

**NOTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING
HELD IN THE MILLPOOL CENTRE, THE MILLPOOL, WEST LOOE ON
WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 2PM**

In Attendance: Cllrs D J Bryan, R Hendy, Mrs M Powell and A Toms
Mrs A Frith (Town Clerk)
Numerous Members of the Public

Cllr Bryan started the meeting by reading out the attached statement and then opened the meeting to Members of the Public.

Mrs McCarthy clarified that the objection is the closure of the ladies facility as it is considered that the Council's proposals for a multi-use facility will not meet the demand, especially in the height of the season.

Many Members of the Public spoke and the over-riding concern is the lack of provision and the location of the proposed multi-use facility.

Most present were in agreement that a charging system should be implemented. Cllr Bryan explained that charging is a consideration but cannot be implemented until the facilities are brought up to an acceptable standard.

Cllr Toms explained that the cost of running all facilities equates to approximately 45% of our budget, the costs incurred for the Guildhall ladies alone is approximately £30,000 per year. He also pointed out that business rates have to be paid on all the facilities and, despite an appeal against this, we do not have a choice. It was also pointed out that when we improve the facilities the business rates will increase.

In response to criticism of East Looe Town Trust Mr Warne explained the remit of the Trust. Cllr Bryan again acknowledged the generosity of the Trust so far and thanked Looe Harbour Commission for their co-operation.

Various suggestions were made by Members of the Public:

- Source funding to help with costs through Crowd funding
- Rain water useage
- Charging for use
- Petition against business rates

Cllr Hendy stated that finances are the key issue, there is no easy answer and there are hard decisions to be made by the Council.

Cllr Mrs Powell suggested that a meeting is arranged with East Looe Town Trust to discuss the continued use of the facility. This was unanimously agreed.

The Meeting closed at 3.20pm.



STATEMENT REGARDING THE GUILDHALL LADIES

PUBLIC CONVENIENCE FACILITY

We would like to welcome you all to this meeting to discuss the concerns raised about the closure of the ladies public convenience facility at the Guildhall and the petition subsequently received.

In April 2013 Looe Town Council took over the running of the public conveniences in Looe from Cornwall Council with the promise of funding for conversion of the West Looe Gents and Guildhall gents facilities to unisex/multi-use facilities to reduce the running costs of around £130,000 per year.

As a Council we have to look at ways of reducing costs of running the facilities thus keeping the burden of Council tax to an acceptable level for our residents. We are working within tight budgets to create the best provision possible for both residents and the many visitors to Looe.

We are intending closing the current ladies facility at the Guildhall, which cost in the region of £30,000 a year to run, but not until the conversion of the Guildhall gents facility has been completed.

East Looe Town Trust own the ladies facility but to date have not charged this Council any rent for continued use and, indeed do not intend to for the near future. We acknowledge that East Looe Town Trust have been generous and assisted us to keep the facility open so far but this situation cannot continue indefinitely as they have to maximise their income to keep up with their responsibilities. If we were to keep the ladies facility open we would ultimately have to, quite rightly, pay a market value rent to East Looe Town Trust which would increase the running costs of that facility.

The proposed conversion of the Guildhall gents will provide a minimum of three ladies cubicles, two gents cubicles, urinals and a disabled facility. We realise that this provision is not going to meet the need in the height of the summer but it is preferable to no provision at all, which is what would have happened if we had not taken over the responsibility from Cornwall Council as it was their intention to close the Guildhall ladies and gents facilities altogether.

Once the Guildhall conversion is completed, and only then, the Guildhall ladies facility will close and East Looe Town Trust will have the opportunity to create some much needed income from the building.

There will be opportunities for the Council to implement a charging policy for the use of all the public conveniences in Looe but we cannot do this until they are all brought up to an acceptable standard which, of course, costs money.

