

Proposal: 'Use Our Loo' Initiative

As part of the proposed expansion of the *Use Our Loo* initiative, it is important to recognise that two participating organisations already have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in place with BCP Council. As these existing agreements already encompass the provision of public toilet access, it is not considered appropriate or necessary to provide additional remuneration to these organisations.

Instead, it is proposed that funding is directed towards supporting smaller, independent businesses that voluntarily make their toilet facilities available to members of the public who are not paying customers/patrons. To ensure a fair and proportionate approach, a tiered remuneration model is recommended.

Payments would be based on factors such as the number of toilet facilities available, anticipated footfall, and the likely volume of non-patron usage which could be affected by factors such as the opening hours of the business etc. This approach recognises the operational costs incurred by smaller businesses, including increased cleaning, consumables, maintenance, and staffing requirements. The potential remuneration encourages wider participation in the initiative and delivering greater public benefit in areas where accessible toilet provision is limited.

A key consideration within this proposal is the potential impact on participating businesses, particularly smaller premises with a limited number of toilet facilities. There is a recognised risk that increased public use could result in misuse, vandalism, or higher levels of wear and tear, potentially leading to temporary closures for repairs or cleaning. Such closures could have a direct impact on the business's ability to provide adequate facilities for its own customers and staff. For this reason, the proposed tiered remuneration structure seeks to reflect not only the anticipated level of public use but also the capacity of each premises and the potential operational impact of participating in the initiative.

The proposed scoring model below could identify the burden and risk to the business;

Factor	Low	Medium	High
Number of customer toilets	3+	2	1
Opening hours	<25 hrs/week	25–60 hrs/week	60+ hrs/week
Business size/capacity	Large	Medium	Small
Existing customer footfall	High	Medium	Low
Risk if toilet unavailable	Low	Medium	High

The idea behind this is:

- **One toilet** = biggest impact if it's blocked or damaged.

- **Long opening hours** = providing the service for longer.
- **Small premises** = less ability to absorb extra cleaning, queues, and disruption.
- **Low existing footfall** = each additional visitor is proportionally more disruptive.
- **High operational risk** = for example, if customers have no alternative toilet or staff have to manage the same facility.

Then convert the score into payment bands.

Tier A (£200/year) – Libraries public, large pubs or cafés with multiple cubicles.

Tier B (£250/year) – Cafés and community venues with two or more toilets.

Tier C (£300/year) – Small cafés, independent shops with only one customer toilet.

LOCATION	Issue to Consider	No. of Toilets	Notes	Tier
The Junction	No Payment – SLA with BCP	Multiple		-
The Hadleigh House Practice	No Payment – SLA with BCP	2		-
Broadstone Library		1	Public authority building	A
The Blackwater Stream - Weatherspoons		Multiple	Already being used	A
Tap and Grape		Multiple		A
Costa	No sticker	2	Already being used	A
Churrasco Steakhouse		2	Off of main high street	B
Patisserie Mark Bennett	No sticker	1?		B
Bonds		1?		C
Café Gardenia		1		C
The 29029	Confirmation required	1?		C
Healthy Habits	Confirmation required	1		C

Based on the above data and tier scoring system, the financial implications to the Broadstone Town Council would be as follows;

Tier A = 4 x £200 = £800

Tier B = 2 x £250 = £500

Tier C = 4 x £300 = £1,200

Total: £2,500 per annum

Payments are intended as a goodwill contribution towards the costs and operational impact of making toilet facilities available to the public. They are based on the level of disruption and risk borne by the participating premises, rather than reimbursement of actual usage.

Any business can withdraw from the initiative at any time with no obligations or ramifications. The payment would be made to each business upon the Location Lists becoming publicly visible and stickers being supplied for display to the business.

In comparison to the potential costs for reopening public toilets, this is a small voluntary goodwill gesture for local business.

A potential extra benefit that could be offered;

*****Exceptional incident payment**, if there's documented vandalism or a closure caused by scheme users, the Town Council can reimburse reasonable costs via the 'contingency' pot in the precept budget. This gives businesses confidence without overpaying everyone.***

Please find below benchmark figures from local UK authorities in relation to refurbishing and maintaining public toilet blocks;

- **Light refurbishment** (new sanitaryware, flooring, decoration, lighting): **£15,000 - £30,000 per cubicle/toilet room.**
- **Full refurbishment** (including plumbing, drainage, accessibility improvements, new finishes): **£30,000 - £70,000+ per cubicle.**
- Where councils are refurbishing entire public toilet blocks, costs often average **£150,000 - £300,000 per site**, depending on the number of cubicles and condition. For example, one council approved **£2.7 million** to refurbish 11 busy public toilet sites which worked out to be around **£245,000 per site** on average.

The Local Government Association has stated that maintaining a public toilet can cost councils **around £25,000 per toilet per year**, although this does vary significantly depending on opening hours, staffing, and vandalism etc.

A recent local example of costings that align with the UK average: Wareham TC had significant costs refurbishing an existing toilet facility at just one site, spending circa £250K. They are setting aside £14K per annum for the cleaning of that facility and this does not include water/electric utility costs.

The 'Use Our Loo Initiative' represents a simple, community focused and cost-effective solution to improving public toilet facilities. At just an annual cost of £2,500, the scheme offers excellent value for money when compared to the significant capital investment and ongoing maintenance that would be required for reinstating and operating a public toilet block.