage people to use these as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The benefits will be maximised through the publication of the details contained within the Local Toilet Strategy.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

Accessible, clean toilets that are well located in places such as town centres, parks and near public transport hubs or active travel routes can help encourage people to socialise, exercise and stay more physically active, which helps to maximise physical and mental well-being.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No known impact

People's emotional and mental well-being

Accessible, clean toilets that are well located in places such as town centres, parks and near public transport hubs or active travel routes can help encourage people to socialise, exercise and stay more physically active, which helps to maximise physical and mental well-being.

Access to healthcare

No known impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

Accessible, clean toilets that are well located in places such as town centres, parks and near public transport hubs or active travel routes can help encourage people to socialise, exercise and stay more physically active, which helps to maximise physical and mental well-being.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

A potential knock-on effect of inadequate public toilet facilities is that people who cannot go out in their community could become inactive. This can impact on health and social care as, with inactive individuals likely to become more immobile, isolated, ill and depressed leading to a possible need for further treatment. It could also have detrimental effects on people's mental health due to the isolation created by not leaving home.

Access to good quality, healthy food

No known impact

People's emotional and mental well-being

For many older people, lack of toilet facilities can stop them going out which can increase physical and mental health problems.

Access to healthcare

No known impact

Participation in leisure opportunities

No known impact

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Negative

Justification for impact

The strategy does not disproportionately affect one group over another.

The strategy will help maintain provision without losing access to toilets.

Improved access to public toilets will encourage greater participation and inclusion of all, regardless of physical restrictions.

Older people may be disproportionately impacted if some public toilets are closed.

Older people may have mobility issues which limit access to other toilets. They may need to use the toilet more often.

Parents and carers may need more frequent access to public toilets for baby changing facilities.

Small children have less control over their bladders and outings can be abruptly shortened if a child needs to use a toilet.

Some people with certain disabilities may be disproportionately impacted if some public toilets are closed.

People with certain disabilities may have mobility issues which limit access to other toilets. They may need to use the toilet more often.

Further actions required

In reviewing the Strategy, consideration will be given to our duties under the Equality Act 2010, such as the provision of "Changing Places" and gender-neutral toilets, as well as standard accessible toilets.

It will be important to ensure that in the community toilet scheme there is provision suitable for people of different cultural or religious backgrounds. For example, if all the community provision was in licensed premises, this would not be appropriate for some members of the community. People of some faiths may not feel welcome in some premises and the consultation will seek to understand if this is an issue.

Publicise other toilets available, such as libraries, museums, shopping centres etc.

Place signage on the closed toilets, directing people to the nearest alternative and to the council website for more information.

Explore the alternative options for public toilets to remain open without council funds e.g. handing sites over to third parties.

The benefits will be maximised through the publication of the details contained within the Local Toilet Strategy

Positive impacts identified:

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics, including fostering good relations between people with protected characteristics and those without. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

No known impact

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

No known impact

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

No known impact

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

No known impact

Negative impacts identified:

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics, including fostering good relations between people with protected characteristics and those without. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

People of some ethnic backgrounds may not feel welcome in some premises and the consultation will seek to understand if this is an issue.

Older people may be disproportionately impacted if some public toilets are closed.

Older people may have mobility issues which limit access to other toilets. They may need to use the toilet more often.

Parents and carers may need more frequent access to public toilets for baby changing facilities. Small children have less control over their bladders and outings can be abruptly shortened if a child needs to use a toilet.

Some people with certain disabilities may be disproportionately impacted if some public toilets are closed.

People with certain disabilities may have mobility issues which limit access to other toilets. They may need to use the toilet more often.

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

There could be negative impacts to homeless individuals who use public toilets as somewhere to wash as well as a toileting facility. The needs of homeless people are seldom mentioned in connection with public toilets, but their toileting requirements do need to be addressed if public urination on the streets is to be reduced. Homeless people may also suffer from stigma, and may not be or may not feel welcome in some establishments.

Advancing equality and improving the well-being of people affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

There could be negative impacts to rough sleepers who use public toilets as somewhere to wash as well as a toileting facility. The needs of rough sleepers are seldom mentioned in connection with public toilets, but their toileting requirements do need to be addressed if public urination on the streets is to be reduced. Rough sleepers may also suffer from stigma, and may not be or may not feel welcome in some establishments.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

There could be negative impacts to rough sleepers who use public toilets as somewhere to wash as well as a toileting facility. The needs of rough sleepers are seldom mentioned in connection with public toilets, but their toileting requirements do need to be addressed if public urination on the streets is to be reduced. Rough sleepers may also suffer from stigma, and may not be or may not feel welcome in some establishments.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The strategy should not have a particular impact on cohesive communities.

Further actions required

We will continue to work with North Wales Police, Town/Community Council, residents, local

Draft Denbighshire Local Toilets Strategy

businesses, voluntary sector partners and community groups to ensure that public toilet facilities are as safe as possible and ensure that as many facilities are available where and then they are needed. In particular, we will continue to work with third parties to encourage greater use of amenities within the community.

The benefits will be maximised through the publication of the details contained within the Local Toilet Strategy. We will also be engaging with facility management and regularly reviewing the Strategy.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

New entrance barriers including a contactless payment system may help mitigate anti-social behaviour and create a safer space for individuals to use public toilets

Community participation and resilience

Consultation will aim to hear from a diverse population on their public toilet needs within the community

The attractiveness of the area

No known impact

Connected communities

Continue to work with third parties to encourage greater use of amenities within the community.

Rural resilience

The strategy will be delivered through a public-private partnership

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

No known impact

Community participation and resilience

No known impact

The attractiveness of the area

Risk of urination in urban and green space areas

Connected communities

Digital exclusion for some cohorts if contactless card payments become the only payment option in public toilets

Rural resilience

Introduction of charges in all public toilets may affect those on low wages

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

There is no distinction between the languages within this strategy and nor does it have an impact on the use of the Welsh language.

The draft Local Toilets Strategy will not have any effect on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and will not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

The Strategy will adhere to the Welsh language standards in relation to signage, apps, resources, publications etc.

Further actions required

Signposting and mapping publicly available toilets will be important so that those who need to visit a facility can easily access information about the location, opening/closing times, accessibility and

suitability of the toilets. In doing so, the Strategy will ensure that we meet our obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards, and provide information bilingually. Regular engagement with facilities management will also be undertaken.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No known impact

Promoting the Welsh language

No known impact

Culture and heritage

No known impact

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No known impact

Promoting the Welsh language

No known impact

Culture and heritage

No known impact

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The strategy has no impact on a Globally Responsible Wales

Further actions required

N/A

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No known impact

Human rights

No known impact

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No known impact

Reducing climate change

No known impact

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

No known impact

Human rights

No known impact

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

No known impact

Reducing climate change

No known impact