

Bingley Town Council

A Changing Places facility for Bingley

– report to meeting of full council 24th November 2020

A group of councillors (Cllrs Drucquer, Owen, Simpson and Williams) and two residents have been meeting to consider various options for the provision of a Changing Places facility in central Bingley. A Changing Places facility is a toilet facility for people with disabilities or older people who cannot access a standard accessible toilet and includes more space and specialist equipment such as a changing bench and a hoist. Detailed guidance relating to the provision and design of CP toilets is included in BS 8300.

Many people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well other disabilities that severely limit mobility, cannot use standard accessible toilets. People may be limited in their own mobility so need equipment to help them or may need support from one or two carers to either get on the toilet or to have their continence pad changed.

Standard accessible toilets do not provide changing benches or hoists and most are too small to accommodate more than one person. Without Changing Places toilets, the person with disabilities is put at risk, and families are forced to risk their own health and safety by changing their loved one on a toilet floor.

The Changing Places Consortium (<http://www.changing-places.org/>) campaigns for Changing Places facilities to be installed in public places across the UK: “This would enable all disabled people to go out with the same dignity as everyone else: to go to the shops, attend hospital appointments, enjoy community life, socialise and travel.”

The Consortium is co-chaired by Muscular Dystrophy UK and PAMIS (Promoting a more inclusive society). Brief information about Changing Places facilities from PAMIS is at the following link: <http://pamis.org.uk/campaigns/changing-places-toilets/>

The March 2020 national government budget included a commitment to Changing Places, making changes to Building Regulations to make compulsory the inclusion of Changing Places facilities in new public buildings, such as shopping centres, supermarkets and cinemas. A £30 million fund to match-fund installation of Changing Places in existing buildings was also announced. A further £1.27m has been announced to install 37 more changing places at service stations across England.

Options appraisal

Bingley Pool

The Town Council has been investigating the option of installing a Changing Places facility in Bingley Pool for the past two years. There are existing facilities in Keighley Pool and Ilkley Pool and Lido. However, there is uncertainty as to when/whether the pool will be transferred by Bradford Council to Friends of Bingley Pool (FOBP) and therefore whether the pool will remain open. The council requested a formal position statement from FOBP who have advised that their discussions with Bradford Council are ongoing but that due to unpredictability they recommend that other options are pursued.

Bradford Council has insisted that electrical work to the value of £23k must be done before a Changing Places facility can be installed in the pool. The Town Council obtained and presented a very much lower quotation from an independent electrician, but this was not acceptable to Bradford Council. While it would have been possible to install Changing Places equipment in the pool that could subsequently have been demounted if necessary, Bingley Town Council is not able to spend substantial funds on a project in the pool when it is not certain when the pool would be transferred to Friends of Bingley Pool.

For the purposes of this paper, the option in Bingley Pool is not included for the reasons outlined above.

The **modular** and **extension** options described below require additional land to be transferred from Bradford Council to Bingley Town Council adjacent to the hub (south elevation, facing Lidl).

Land requirement

The standard size for a Changing Places facility recommended by the Changing Places Consortium to comply with BS 8300 is 12 square metres (3m x 4m), with a ceiling height of 2.4m.

There is space for this adjoining the hub and Bradford Council have indicated that the additional land required could be accommodated through a deed of variation to the existing lease.

“I am mindful that the Council can accommodate a deed of variation, if needed, so a Changing Place can fit at the side of the toilet as illustrated on in architects model.”

They are also minded “to recommend any of the grass at the road side or rear could be included in a deed of variation.”

“As a community partner seeking improved provisions for the wider community there would not a be a charge only your own legal fees incurred. As the lease is so new it could be rather

than a variation that we just grant a new lease referring to a different plan number, rather than varying it.”

“There is a chance that Legal call the land public open space in which case we may have to advertise the disposal by way of lease and consider any objections, but I would not think this would be an issue with the support of the Town Council.”

“The process is to ask. As a community partner seeking improved provisions for the wider community there would not be a charge only your own legal fees incurred.”

A 1:500 plan has been provided. The Project Manager for the hub project, Bowman Riley, has been asked to quote for provision of plans that can be used for planning permission etc. This same Planning Permission would be used to site the modular units and PP changed under the Non-material Amendment protocols.

Estimated costs:

Legal fees: £2k

Drawing of land requirement on 1:500 plans for Planning Permission: £950 + vat

Option 1 – Modular facility

A modular Changing Places facility could be placed onto a base alongside the existing council hub and connected into the relevant services (electricity, water).

The group has considered options proposed by two companies. Both models are the standard size recommended by the Changing Places Consortium.

In both cases, the module is delivered to site and installed by the supplier. Ground works and planning permission are included in the quotation from Supplier A.

Planning permission is as above. Building control permissions and oversight would be dealt with by the supplier.

Estimated costs:

Supplier A - Supply, deliver and install module, including necessary ground works: £ 64,750

Supplier B – tbc (initial estimate £50k excluding building works)

Planning permission modification and building control approval – provided by Supplier A - £1,650

Guarantees/warranties

Tbc

Life span

Changing Places modules have a lifespan of 30 years, and so funds would be needed for a replacement after that time or alternative provision.

Option 2 – extension to hub

This option would see a permanent full-size brick-built extension constructed to the side of the hub building and connected to utilities and fitted out with the necessary Changing Places equipment. This would be built to the standard dimensions given above.

There are several companies supplying the equipment only for this purpose, e.g. Innova, Closomat, Multicare. Alternatively, a design and build contract could be issued, requiring the contractor to supply, install and connect the equipment specified. This is favoured by Councillor Williams as it removes the need for a project management company (at extra costs). The council would need to approve specifications and drawings prior to construction commencement but this is not seen as onerous

Estimated costs:

Supplier C - indicative cost £75K for the design and build

Equipment supplied separately - £15-20k

Option 3 – conversion of hub and extension

This option would see part of the building – mainly the new left-hand standard accessible toilet – being converted to accommodate a Changing Places facility and an extension being built to meet the Council's storage needs.

An architect would need to be employed to investigate the feasibility of this option, e.g. standard size/smaller size facility, height availability for hoist, and provide drawings as appropriate. This option would mean the loss of one of the standard toilets and would require consultation with residents.

Estimated costs:

Architect feasibility and design: tbc

Cost for the conversion/build: tbc

Cost of equipment supplied separately: £15-20k

Planning permission

Planning permission is required for both modular options and extensions.

Estimated costs:

Applied for by BTC - £117. Led by Councillor Williams. Information on construction fabric as the existing hub building.

Building control

Covered by the contractor/supplier in all options.

Estimated costs:

To be included.

Management and additional services required

Management of a module or an extension could be included in the remit of the facilities management sub-committee until such time as the council is fully resourced with paid staff. Please see separate risk and resource assessments for an estimate of resources needed.

Access options

a) Automated set opening hours (linked to existing hub system) with access for users via a RADAR key

b) Automated set opening hours (linked to existing hub system), with access for users via a fob collected from a local business/office or via a code obtained in advance from a management office

The group feels that the RADAR key option is the simplest. Keys can be obtained from Disability Rights UK at a cost of £4.75.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/shop/official-and-only-genuine-radar-key%20>

The council would need to ensure that its facility was fitted with a Nicholls & Clarke (N&C) Phlexicare RADAR National Key Scheme lock, which can only be opened with a RADAR key.

Estimated costs:

N&C RADAR lock - tbc

Connection into hub system - tbc

Cleaning

Cleaning of the facility could be included in the cleaning contract for the council hub and public toilets.

Estimated costs:

Cleaning: est. by current contractor at £590/month (£7.080 p/a) for a daily clean 7 days/week , consumables. Alarm responses £25k per callout.

Hygiene services

TWC, which provides hygiene services for the new standard toilets and the office has proposed the following services for a Changing Places facility.

Estimated costs:

Hygiene services:

Disposal bin – 2-weekly service, £125 p/a

Feminine hygiene bin – 4-weekly service, £60 p/a

Equipment testing and training

The Town Council will be responsible for ensuring the equipment is in good condition/right position. Some training will be required for this. Alternatively, some CP providers have a specialist company with appropriately trained staff to maintain/empty the hoist and sanitary bins (see Swansea below).

Warwickshire County Council – “the lifting equipment is tested every six months by Zurich (WCC insurers) - this is mandatory under LOLER” (Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998).

Estimated costs:

Training: tbc

LOLER testing/certification: Approx. £300 (Zurich)

Specialist company: tbc

Security

The current CCTV arrangements may need to be amended to ensure the security of users of the facility and of the building as a whole.

Estimated costs:

CCTV: tbc

Signage

Additional signage will be needed both inside and outside the facility.

Estimated costs:

Signage: tbc

Risk assessments

Paid-for risk assessments will be needed in advance of opening in respect of fire safety and Legionella. The Council will also need to complete its own risk assessments regarding the use of the facility/equipment.

Estimated costs:

Fire risk assessment: tbc (£406 for hub September 2020, including extinguishers and signs; £245 annual cost)

Legionella risk assessment: tbc (Hub: £125 biannually, September 2020)

Utilities

There will some additional costs for electricity and water use.

Estimated costs:

Electricity:

Water:

Other running costs/testing

Annual/biannual testing will be required as follows:

Estimated costs:

PAT testing: tbc (hub £35 annually)

Legionella testing: tbc (hub £125 biannually)

Fire testing: tbc (hub £65 biannually)

Hoist: (LOLER testing and certification by Zurich is approx £300 pa)

Insurance

There will need to be an addition to the council's insurance premium for the hub.

Estimated costs:

Insurance: tbc

Funding options**Reserve**

The Town Council has been carrying a sum of £12k designated for a Changing Places facility for the past two years. One option would be to create a reserve that can be added to over the next few years or as necessary until the required sum is reached. The council currently has reserves for allotments, elections, hub (unforeseen circumstances), CIL and general contingency. The contingency represents the financial reserves that the council is required by statute to maintain and the current figure is at the bottom of the range specified in the council's policy (3 months' expenditure).

The council may want to consider use of CIL monies.

Loan

The Town Council could apply for a loan for the required amount from the Public Works Loans Board. This would require an application for borrowing approval to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (with the endorsement of the Yorkshire Local Councils Association (YLCA)). This involves the following:

- Completed application form
- Submission of the minute of the full council meeting where it was resolved to seek approval for borrowing
- Budgets showing the provision made to meet the loan costs in the current year and next year (if available)

- A full report or business case including a breakdown of the proposed works, estimated costs, financial planning to fund the loan repayments and the steps/options the council has in place to mitigate the risk of not being able to afford the loan repayments
- Information on how the council will afford the loan repayments, breakdown of funding resources, amounts to be used from reserves, and any increase of precept to fund the borrowing
- If the precept is to be increased to cover the loan repayment, confirmation of the amount and percentage of the planned increase related to the loan only (i.e. how much increase for householders at Band D)
- Evidence of public support to increase the precept to fund the loan repayment (e.g. the result of any consultation). If the precept is not being increased to fund the loan, details of how local residents were consulted on the project and associated borrowing (e.g. newsletter/website/in the agenda of a public meeting). Evidence should include the results and the consultation materials produced

The amount to be borrowed should generally not be less than £5 multiplied by the number of local government electors for the area of the council as counted at the latest register for the electoral roll. However, the Ministry will consider applications for a lower borrowing amount where the total project cost is above the threshold and grants or other resources intended for the project expenditure will be refused or reduced if the borrowing does not go ahead.

Councils should not apply for borrowing approval until all negotiations have been completed and all other consents (eg planning permission) have been obtained. If an applicant council is successful, processing of the borrowing approval should generally take about 15 working days from the date of its receipt by MHCLG. The borrowing approval will authorise the council to take out a loan within a period of twelve months starting with the date of issue of the borrowing approval.

External funding and support

Earlier in 2020, the government launched a £30m fund to increase the provision of Changing Places facilities in existing public buildings. Details of the funding have not been finalised, but indications thus far are that the money will need to be match funded. It is not clear whether a proposal from Bingley will be eligible.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changing-places-toilets-for-severely-disabled-people-to-be-compulsory-in-new-public-buildings>

It is possible that funds may be available to support the project from grant-making trusts or similar funding schemes. This needs further investigation; a recent review of some possible targets has shown that these are on the whole currently closed to new applications except those for projects related to COVID-19. Enquiries are being made of

<https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/>, <https://communityfirstyorkshire.org.uk/>

<https://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx> (NCVO) and the Directory of Social Change.

Businesses in Bingley could be approached for a contribution to a Changing Places facility. Lidl were approached about including a Changing Places facility in their premises at the design stage but declined to respond.

There may also be members of the community willing to give their time and/or in-kind support to progress the project.

A rise in the precept

Bingley Town Council's precept has been low in comparison with other local councils since Bradford Council first set the level for the initial precept in 2016. Shipley Town Council was set up earlier in 2020 and has been allocated a much higher initial precept. A substantial rise in the precept needs to be seriously considered by the Town Council to enable it to adequately resource its existing activity and projects and respond to the aspirations of residents.

A combination of the above

Reserves are currently high as spend this year on many budget lines has been reduced due to the pandemic.

Available Town Council staff resources

The Town Council has just appointed a new part-time Administrative Officer to work alongside the existing Administrative Officer, who has recently chosen to reduce her hours. The new appointee will need to go through an induction process to enable her to undertake the duties in her job description and support the work of the council.

The council is also undergoing a staffing review with the aim of ensuring it has the human resources necessary to ensure it fulfils its statutory obligations and to match the expectations and aspirations of residents and councillors.

Staff time will need to be shared among a number of other projects and duties. In particular, the council has been working for a number of years on a Neighbourhood Plan and a major formal consultation will need to be undertaken in 2021.

This means that in the next few months, staff time available for any new project will be minimal, hence the requirement for a fully functioning and appropriately skilled project delivery group potentially supported by a paid project manager/fundraiser.

Consultation

The need for a Changing Places facility came to the council's attention when a group of residents approached the council in December 2017 during the consultation for the proposed public toilets conversion. A presentation was made to the council highlighting the

need for this facility in January 2018 and a petition in favour of a Changing Places facility was submitted in February 2018. A presentation was made to the council at a meeting at Hazelbeck School. A Changing Places facility was confirmed on the council's priority project plan following the wide-ranging consultation exercise in September 2019.

The Changing Places facility will cost up to £100,000 and will therefore be the second largest project, in terms of cost, that the Town Council has undertaken. A condition of any loan that may be taken out is that public consultation of residents/precept payers must be carried out to determine the level of support. If sufficient support is shown by residents, the request for borrowing approval can go ahead. If the council decides to fund the project by increasing the precept or building up a fund over a period of time using the precept, not taking out a loan, resident support is not compulsory. However, for a project of this cost, support shown through wide-ranging consultation is preferable to ensure the council is carrying out the wishes of residents. Even if a consultation is not carried out, widespread information about the council's plan should be made public with opportunity for people to comment.

Proposal

The council is asked to agree the following:

a) Pillar 1: To create a reserve fund of up to £100k that can be built up over the next two or three years for the purpose of either building an extension to the hub for a Changing Places facility, installing a modular Changing Places facility or converting part of the hub for Changing Places facility and building an extension for storage. This can be started by adding to the £12k allocated to Changing Places in the current budget. A suggested addition is £18k. The fund, and therefore the whole project, would be initiated once the project delivery group, defined below*, is formed.

b) Pillar 2: Set up a project delivery group (3 councillors + 3 non-councillors), with membership as specified below, to further develop a specification and planning for an extension/modular facility, research funding options and apply for external funding as necessary. The group will also work with the council to establish whether a public consultation is required. When a model is agreed and sufficient support demonstrated, the group will produce a business plan for the chosen option, oversee the building/installation of the Changing Places facility and develop a plan and budget for the Town Council for ongoing maintenance.

The project group must include three councillors and three residents/other stakeholders/experts (e.g. access consultant), ideally with lived experience of the requirements of users of a Changing Places facility. Non-councillors would be required to meet the criteria for formal membership of a Bingley Town Council working group or sub-committee.

Depending on the skillsets of the members of the project group, a paid project manager may also be required. A representative/representatives from organisations with specialist knowledge could also form part of the project delivery group to ensure the council benefits from their expertise and insight.

The Changing Places facility project is viable only if both of the above “pillars” – funds and an effective project group – are in place throughout the duration of the project.

Appendix

Feedback from Changing Places customers

A number of organisations have been contacted for feedback on reception and use of a modular facility.

a) Gillian Scotford at Access for All UK

Access for All is closely linked to Supplier A who were the first to develop the modular options and also sponsor CP training that Access for All UK offers across the country. Gillian speaks very highly of them and Ben Hickey in particular. As regards a choice between Supplier A and Supplier B, she says (as a user herself) that they are both good and doing a good job, and there is not much to choose between them.

b) Craig Williams, Warwickshire County Council – Supplier A

Craig said they were happy with their module from Supplier A and were planning to put in another. They were a reasonable price, easy to clean and their current module had ‘remained spotless’. Downsides were heaters that didn’t work very well and LED lights that kept blowing. [That initial module has been in place for a while and so those comments presumably reflect earlier specifications.] They operate using a RADAR key with another lock to lock it at night. Users are very happy with it, and they believe it draws people in to the park.

Craig also said that their original preference had been for a brick-built mode due to the limited life span of the modular option. He said for the last fifteen years the module had been in a ‘a horrible state’ [It’s assumed he’s referring to the outside rather than the inside, given earlier comments about cleaning]. They had chosen to have another modular facility purely for budgetary reasons.

Additional information by email: Cleaning is done inhouse. The lifting equipment is tested every six months by Zurich (WCC insurers) - this is mandatory under LOLA. The sanitary bins are supplied/maintained/emptied by contractors.

c) Geraldine Williams, Swansea Council – Supplier A

[By email]

Swansea Council was successful in accessing Welsh Government funding to improve accessibility at one of our key Blue Flag beaches and we subsequently appointed Supplier A to install a modular Changing Places facility in the car park across the beach, which was officially opened in September 2019.

Caswell Bay is extremely popular particularly during the summer time and the new facility has been well-received by residents and visitors alike.

In terms of maintenance, the Council's Cleansing crew opens and shuts the facility every day and cleans it daily. The hoist and sanitary bins are maintained/emptied by specialised companies via separate contracts.

Access to the facility is via a combination code, which must be requested in advance via the Council's mobility hire shop or Surfability UK.

d) *Awaiting info on customer contacts from Supplier B*

e) Muscular Dystrophy UK (co-chair of the Changing Places Consortium) was contacted for advice on security and suppliers.

"Regarding locks, we usually recommend the Radar Key Scheme is suffice , sometimes some outdoor public venues add some extra security measures if the facility is open 24/7 and unattended."

The organisation describes Supplier A as "a very reputable installation company that we work with".
