WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Roads and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Special Council: 28 March 2007

Subject: Balloch Toilets

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the existing toilet facilities in the Balloch area and advise them of the costs associated with re-opening the Balloch Toilets.

2. Background

2.1 The 2004/05 General Services Revenue Budget process agreed to the closure of the Balloch Toilets. This decision was based on the need to significantly refurbish the existing building to bring it up to a modern standard and to deliver budget savings. As part of the decision making process, consideration was given to other toilet provision within the Balloch area that was available for public use.

2.2 It was agreed that the existing toilets be replaced by an Automatic Public Convenience (APC) which would be modern and meet the requirements of disabled users.

2.3 Currently toilets are available or are being developed at Lomond Shores, APC at the Information Centre, Balloch Station, Balloch Park boat house and Balloch Castle. Public facilities are likely to be available in the new National Park Headquarters that are currently being constructed. There are also a number of commercial premises that have toilets available for customer use.

2.4 Representation has been made to Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services by Elected Members to consider making available to the Balloch Commercial Association and/or to the Balloch Community Council the closed toilets to be operated by either group should they deem the toilets to be a key element to improve business or local community facilities. This was on a no charge basis.

2.5 The offer to provide the toilets on a no charge basis to both the above groups was not taken up at the time however, this option is still available to interested parties.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The existing fabric of the building is in a poor condition and was one of the major factors in recommending closure of the toilets.

3.2 The alternative toilet provision of an APC is leased for 15 years and would require to be retained or termination costs would be incurred.

3.3 The alternative toilet facilities previously listed within Balloch offer a range of locations for the public to use.

3.4 Power and water supply to this location has been disconnected.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 Staff previously employed within the public convenience service have left the Authority on a redeployment, voluntary redundancy or retirement basis.

4.2 Staff would be required to be appointed to operate this facility should it re-open.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The costs associated with re-opening the Balloch toilet are as noted.

Property Costs including rates, water, electricity	£22,400
Supplies & Services including cleaning materials	£ 3,200
Employee Costs covering 7 days per week split shift working	£44,000
Basic refurbishment costs associated with re-opening facility to achieve structural integrity and utility reconnection costs	£11,000
	£80,600

5.2 There is no budgetary provision made for the £80,600 estimated cost in the General Services revenue budget agreed on 8 February 2007.

5.3 The 2007/08 budget approved by Council applied the maximum level of reserves identified as being available by the Head of Finance. As these projections remain unchanged and no further balances are available to fund this expenditure additional efficiency savings would require to be identified to fund this proposal should re-opening be agreed. Members would be advised to select a saving from the remaining uncommitted options list prepared by the CMT during the budget exercise and distributed to Members on the 18 January 2007.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 A formal risk assessment of the building would require to be undertaken should Members agree to re-open this facility.

6.2 The Council has not made budgetary provision for this service and could overspend agreed budgets unless additional savings were identified.

7. Conclusions

7.1 As part of the budget process for 2004/05 it was agreed to close the existing Balloch Toilets and replace them with an APC due to their condition and to deliver budget savings.

7.2 The alternative facility has been provided and the condition of the building has further deteriorated since the original decision in February 2004.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That Members agree that the Balloch Toilets remain closed due to their existing condition and lack of revenue budget for 2007/08.

Ronald M. Dinnie
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(Land & Environmental Services)
Date: 20 March 2007

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: N/A