

Consideration by Newport Town Council of the future provision of public toilet facilities 27th March 2023.

To whom it may concern: -

- County Cllr. Huw Murphy
- David Simpson, leader of Pembrokeshire County council
- Katie Daly, Strategic Business Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council
- Policy and partnership team, Pembrokeshire County Council
- Will Bramble, Chief Executive, Pembrokeshire County Council

Newport Town Council met on the 27th of March 2023 and discussed various communications/emails regarding the provision of Public Toilets in the Newport locality.

Newport Town Council (NTC) acknowledges the published Draft Pembrokeshire Local Toilet Strategy 2.

Three toilets listed within the strategy that are of most concern to NTC, these being:

- Traeth Mawr / Newport Beach,
- Newport Long Street,
- Newport Parrog.

1. Traeth Mawr / Newport Beach

(Categorised as Group 2 by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) because they currently do not have a funding stream, scheduled for closure 5th November 2023.)

We acknowledge these facilities are in Nevern. As a town council, we are very interested in the future of the facilities at Traeth Mawr / Newport Beach. We wish to be kept informed of all developments/plans for these facilities. We strongly recommend that these facilities are kept open.

2. Newport Long Street.

(Categorised as Group 1 by (PCC) because they are fully funded by income and therefore not scheduled for closure.

We understand as this is adjacent to a fee-paying car park, the closure of this facility is not under consideration. Is PCC considering dispensing of the car park and its facilities? Should that be the case, would PCC wish to dispose of the car park and facilities by a community asset transfer?

As Newport Long Street Car Park is subsidising the Long Street toilets NTC would like to investigate if the Long Street Car Park income can be used to fund the Parrog toilets.

Could we be provided with relevant income and costs?

3. Newport Parrog

(Categorised as Group 2 by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) because they currently do not have a funding stream, scheduled for closure 5th November 2023.)

Newport Town Council believes that PCC should supply public toilets and that this should apply to local authorities across Wales

3.1 Categorisation

NTC strongly recommend that Newport Parrog toilets be recategorised as Group 1 due to considerations we have highlighted.

3.2 Shared Costs

NTC would like to know if there is an option for a “shared cost” model between PCC and NTC or another third party? Is this being considered by PCC?

3.3 EoI

NTC wishes to have time to develop the ideas in this letter and therefore ask that the toilets remain open until at least 31st March 2024.

3.4 Second Home Council Tax

NTC does not believe that funding toilets from the second home council tax should be considered as this was NOT the original stated purpose of this Tax.

If this funding system were to be introduced, is it proposed to come from the Newport quota or the Strategic quota?

3.5 Charging for Toilets

Can PCC provide NTC with current charging rates for using public toilets.?

3.6 Community Asset Transfer

If a CAT is to be considered we would need to investigate the following:-

- How much would a CAT cost NTC.
- What is the footprint of the Parrog toilet land under consideration.
- WE understand that the Barony of Cemaes is reviewing its ownership of it's land holdings on Parrog. This may have some bearing on the future of charging for the car park. The Car Park is currently leased to Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. (PCNPA)
- We understand that there is a covenant preventing charging on the Parrog car park. This needs to be explored.

3.7 NTC to fund from the Precept

This is a possibility that NTC would need to consider but could not be instigated until the next financial year.

3.8 Other Interested Parties

NTC will publicise the current discussions to enable others to express points of view and ideas.

3.9 Welsh Government - Visitor Levy

Point 5 of the email/letter from Katie Daly (PCC Strategic Business Manager) dated 13/03/23 states.

“Agree that any toilet which is declared surplus to requirements and closes but is serving, predominantly, the visitor economy will be temporarily retained until the outcome of any future decision on Welsh Government’s proposal for introducing a Visitor Levy is known”.

NTC agrees with this point and urges PCC to consider keeping Parrog toilets open to at least March 31st 2025 when a decision from Welsh Government should be available.

There are of course concerns with the long term future of the toilets based on funding from a visitor levy.

In conclusion we strongly agree with Cllr Huw Murphy in his email to PCC on the 24/03/23 where he states:-

“Furthermore, and specific to point 5 in letter dated March 13th 2023 that both public toilets are “temporarily retained until the outcome of any future decision on Welsh Government’s proposal for introducing a Visitor Levy is known.” There is no doubt that both these public toilets are vitally important to the tourism economy of Newport & Dinas ward and until the outcome of any decision on a tourism levy is known both these public toilets to remain open, which should mean at least another year until at least March 31st, 2025.”

Please could you let us have a response to this email/letter to enable Newport Town Council to engage with PCC regarding this important matter.

Yours Sincerely,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read "P. Harries".

Paul Harries
Chair Newport Town Council