



## **City of Lincoln Public Toilet Consultation January 2021**

### **Results Summary**

INFORMATION THAT WAS PROVIDED WITH QUESTIONS AS CONTEXT:

The City Council is reviewing its public toilet provision. In the face of a challenging budget position it is necessary to cut the overall cost of the service, and we wish to do this in a manner that mitigates impacts on users, and where possible enhances some elements of the services.

Residents in the city were consulted on the following key changes under consideration:

- Permanent toilet attendants will be removed (except the Bus Station, which will have staff at busy times).
- Retention of public toilets at Bus Station, Castle Square, Tentercroft Street, Boultham Park, Hartsholme County Park, and cemeteries.
- Temporary closure of Sincil Street toilets until the renovation of the market, at which time a new set of toilets will be introduced.
- Permanent closure of the urinals at The Lawn (Union Road) and at Newport Arch.
- South Park, Lucy Tower and Westgate toilets will be open for events only.
- Access to be changed to take card payments as well as cash.
- Disabled access to be by a new scheme city wide, as trialled at the bus station (this is via an electronic card registered to a specific user- this is so that damage/abuse of facilities can be tracked and those damaging facilities denied access in the future). There would be a small administrative charge for the card and set up. Please note that visitors without a card will still be given a method of entry and we will not exclude anyone from using these facilities.

The charts below show an overview of the responses received. A total of **816** responses were received. Also included is a demographic breakdown of responses by age, gender, and disability (shown in figures 1, 2 and 3).

#### **Age**

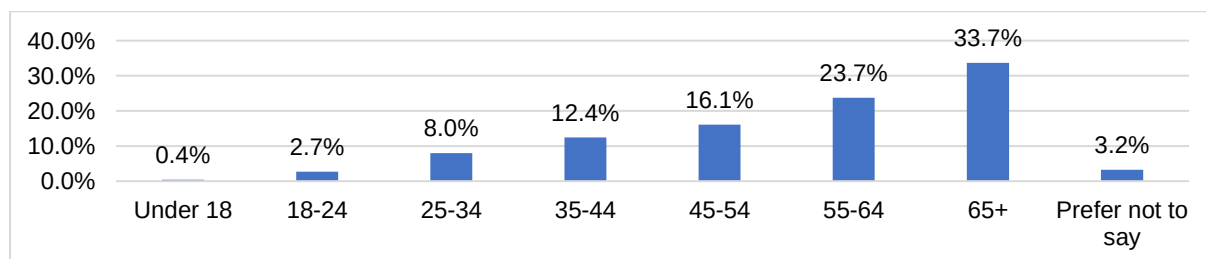


Figure 1

## Gender

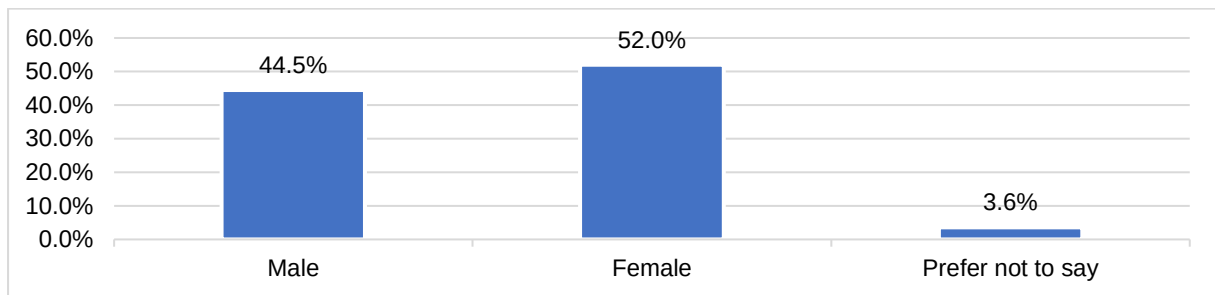


Figure 2 (96.86)

## Disability

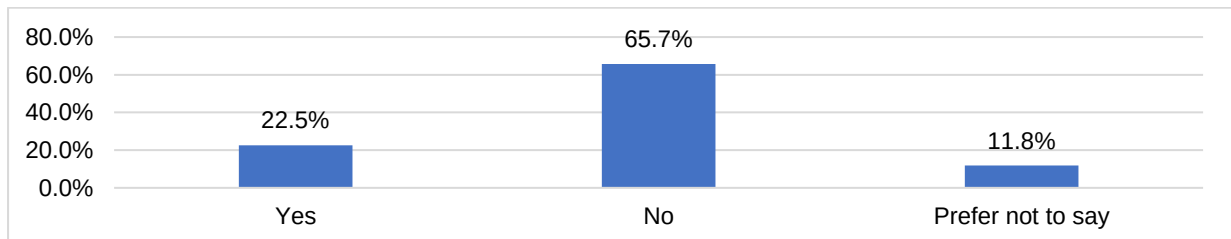


Figure 3

**If the Council were to reduce the number of public toilet sites in the city as proposed in the survey introduction would this affect you personally to the extent that you would not be able to make use of a suitable alternative ?**

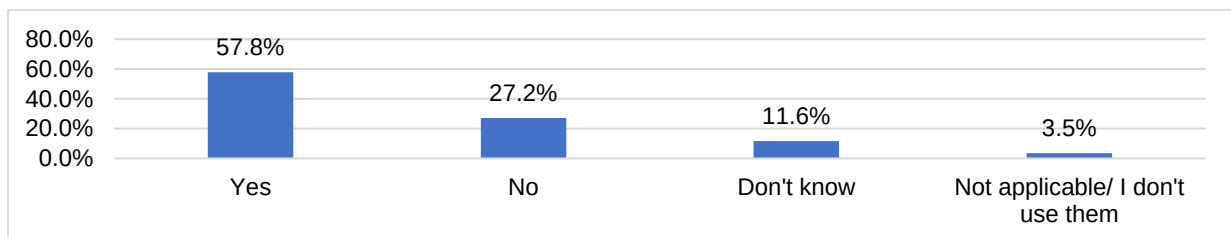


Figure 4

**If yes, please would you be able to tell us why you wouldn't be able to make use of a suitable alternative.**

The following question was a comments based question, whereby respondents were asked why they wouldn't be able to make use of a suitable alternative. Out of those that responded (816) 433 comments were received . Figure 5 shows an overview of the most commonly mentioned topics.

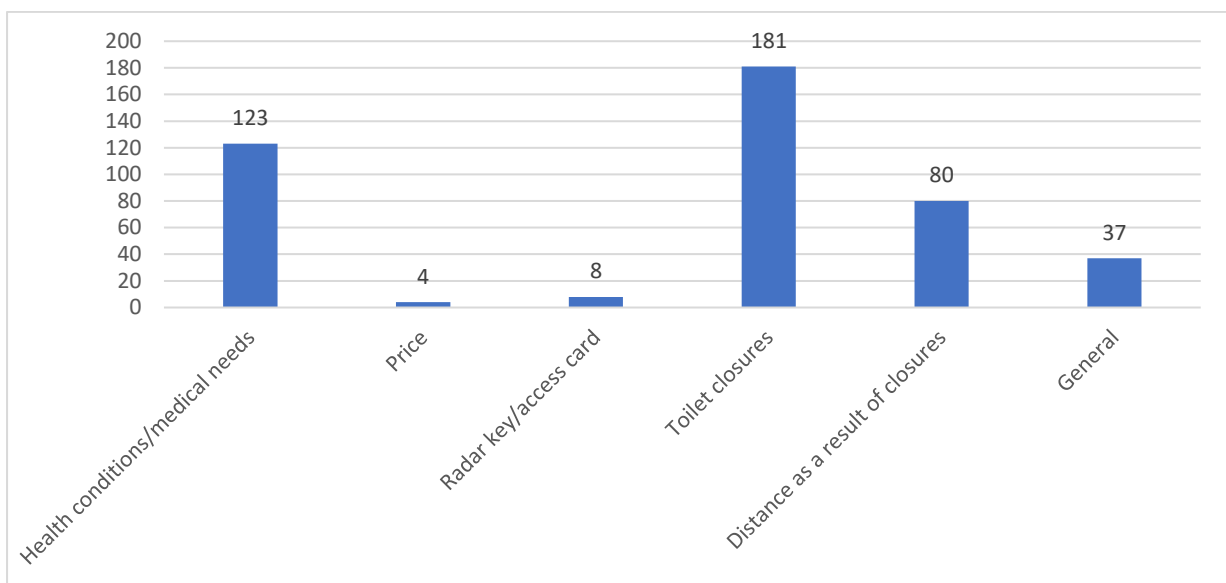


Figure 5

This feedback is not very conclusive unfortunately, but shows generally annoyance at the closures it could be suggested. Some assumptions can be made however if health issues and distance are considered together. This, in conjunction with the age profile of the respondents does tend to indicate that public toilets are used by a higher age profile generally, and as a consequence of age, this comes with some health conditions. These factors make distance an issue for users, so locations of facilities, and being able to find a toilets location (and alternatives at times of closure) are important. If this is the case, then it also highlights the need for the council to take steps to make access easier (contactless payments) and to protect facilities better so they are available when needed (the card access system preventing damage/abuse).

In terms of distance to an alternate public toilet location, Appendix D highlights how near alternate locations are within the city centre and uphill area. These are considered acceptable distances to walk (or in all such locations there is a public pay and display car park adjacent should people wish to drive to them). However, in response to the feedback, the business case does now further reflect on the proposals for the public toilets in Westgate 2 car park, acknowledging the fact some people may have travelled some distance and, due to medical conditions, upon arrival need swift access to a toilet.

In locations where closure/mothballing remains the proposals, clear signage will be displayed identifying the close proximity of alternate public toilets in the area.

**If the Council were to remove permanent attendants at public conveniences and use mobile attendants instead would this deter you from using the toilets?**

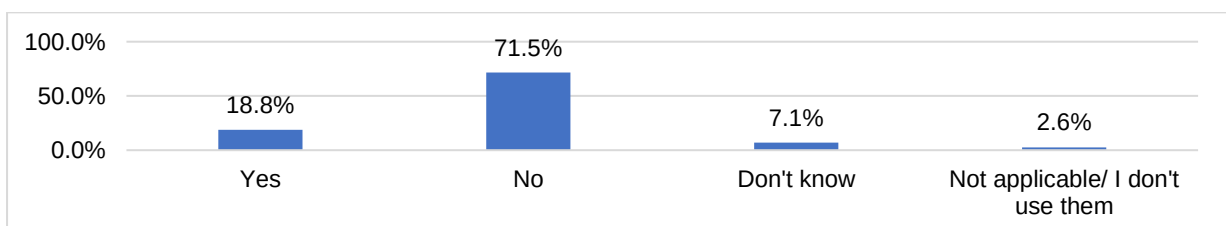


Figure 6

It is a reassuringly high figure, especially given the age profile of respondents and the annoyance expressed in the previous question. However, it is noted that almost 1 in 5 has shown a concern, so

this will need to be considered in signage and general access/welcoming/information of service users.

**We currently charge 20p for the use of our public toilets in the city. If we were to consider increasing charges to mitigate some of the impact on services would you be prepared to pay more to use the toilet? If so, how much more?**

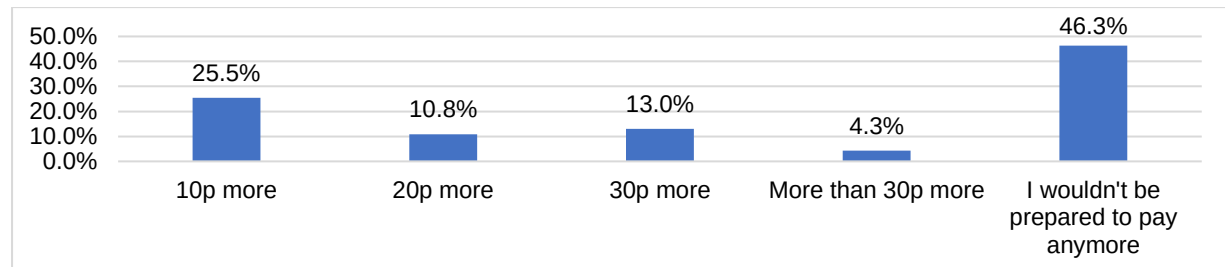


Figure 7

Any question asking if customers want to pay more will inevitably receive one response from the majority. Against this background it is refreshing to see that more than half the respondents said that they would be willing to pay something more to protect these services. This, it is felt, reflects the importance service users attach to these services. Whilst a modest increase would not be sufficient to impact the budget requirements significantly, it is helpful to know that this is an option for other issues, such as investment, and how customers would be likely to receive a request.

**How would you prefer to pay for access to public toilets? (Select all that apply)**

For the following question respondents were asked to select all that apply in relation to how they would prefer to pay for access to public toilets. The percentages in figure 7 are based on the total number of responses received for this question.

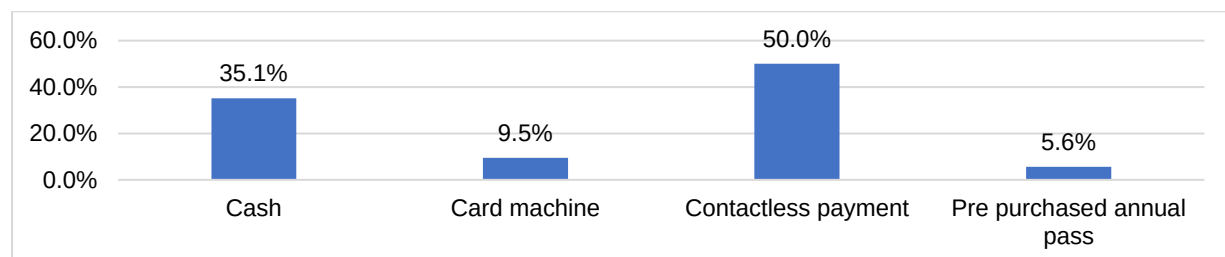


Figure 8

Whilst the traditional cash payment remains popular, it is a surprise perhaps to see contactless surpass even that. This is believed to be a reflection of covid impacting how people pay for things, and the ease of not having to find actual cash change to pay at the turnstile, so it also offers easier opportunity for cost changes, where charges won't impact customers by way of them needing to find and carry suitable change.

**Do you use the publicly accessible night toilet? (Available for use after the main toilets have closed. The publicly accessible night toilets are located at Westgate, Lucy Tower, Tentercroft Street and Castle Square.)**

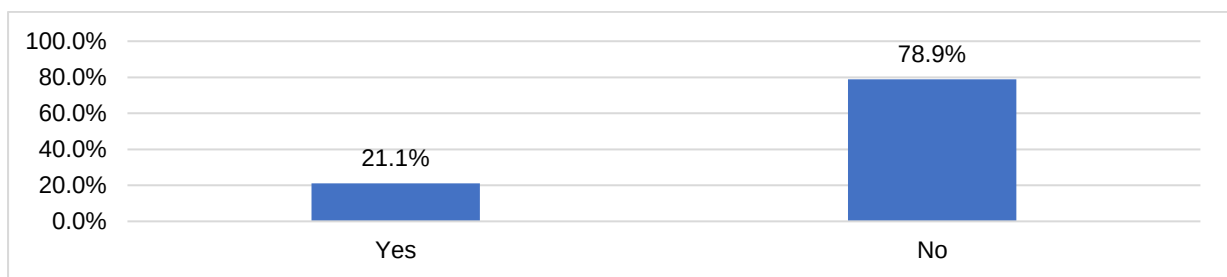


Figure 9

The 'Yes' figure is surprisingly high given daytime footfall figures, and the demographic of the respondents. It emphasises the need to factor in detailed suitable evening access arrangements for future plans.

**Are you registered or consider yourself as disabled, or need to use accessible toilets?**

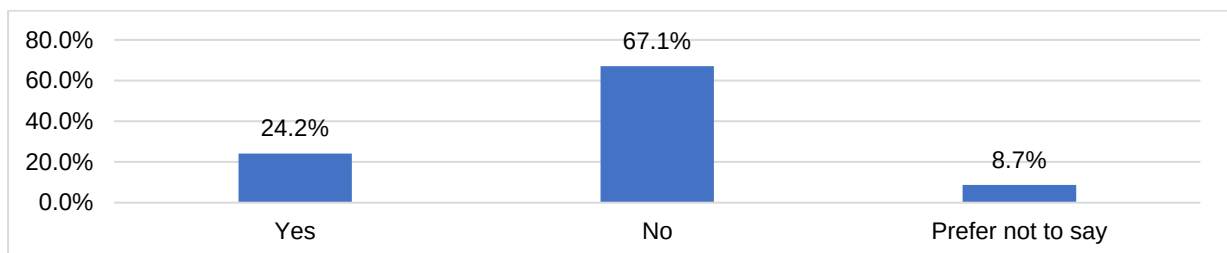


Figure 10

This is a bit perplexing as a response, given that a similar number of people to those reporting here as having no disability, felt they were not able to consider use of an alternative facility in the city if their usual toilet was closed; with health issues being cited as the key issue. It perhaps confirms the suggestion that refusal in Fig 4 was more based on the perception/principle of closure.

**Do you use the city council's current public disabled toilet facilities? If yes, please select which facilities you use below. (Select all that apply)**

For the following question respondents were asked to select all that apply in relation to which facilities they use within the city. The percentages in the figure 11 are based on the total number of responses received for this question.

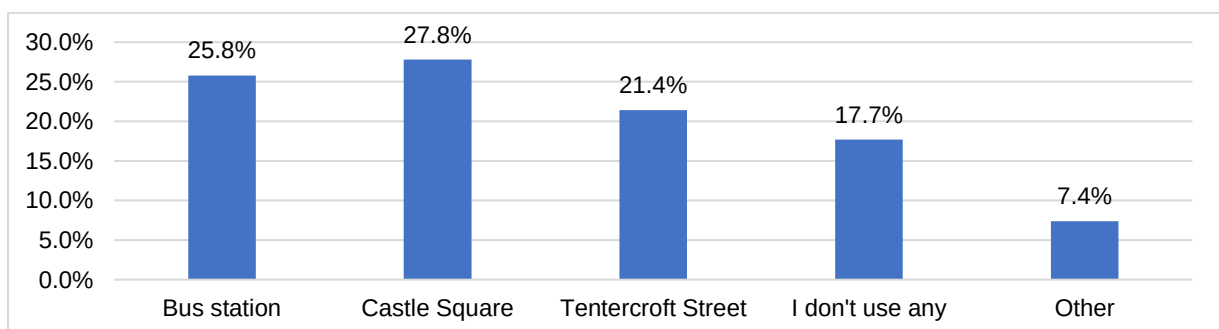


Figure 11

This response is helpful in demonstrating that the key service locations protected from change are those most frequently used by disabled users.

### **Do you have a Radar key?**

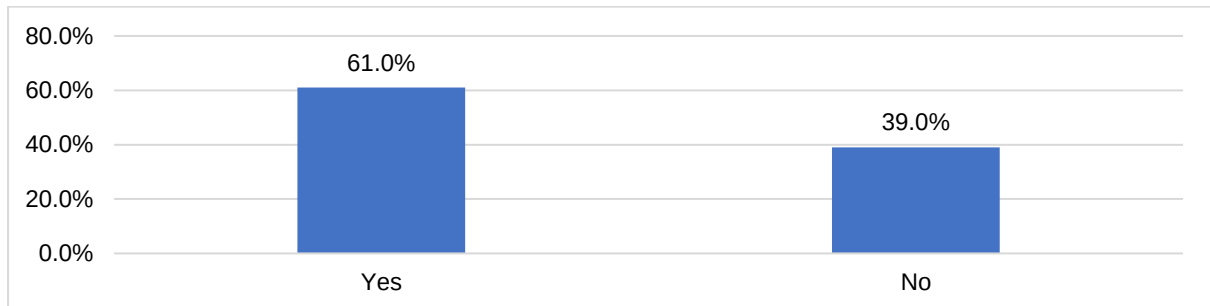


Figure 12

It is important to note that this response is not just from disabled users, suggesting, as has been believed, that a significant number of the general public have acquired Radar keys.

### **Would you foresee a problem if the council stopped using a radar key system and replaced it with a modern electronic access system?**

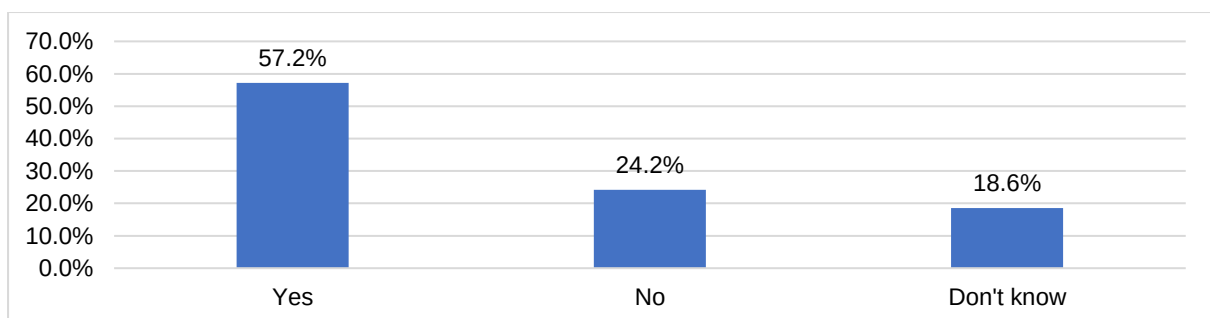


Figure 13

It is important to read Fig 13 and 14 together. This suggests that the problem people encounter are in using Radar keys/access cards.. and could be a kick-back against the perceptions of this review, and the amount of time public toilets are taken out of use due to damage/abuse. Both points suggest that an improved card access system that better protects facilities would be an improvement.

### **If you would like to make the council aware of any specific issue relating to disabled toilet facilities in the city, please do so below identifying which question number you are referring to please.**

The following question was a comments based question, whereby respondents were asked if they would like to make the council aware of any specific issue relating to disabled toilet facilities in the city. Out of those that responded 68 comments were received overall. Figure

14 shows an overview of the most commonly mentioned topics. A detailed breakdown of the comments can be found on pages 24-28.

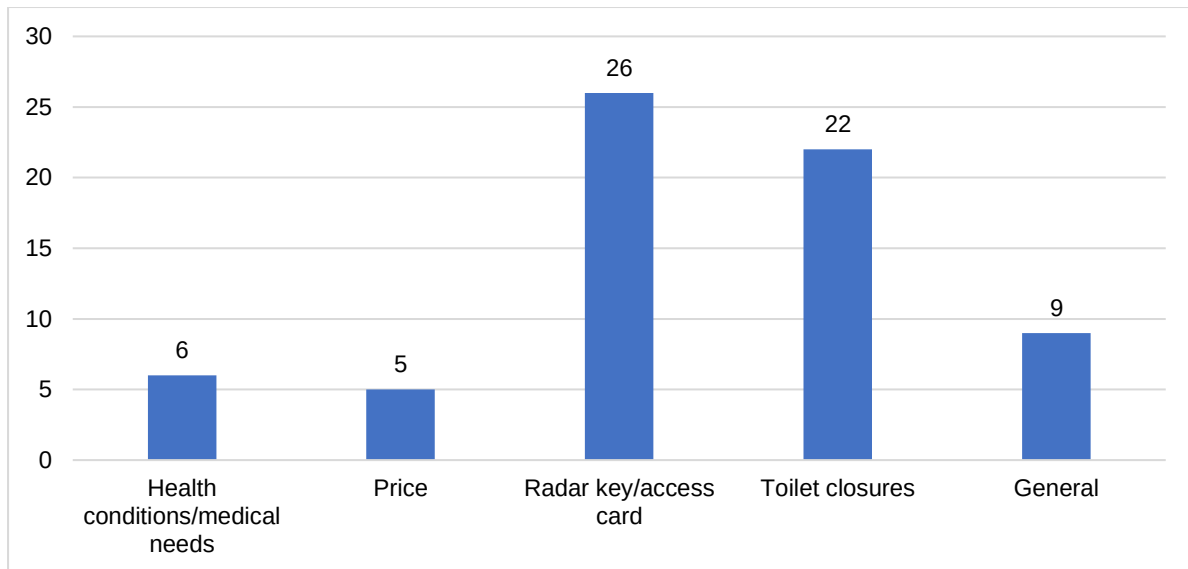


Figure 14