



Subject:	Organisational Recovery, Update on City Centre Public Toilet opening
Date:	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Reporting Officer:	Alastair Reid
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland – Director City & Neighbourhood Services

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To provide an overview and status of the public conveniences in the City Centre that are provided by the Council and their current status in the midst of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are requested to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Note the report.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<b>Key Issues</b> The provision of public toilets is a vital public service helping to improve the quality of life for Belfast citizens and visitors to the city. The provision of clean and accessible public toilets supports business by boosting customer footfall and allows everyone to have the confidence

	<p>to move around the city in the knowledge that toilet facilities are easily available or accessible. This is extremely important for some user groups such as tourists, families with young children, the elderly or those with long term medical conditions.</p>
3.2	<p>The Council provides a network of standard and automatic public conveniences (APCs) across the city. In line with many other Council services these facilities closed in late March, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This action was taken to minimise the potential for transmission of the virus and in response to the Public health challenges.</p>
3.3	<p>As part of the Council's recovery plan for services there has been a phased re-opening of these facilities in order to ensure a safe environment for staff and users. Five APCs opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. These are located at; Lombard Street, Custom House Square, Dublin Road, Gasworks and Waterworks.</p>
3.4	<p>On 17<sup>th</sup> August, two standard public toilets in the city centre re-opened at Church Lane and Winetavern Street. On 1<sup>st</sup> September the last of the city centre public toilets opened at Arthur Lane. See <b>Appendix 1</b> for opening hours.</p>
3.5	<p>The final phase of service recovery involves those facilities at; Ormeau Embankment, Drumglass Park and Connswater. These are scheduled to re-open on 14<sup>th</sup> September. By this date all public toilets previously in service before the pandemic will be operational, subject to public health announcements in the interim.</p>
3.6	<p>All facilities have signage and operating practices in place aimed at reducing the impact of Covid-19 transmission. This includes the temporary deployment of additional security staff to reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour at these facilities which was an ongoing issue pre-pandemic. For further information on public toilets, including opening hours, please refer to the Council's web site; <a href="https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/publictoilets">https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/publictoilets</a></p>
3.7	<p>The focus to date for the City &amp; Neighbourhood Services Department has been on service recovery in the midst of a pandemic. Despite having finite resources, additional cleaning measures and frequencies at Standard Public Conveniences have been introduced and supported through the Councils facilities management teams. This means that all available cleaning resource is being fully deployed to service slightly restricted opening hours. In addition there are ongoing cost considerations in relation to the security and supervision of these sites should current opening hours be extended. Any proposed increase in service</p>

	<p>levels at Standard Public Conveniences would require additional resource and therefore would need to be considered in line with the organisational assessment process and the context of the overall city centre recovery.</p>
3.8	<p>City and Neighbourhood Services are currently looking at options to extend the opening hours of the APCs. It is the intention to extend the opening hours of these facilities to 11pm each night from 7<sup>th</sup> September. This will be kept under review should these facilities suffer from major abuse during the 'out of hours' periods.</p>
3.9	<p><b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications associated with presenting this report.</p>
3.10	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs issues associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents attached</b>
	<b>Appendix 1 – Current Opening Hours in City Centre</b>