

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**PUBLIC CONVENIENCES  
A PLAN TO MEET SAVINGS TARGETS**

**June 2021**

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## A. Executive Summary

This Impact Assessment report is provided to identify options to save a **minimum of £82k pa** from the council's Public Conveniences service, in accordance with the Council's Towards Financial Sustainability (ToFS) plan, and thus underpinning the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

This report is intended to do two key things. It considers the services 'in the round' to provide valuable background context and data on which to make decisions, but crucially it also reviews options for change, eventually arriving at a 'preferred proposal', to deliver the required savings.

In summary the savings options considered are:

1. Reduce opening hours (retain attendants)
2. Close some facilities (reduced facilities but retain attendants)
3. Reduce staffing support of open facilities (mobile attendants)
4. Externalise the service.

The report sets out the rationale behind arriving at a 'preferred proposal' of closing two sites, mothballing others for special events only and cleaning those that are retained with a mobile service, except the bus station, for which a case is made for dedicated staffing due to high footfall. It should be noted that two sites proposed for mothballing for events only, have in fact operated this way for some considerable time already pre Covid 19 -these being South Park and Lucy Tower Street. So for these sites the report simply seeks to ratify this practice.

The staffing profile for the service would be reduced by 3 posts, which would be subject to redundancy.

A. Those toilets suggested for retention are:

Covering city centre and uphill area:

Bus Station

Castle Square  
Tentercroft St

In our parks:

Hartsholme Country Park

Boultham Park

Note: The Arboretum Toilets are managed by a third party

B. Those toilets to have reduced access:

Westgate- disabled Radar key access only

Sincil Street (on the basis of closure now but replacement with modern unisex when market reopens).

C. Those toilets to be closed are:

Urinals- Newport and Union Road

D. Toilets to be opened for event use only:

Westgate (wider toilet block)

Lucy Tower (already operating this way pre covid)

South Park (already operating this way for some years)

The retained sites will still be open seven days a week. Only the bus station would have a commitment for dedicated staff due to high footfall each day and associated bus station cleaning duties.

Income needs to be protected and enhanced where possible so as to safeguard the services for the future.

To protect services, it is vital that income is considered. Income improvements might be achieved by:

a) Channelling city centre use to three main facilities, all of which have a charge (Bus Station, Castle Square, Tentercroft)

- b) Charging event organisers (event organisers who require the toilets to be open to be charged at whatever the actual operational costs are, plus 20% to cover management/administrative costs). Where free access is requested for facilities that would usually charge, this to be charged at an estimated / negotiated mutually agreeable rate based on the likely lost income rate.
- c) The toilets service will, it is hoped, be able to deliver a part of the cleaning work requirements for the bus station and recharge this, which will bring a small income.
- d) Moving to contactless payments for charging to encourage use and reduce cash handling costs (this is in addition to still taking cash at these locations).

These service changes act as a catalyst to address another long-standing service-related problem, that of the abuse of Radar key and 'night toilets' access. This proposal therefore includes a marker for further work to develop a new access control system, in conjunction with representatives of disabled access groups in the city, based on the sale of access cards as previously trialled at the bus station. This would not be profit making- but would seek to reduce costs arising from the damage/abuse of facilities.

## **B. Objectives of the review**

As has been the backdrop for budget planning in recent years, the Council continues to operate in a difficult financial environment. Significant national reforms about future funding allocations to local government and the implementation of new funding mechanisms are set to detrimentally impact on the Council's financial position, let alone the more recent direct impacts arising from covid. In addition, the impact of Brexit and the consequent impact on the economic and political landscapes poses significant uncertainty for local government resources.

Furthermore, the Council continues to face financial challenges due to changes in the use of, and demand for its services, as well as escalating costs in some areas. In response to these funding reductions and pressures, the

Council is undertaking continual reviews of its services, leading to the necessary reductions in its annual expenditure.

However, the Council still has further significant annual savings to deliver if it is to meet the targets set out in its current medium term financial strategy. It is the delivery of a contribution towards these savings that is the objective of this report. Specifically, this Impact Assessment is provided based on the request to identify options to save a minimum of £82k pa from the council's Public Conveniences service.

In addition, as is good management practice, whilst undergoing any period of significant change, it is incumbent on management to seek ways to mitigate impacts and add value wherever possible, albeit against a new lower cost baseline. This impact assessment therefore suggests other options that try to maximise income, mitigate against imposed costs, and add value to any necessary changes.

It is of course important to remember that any savings will ideally be delivered in a way that mitigates, to the best of our ability, any impact to the council's main aims. Given the depth and severity of cuts, it must be accepted that this may not always be possible.

The strategic priorities that support Vision 2025 are:

Let's drive inclusive economic growth

Let's reduce all kinds of inequality

Let's deliver quality housing

Let's enhance our remarkable place

Let's address the challenge of climate change

Of special relevance for this review are three key strands.

1. Remarkable Place – protecting and enhancing the city as a great place to live, work and visit.

2. Economic growth- protecting and enhancing the city as a vibrant and prosperous centre.
3. Climate change- making sure the toilets function in an environmentally friendly manner.

## **C. The Scope**

Public conveniences sit within the auspices of the Community Services section.

In very broad terms the Community Services area is responsible for delivery of the following services city-wide (in no particular order):

Waste management  
Street Cleansing  
Street Furniture (Benches/ name plates/art installations)  
CCTV  
Open Spaces management (wide range of green space functions)  
Emergency Call-Out for street issues.  
Public Conveniences

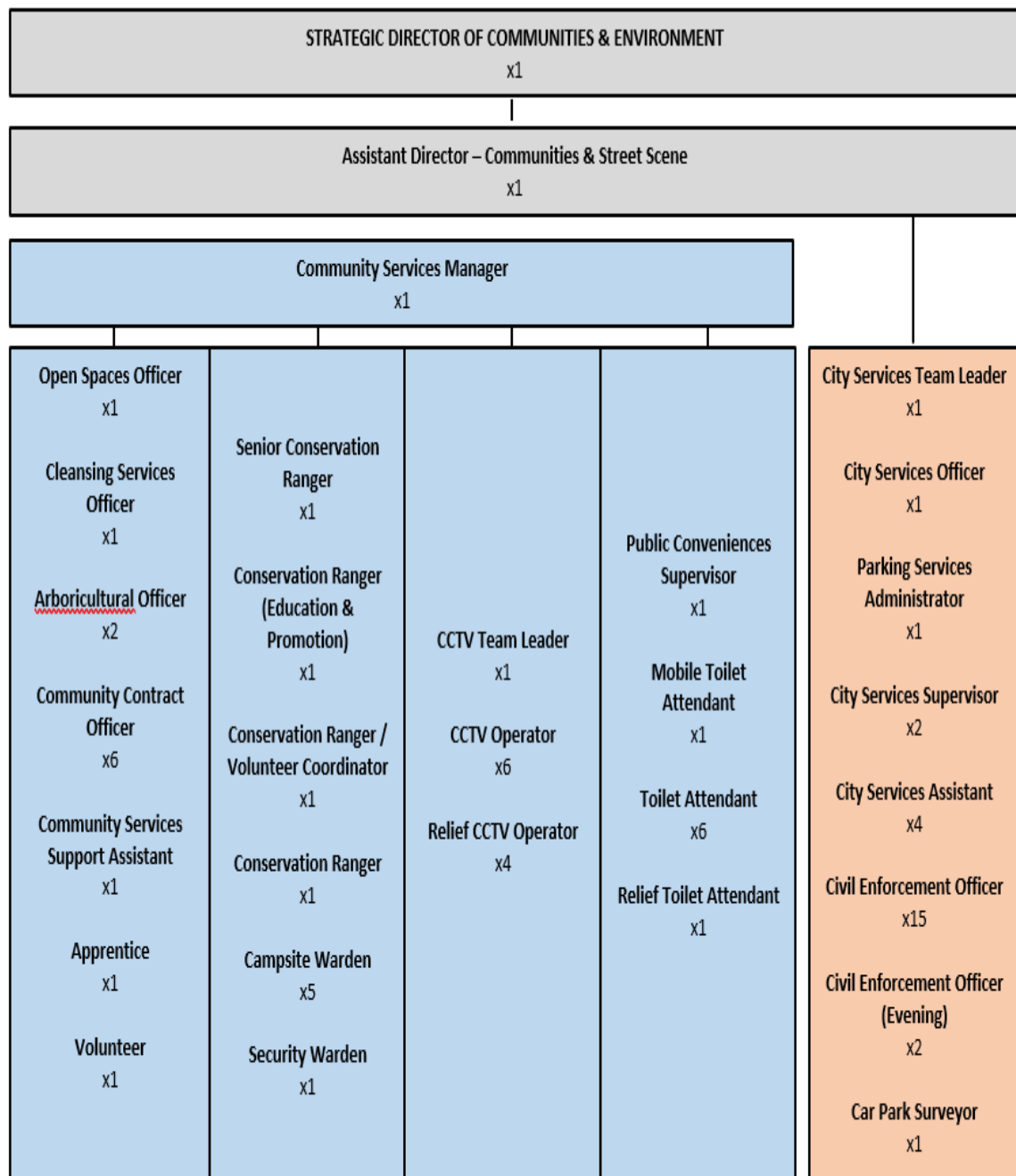
In 2015 the Public Conveniences service was subject to a 'lean systems review', and savings were made by the service without fundamentally affecting the main elements of service delivery. Members chose, at that time, to keep dedicated attendants at sites to maintain a high standard of service and protect the assets. This review has, by necessity, gone beyond that in order to identify other savings options necessary to deliver the new £82k+ target saving.

The staffing information in section D below shows the staff involved in the delivery of this service, and the lines of reporting.

## **D. Staff structure**

The public conveniences service only has dedicated staff from the Public Conveniences Supervisor/Co-ordinator forwards in the structure. The

Cleansing Services Officer is the Team Leader and is predominantly occupied with waste management and street cleaning issues.



C&SS Structure – February 2020

NB

1. The Senior Conservation Ranger reports via the Open Spaces Officer (Team Leader).
2. Toilets services report via the Cleansing Services Officer (Team Leader).



*3. This structure is as August 2020 but is subject to change following other service reviews running in parallel as required by the extended savings programme.*

## **E. Background information and data**

Local authorities have discretionary powers, but not a duty, to provide public conveniences.

The Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 empowers local authorities to require toilets at places of entertainment, and to maintain them, and where food and drink is sold for consumption on the premises.

Section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936 allows authorities to make a fair and reasonable charge for public conveniences.

There is no statutory requirement for any provision at transport hubs or stations.

The public conveniences service has in recent years operated at eight enclosed sites in the city, and two open air urinals. Hartsholme Park has been operated by the ranger service and camp site staff, but has been subject to covid impacts, and may be subject to impacts from other parallel service reviews, so has been included here to ensure the review is comprehensive and ensure service continuity. Recently, under Covid restrictions, this has reduced to four sites in operation: Bus station, Castle Square, Boultham Park and Hartsholme Park.

### **Provision Chart- current (as pre-covid)**

<b>Toilet Block</b>	<b>Provision</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>
Bus Station	Ladies & Gents, Disabled, Changing	Staffed 7 days per week. Toilet	As per Bus Station

	Places & Drivers' separate facilities.  Charging	Attendants staff to 5:30 pm – Bus station staff close the toilets at Bus Station closing time.	opening hours.
Tentercroft	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Charging	Staffed 37 hours per week	Monday to Sunday inclusive. 9am to 5pm
Castle	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Charging	Staffed 37 hours per week	Monday to Sunday inclusive. 9am to 5pm
Westgate	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Free	Staffed 37 hours per week	Monday to Sunday inclusive. 9am to 5pm
Sincil Street	Ladies  Free	Not staffed permanently. Mobile coverage from other sites .	Monday to Saturday inclusive. 9am to 5pm
Lucy Tower	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Charging	Staffing subject to event requirements/income.	Closed other than for events due to abuse.
South Park	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Free	Staffing subject to event requirements/income.	Opened for events only.
Boultham Park	Ladies and gents at the park entrance Unisex adjacent café  Free	Not staffed permanently. Mobile coverage from other sites.	Monday to Sunday inclusive. 9am to 3pm
Hartsholme Park (HCP camp site has its own separate shower and toilet block)	Ladies & Gents  Free	Support for ranger service	Monday to Sunday inclusive. 9am to 5pm (seasonal changes may apply)
Newport Arch urinal	Gents  Free	Not staffed, but attended to several times a day by mobile staff.	24/7/365
Union Road urinal	Gents	Not staffed, but attended to several	24/7/365

	Free	times a day by mobile staff.	
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Public toilets at the crematorium are maintained by site staff, and at the cemeteries by contracted dedicated cemetery staff as a part of the grounds maintenance contract.

The toilets at the Arboretum are maintained by the lessee of the lower lodge, linked to their lease.

## **F. Key functions undertaken**

The service is based on the simple premise of providing publicly accessible toilet facilities. Section E above lists the locations and facilities historically available until recently, and opening times (until recent changes due to covid).

Over and above the basic functions it should be noted that the service also flexes to meet toilet facility requirements in the support of special events, opening/locking facilities and stepping up care/cleaning as required. A good example is the Christmas Market, where the service operates much longer hours and a higher level of input for the duration of the market. Income at charging sites is also forgone over the Christmas market period. Subject to safety requirements and it not adversely impacting other strategic objectives, this affords a potential opportunity for income generation.

More recently other events have been required to pay costs for toilet provision.

The toilets staff also act as ambassadors for the city, dealing with tourists/visitors at what is frequently their introduction to the city, be that at the bus station, or in the uphill Castle Square tourism area.

## **G. Data**

Below is a table showing the footfall statistics for each of the four charged sites last year.

It will not be totally accurate for the specific number of visits, as we know that some people will gain access without payment. However, statistically this anomaly is believed to be low.

	Castle	Tentercroft St	Lucy Tower	Bus Station	TOTAL
<b>2019/20</b>					
	36,733	38,365	860 *	74,896	150,854

\*Lucy Tower is especially low due to prolonged closures related to damage/abuse.

Charging for toilets has delivered an income stream to assist in funding the services. However, it has only been able to cover a small part of the overall costs. See finance section.

The table below outlines the annual income from each charging toilet, since 2016/17.

	Castle	Lucy Tower	Tentercroft Street	Bus Station	TOTAL
<b>2016/17</b>	£1,731.93	£988.20			£2720.13
<b>2017/18</b>	£10,029.31	£4,588.02	£917.65	£3,115.35	£18,650.33
<b>2018/19</b>	£8,354.97	£2,278.05	£9,176.03	£17,843.46	£37,652.51
<b>2019/20</b>	£8,380.77	£172*	£9,207.88	£18,179.43	£35,940.08

\*Lucy Tower is especially low in 19/20 due to prolonged closures related to damage/abuse.

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## **H. Service performance – customer perspective.**

In June 2019, the Council's Citizen Panel were invited to respond to the question:

*How satisfied are you with the standard of the following facilities and services provided by the council?*

Public Toilets scored:

3% Very satisfied.

45% Satisfied.

28% Dissatisfied

23% Very dissatisfied.

These scores are not good but are believed to be reflective of the introduction of charges, periods of closure due to damages, and general public perception of public toilets. It is disappointing on a number of fronts, not least due to the positive anecdotal feedback received for newer sites such as the Bus Station.

## **I. Horizon scanning**

There are several factors that need to be taken into account when considering a service review/change. One key element is that of assessing what may affect the services in the future, so as to avoid changes to services that may not be appropriate in due course. As Community Services functions deal with street scene services generally, then the growth of the city needs to be understood, and the demand on public conveniences as a part of this picture. Below are figures for the last eight years, showing that there is a regular increase in demand from natural growth of the city, although it must be noted that the impact of covid on confidence in 'the high street' has to be an unknown quantity in any assessment at this time.

Date of property count	Number in count	Size of increase in number of properties on previous year
March 2011	42,960	N/A
March 2012	43,430	470
March 2013	43,780	350
March 2014	44,260	480
June 2015	44,430	170
June 2016	44,710	280
June 2017	45,220	510
June 2018	45,480	260

Average		297
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In addition to 'natural growth' it is noted that the Council is embarked on a strategy for growth in relation to some specific projects, namely Western Growth Corridor, and the North East Quadrant, both of which (subject to planning permission) will deliver significant expansion and demand.

Over and above this it should be noted that Lincoln is a hub for other districts, and therefore a larger catchment area beyond its own boundaries, all of which has growth plans. Demand in the city should therefore be expected to grow well beyond that set out above, provided the 'offer' in the city centre remains attractive and recovers successfully from Covid impacts.

The recently published Lincoln Transport Strategy, in line with government policy, places increasing emphasis on the use of public transport. Whilst not a statutory requirement, it is likely that there will be a clear demand/expectation of public convenience provision at all/any transport interchanges/hubs as a part of providing modern facilities and supporting modal shift.

It is of course also vital to assess impact on the Council's longer term vision for the city. The strategic priorities that support Vision 2025 are:

- Let's drive inclusive economic growth
- Let's reduce all kinds of inequality
- Let's deliver quality housing
- Let's enhance our remarkable place
- Let's address the challenge of climate change

Based on the above it is considered that the proposed public conveniences that are to be retained will provide suitable basic cover for the city in the immediate future. This is based on the fact that it gives access to toilets at the transport hub, and both the lower part of the High Street and 'uphill'. In this regard it provides basic coverage. It also supports the investment more recently made at Boutham Park, and the known high footfall of Hartsholme Park. Both parks are expected to have increasing footfall in future years.

Should these proposals be enacted, subject to the other proposals for service improvement/development it would be wise and appropriate to review the coverage in the city in a few years' time, once any longer term impacts of covid on shopping and travel is known.

## **J. Summary of Suggestions**

In essence this service is a simple one, with staff provided on shifts specific to sites, with a clear remit to open, close, keep clean, and support customer use. It is of course a little more complex than that when factoring in cover, mobile cleaning of sites and extra hours for events etc. but this is the starting point. The scope of this review is therefore the nine staff (eight fte and one p/t) dedicated to this service and the way the functions described above are undertaken.

As the aim of the review is to find savings then these can potentially be derived from an almost limitless range of options. However, it is vital that the review is finished as quickly as is reasonable, so that the savings can be delivered to meet MTFS requirements, and staff are not subjected to uncertainty for longer than is necessary. Accordingly, a limited number of choices are ventured here as the most viable options, and then fine tuned to a 'preferred option' in the next section. All are based on the necessity to reduce the hours of staffing, and thereby the staff required, as this is the main area of operational cost and so is the only area of change that can deliver sufficient financial savings. Clearly closure or reduced use of sites also reduces associated costs from such as utility charges, which play a lesser part, but it can, in a couple of cases, also provide property disposal opportunities.

Options covered are:

1. Reduce opening hours (retain attendants)
2. Close some facilities (reduced facilities but retain attendants)
3. Reduce staffing support of open facilities (mobile attendants)

As the scope has not been to retain services in-house specifically, then a fourth option is included to ensure the review is comprehensive.

#### 4. Externalise the service.

Associated with any review, consideration must be given to unintended consequences. In summary, other issues that need to be considered/addressed as part of any change programme include:

Provision of night time toilets

Use of radar keys / sale of toilet access cards

(including access to toilets in the bus station where no access card has been purchased).

Ease of payment

Opportunities created/ potential repurpose of buildings.

## K. Outline thinking and proposal

In order to prevent spending time on options that are less viable/workable, a simple SWOT analysis has been developed below for each option above.

### 1. Reduce opening hours (retain attendants)

<b>Strengths</b> Meets cost cutting requirements  Retains services in-house  Reduces costs of utilities pro-rata  Keeps all/more sites available	<b>Weaknesses</b> Redundancy for some staff  Reduced public access to facilities and thus support for wider economy  Reduces income potentially Retains some costs despite being closed so poor value(e.g. NNDR)
<b>Opportunities</b> Tailor opening times to highest footfall, so improving efficiency (outcome/cost)	<b>Threats</b> Spiral of decline possible, which may mean footfall/income reduces disproportionately.

### 2. Close some facilities (reduced facilities but retain attendants)



<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Meets cost cutting requirements</p> <p>Retains services in-house</p> <p>Reduces costs of utilities pro-rata</p> <p>Reduces repair costs compared with maintaining more sites</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Redundancy for some staff</p> <p>Reduced public access to facilities and thus support for wider economy</p> <p>Reduces income (if closing charging sites)</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>Tailor to highest footfall sites, so improving efficiency (outcome/cost)</p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p>Spiral of decline possible, which may mean footfall/income reduces disproportionately.</p>

### 3. Reduce staffing of open facilities (mobile attendants)

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Meets cost cutting requirements</p> <p>Retains services in-house</p> <p>Maintains all (or more) of the sites/facilities</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Redundancy for some staff</p> <p>Lowers service quality</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>Moving staff to being mobile may provide opportunities to support other services</p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p>Potentially more damage/increased repair costs</p> <p>Potentially reduces income (abuse of access)</p>

#### 4. Externalise the service.

<b>Strengths</b>  Would be expected to attract investment for long term contracts  Third party would be keen to promote services	<b>Weaknesses</b>  Moves staff to contractor under TUPE (Redundancy for some staff)  Unlikely to be attractive for all sites (some would close)  Putting this to market would take considerable time/resources.
<b>Opportunities</b>  Potential to be lower cost option(would not know until market tested)	<b>Threats</b>  May lose control of levels of charge

In addition, the following have been developed as 'guiding principles', in priority order, so as to assist in determining a preferred option. Clearly it is unlikely that all the desirable outcomes can be achieved, but it helps as a steer in considerations:

- Make the required levels of savings in the short term (priority to protect other council services overall)
- Protection of access to services for the public where possible
- Protection of staff where possible
- Exploitation of opportunities to get the best possible outcome from the necessity for change.

These principles have then been used in conjunction with the SWOT analysis to obtain scores and thus indicate a 'preferred option'.

They are ranked 1 to 4 with a high score being good.

### 1. Make the required levels of savings in the short term

All options will be tailored to make the required saving, but option 4 would take a longer time.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Score 4=high	2	3	4	1

### 2. Protection of services for the public

Option 3 maintains access to all all/most sites

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Score 4=high	2	1	4	3

### 3. Protection of staff

No scores as all options have to be equally damaging in order to make the required saving.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Score 4=high	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### 4. Exploitation of opportunities

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Score 4=high	4	2	3	1

Accepting that there is some subjectivity in this methodology, it suggests that the options are, in order of preference for implementation:

First: Option 3 Reduce staffing of open facilities (mobile attendants)  
Second: Option 1 Reduce opening hours (retain attendants)  
Third : Option 2 Close some facilities (reduced facilities but retain attendants)  
Fourth : Option 4 Externalise the service.

Taking the highest scoring option as being to maintain as many as possible of the existing facilities, but to reduce the staffing of these facilities, the only option would be to move to a mobile service, opening up and closing down daily, with cleaning services circulating between times.

As the target saving is £82k pa, this means reductions in staffing to get down to 6 staff (5 fte and 1 p/t).

As the bus station has the highest footfall, with the opportunity for income from undertaking other bus station cleaning duties, it is suggested that this, coupled with the importance of maintaining a high quality service at this important 'flag ship' site, means that this site should be retained as staffed throughout the main daytime period (and early evening when there is greater risk of incidents). Covering this site as attended at peak times means that shifts have had to be developed to meet this need, and then an assessment has had to be made as to how many other sites could then be covered by the number of mobile staff that can be afforded within budget. Severely reducing the opening hours of sites and covering them mobile has been considered but has not been thought desirable from a customer perspective, or workable operationally, so it has been necessary then to look to the option of restricting/closing some facilities so as to get a 'fit' between staff available for the budget, and work to be undertaken.

This is fed into the proposal below.

Work with external providers has been undertaken at a very high level simply to assess if other opportunities are available that have not been considered as a part of this assessment. They also provide a useful benchmark. The view , after these initial discussions, was to seek to retain the service in house as the preferred option.

## PROPOSED STAFFING

Toilet Block	Provision & Staffing	Staffing/Proposed	Opening Times Proposed
Bus Station	Ladies & Gents, Disabled, and 'Changing Places' .  Charging	Staffed 7 days per week. Toilet Attendants staff into evening – Bus Station Staff (contractor) closes up at Bus Station closing time.	7 days per week, as per Bus Station opening hours.
Tentercroft	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Charging	Open 7 days Mobile	7 days per week 9am to 5pm
Castle	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Charging	Open 7 days Mobile	7 days per week 9am to 5pm
Westgate	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  New- charging	Disabled toilet at Westgate to remain open to Radar key holders. Staffing subject to event requirements/income.	Radar key for disabled access 24/7. Opened for events only.
Sincil Street	Ladies  Free	Staffing subject to event requirements/income.	Opened for events only. (site to be redeveloped with new toilets)
Hartsholme Country Park (HCP camp site has its own separate shower and toilet block maintained by camp site staff)	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Free	Open 7 days Mobile	7 days per week 9am to 4pm
Boultham	Ladies & Gents, Disabled  Free	Open 7 days Mobile	7 days per week 9am to 3pm
Lucy Tower	Ladies & Gents, Disabled	Staffing subject to event	Opened for events only.

	Charging	requirements/income.	
South Park	Ladies & Gents, Disabled Free	Staffing subject to event requirements/income.	Opened for events only.
Newport Arch	Gents urinal Free	Closed	Closed
Union Road	Gents urinal Free	Closed	Closed

The above would require a totally new staffing shift pattern.

This would require the loss of 3.0 fte members of staff.

This would require changes in terms of vehicle requirements for staff, as mobile staff will need to be able to drive. This would feature in any redundancy assessments.

## **L. Detailed proposal**

i Description and service impact

ii Financial impact

iii Staff impacts

### **Description of overall service impact.**

The general proposal is to cut the number of sites available for general use to five, and close two completely (two urinals). Three others would be closed for general use but retained for use to support events in return for payment (Lucy Tower (already operating this way), Westgate and Sincil St), these joining South Park which is already used in this way. Westgate would have the disabled access toilet left available for Radar key users only.

The closure of the urinals has been suggested on the basis that in order to reduce the number of facilities to fit the reduced resources available some will need to close. In terms of prioritising which are to be kept against those to close permanently the urinals score very low for the following reasons. They are old and in poor condition, cannot be locked off (no doors or roofs), tend to be used for nefarious activities (because access can't be controlled finding

drug paraphernalia is common place as is late night abuse), are male only (so not part of an equitable provision), and do not have flushing or hygiene/hand washing facilities (no mains water is connected).

It is also to be noted that residents who live nearby the urinals complain regularly about the smell coming from them due to lack of automated flushing, and have commented about how much better it is since they were closed under covid restrictions.

At a time when health and hygiene is paramount it is believed that retaining them increases risks to both users and our attendants.

City Centre provision would be catered for by way of one facility uphill (Castle Square), and two downhill (Bus station – which would be attended for busy parts of the day, and Tentercroft Street). These would all remained as charged. An additional Radar accessed toilet would be available for disabled use at Westgate, a change to the original impact assessment to reflect the public consultation feedback.

It is important to remember that it is proposed that the new market will also contain public toilets, and whilst it is not possible to say when these new facilities will open, work on it is already in the planning stages.

Two other facilities would be maintained in parks, Boutham Park and Hartsholme Country Park (HCP), where high footfall has shown a clear demand (HCP camp site has its own separate shower and toilet block). These would remain free to use.

Income to help safeguard the service in the future might be enhanced by:

- a) Channelling all city centre use to three facilities, all of which have a charge.
- b) Charging event organisers (event organisers who require toilets to be open to be charged at whatever the actual operational costs are, plus 20% to cover management/administrative costs). Where free access is requested for facilities that would usually charge, this to be charged at an estimated /

negotiated mutually agreeable rate based on the likely lost income rate. Deviation from this is to be at the Director's discretion following consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

c) Taking on some support cleaning work at the bus station to bring an income. The toilets service will, it is hoped, be able to deliver a part of the cleaning work requirements and this would be recharged to the bus station.

d) Moving to contactless payments for charging (in addition to continuing to take cash).

To address other associated issues and costs for the service it is proposed that use of the Radar key scheme be replaced with a new access control system. This has been trialled at the bus station and had limited numbers of objections, once the system became widely known.

The Radar key scheme is now widely abused and as a result many people access the toilets who should not. They often both block them from use for legitimate users and damage facilities, adding to running costs. This should no longer be tolerated. Use of a control system means that we have tracking for anyone who uses a facility, just as members/staff access City Hall, and the manager can give or remove access rights as required, thus protecting facilities.

Due to abuse and damage, our night time facilities have also had to be closed for significant periods. Unfortunately, due to the prevalence of Radar keys amongst some sectors of the community, they have tended to be used as overnight accommodation, preventing legitimate use by disabled and other 'out of normal hours' users. The card access system would not completely prevent the 'street community' accessing night time toilets, but would allow us to identify, and switch off, if required, those users who abuse it as a toilets and prevent legitimate use by others.

It is recognised that visitors to Lincoln may carry a Radar key and expect access. This would clearly not be possible, but as the system is electronically controlled, then it is possible that anyone could be given access at any time,



by calling an emergency number. The person receiving the call, can authorise access immediately. It has not yet been determined who would be given access to the system, but the council has several options in terms of Lincare,/CCTV/or the emergency ‘standby’ services.

However, it is important to know that no changes to access would be instigated until further consultation has taken place with disabled access groups, and a clear and acceptable way forwards has been developed.

Members should note that Radar have been contacted to ask if they plan to do anything about the known abuse of the system, or to move to a controlled access system, and they have not responded positively, leaving little option but to find a better system. Subject to further work, this offers potential as a service that could be offered to other councils to replace Radar on a much wider basis.

Therefore, at this time this report simply signposts to further work to follow on this particular aspect of the review. This will then be subject to a further report with its own Equality Impact Assessment as required.

Signage is an item that has become evident from all consultation work. There is an apparent lack of knowledge as to where Lincoln’s toilets can be found, with users currently accessing the service based on previous habits/routines. It is important that the signage to and at the toilets be completely reviewed so as to give better and more consistent guidance, with clearer information. An outline of the work required is attached as appendix E.

### **Financial impact**

The MTFs target is for a saving of £82k pa plus annual inflation. The proposal detailed below slightly exceeds the target figure.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
TOFS Savings Target required	<u>(82,000)</u>	<u>(83,640)</u>	<u>(85,310)</u>	<u>(87,020)</u>	<u>(88,760)</u>
TOFS savings target identified	<u>(82,220)</u>	<u>(86,880)</u>	<u>(88,540)</u>	<u>(90,230)</u>	<u>(94,480)</u>

<b>Savings Target Overachieved</b>	<b>(220)</b>	<b>(3,240)</b>	<b>(3,230)</b>	<b>(3,210)</b>	<b>(5,720)</b>
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Any overachievement of the target will be retained within the service initially in order to fund any potential loss of income from the service changes.

The initial outlay for the purchase of the card machines will be funded from the overachievement of the ToFS target in year 1 and is included in the above table.

As part of the proposal there will potentially be redundancy costs and pension strain costs, these will be funded from the Invest to Save Reserve. At the maximum potential cost the savings delivered will achieve a payback on the upfront costs of less than 2 years.

**Further information is redacted and subject of a part B item because it contains specific sensitive information relating to staff salaries and services.**

#### **Staff impact.**

The posts directly affected are the 8.5 fte posts dedicated to this service on the corporate structure (this includes the Public Conveniences Supervisor but this post is not considered for cut as supervision of the service will still be required, and that post is already mobile with the requirement for a driving licence considered to be essential).

As public conveniences are a relatively small part of the overall Community Services functions, once the changes have been settled, the impact is low in the management structure beyond supervisor.

**Redacted section- subject of a part B item because it contains specific sensitive information relating to staff salaries and services.**

### **M. Analysis of Risk and Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal is predicated on the need to make savings of £82k pa. The reduction is only achievable by reducing staff and staff presence at sites, and

as such this means, by necessity, less monitoring and control of sites. The effect of this is that there is a heightened risk of abuse, damage, and vandalism at sites which, if it proved to be the case, could mean not just increased periods of closure, but also increased costs of repairs. It is not possible to forecast what the extra costs would/could be, but if there is no more funding for repairs, and the repairs have to stay inside budget, then the only outcome from either scenario would be increased periods of closure.

However, long periods of closure are not forecast, and the impacts of availability will therefore be kept under review. It is not envisaged that any increase in damage would outweigh the savings made from implementing the report recommendations.

Recognising the current low public satisfaction scores, it is not expected that these will improve. Reduced numbers of facilities and fewer staff available are unlikely to improve satisfaction, plus, should the remaining facilities have to close for longer periods due to damage, then this could impact adversely as an unintended consequence.

A formal detailed EIA and consultation have been undertaken and are included separately.

## **N. Implementation Plan**

### **Outline Timetable for implementation of staffing changes.**

- o Draft outline Impact assessment- Oct 2020
- o Staff formal consultation starts - letter and meeting with those directly affected with their trade unions –Nov 2020
- o Review of Impact assessment following responses - Nov/Dec 2020
- o JCC considers Impact Assessment/Proposal – Feb 16th 2021
- o Policy Scrutiny Committee considers Impact Assessment

15<sup>th</sup> June 2021

- o Executive considers Impact Assessment – 21st June 2021
- o Call in period.
- o Implementation starts – TBA

## **O. Key Decisions Required**

The key decisions required are:

- Preferred option to be identified regarding future staffing and provision of facilities, including reductions and any closures.
- Support for further work on an improved controlled access systems to be used to protect facilities (subject to an emergency access system being available)
- Investment in contactless payments (in addition to taking cash)
- Charging external event organisers / seeking imposed cost recovery (with discretion subject to Director agreement in consultation with Portfolio Holder )
- Support for new 'way finding' signage as identified in the review of signage.

## **P. List of Appendices**

Appendix A. Finance model

**Redacted section.**

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