

Update and proposals for Bingley Toilets, Magistrates Court and the request for a Changing Places facility.

Introduction

Bingley public toilets in Jubilee Gardens were shut on 31st March 2018 by Bradford Council and are currently mothballed. However, Bradford Council has made clear they will not be mothballed indefinitely, due to the costs involved. The Town Council has to make decisions based on the information it has at present. This paper attempts to summarise the situation at present. Other documents to help formulate a response to the request for a reasonable adjustment to Bingley Town Council's development plans for the toilets/office and a summary of proposals are provided.

Summary

Bingley Town Council has been trying to find a way to retain public toilet provision in the town, an undertaking it resolved last year.

The proposal for CAT to enable conversion of the site into offices for the Town Council along with two semi-automatic toilets suitable for use by able-bodied and some people with disabilities was consulted on, supported by those who took part (and the majority want public toilet facilities), approved by the Town Council and a corresponding precept set in January. Previous information provided to the Town Council explains in detail the results of the consultation and a draft CAT/business case has been prepared.

From the consultation, a campaign also began for a Changing Places facility, to enable toileting of those with complex disabilities. This led to requests under the Freedom of Information Act to Bradford Council for correspondence with Bingley Town Council relating to the CAT. Initially, Bingley Town Council was informed it would have to supply all correspondence. Bradford then advised its request was incorrect. Changing Places campaigners also made a formal request for a reasonable adjustment to the toilet site development to include a CP facility. This required that the Town Council sought legal advice, initially accessing a lawyer through its membership of YLCA. The Changing Places campaigners also presented the Town Council with a petition signed by around 800 people requesting that the plans should include a Changing Places facility to include all Bingley residents. Receipt of the petition has been acknowledged. Some information about the Town Council's plans on the petition summary was incorrect, namely that the council would be taking over "sole ownership of Bingley Public Toilets from March 2018". The Town Council also discovered in the course of its research to respond to the campaign for a Changing Places facility that it is possible to adapt a disabled changing room at Bingley Swimming Pool into a CP facility.

In February, businessman Donald Jagger, announced at the Town Council meeting that he is buying the former Police Station and Magistrates Court and wished to give the latter to the Town Council on a peppercorn lease for it to be used as a community facility. The Town Council of course was compelled and interested to pursue this generous offer.

This complex set of circumstances was given to the Town Centre and Regeneration Committee to discuss. A summary of the thoughts leading to its recommendations are:

- to pause, not stop, the agreed plan to create office and toilets at the Jubilee Gardens site
- this would therefore give the council the opportunity to decide on the response to the request for a reasonable adjustment, bottom out the Magistrates Court offer and decide on whether or not to install CP in the swimming pool.
- investigating re-opening the toilets through sub-contracting, now that TUPE is unlikely to apply, is a measure that would ensure Bingley has public toilets whilst the Magistrates Court offer is being explored.

Other proposals and a paper outlining the issues the council should consider in its response to a request for a reasonable adjustment are provided.

