



Author: Sharon Payne – Deputy Town Clerk

Committee: FC 27th May 2025

Status: PUBLIC

Agenda Item: FC.25-26.009 Accessible Toilet Opening Times

Date: 15th May 2025

1.Purpose. To review an incident report submitted by the Cleaning and Maintenance Supervisor regarding 24/7 opening of the accessible toilets at The Millpool and The Guildhall. See point 4 below.

2.Decision required. Councillors are asked to review the incident report, the risk assessments (see images below) corresponding to 24/7 entry of our accessible toilet facilities and to resolve to select Option 8.1 or 8.2 below for the future opening hours of these facilities.

3.Background. At the meeting of the Services, Assets and Community Committee meeting held on 14th April 2025, it was resolved to take a report from the Cleaning and maintenance officer to Full Council (SAC 24-25.55). The Deputy Clerk was also asked to contact other local councils to confirm opening hours of comparable towns. Up until December 2024, the cleaning and maintenance team had padlocked the accessible toilets, at the same time as the toilet facility closed. A decision was made in December 2024 by Councillors to not padlock the accessible facilities at the Millpool and the Guildhall toilets. The arrangement was to continue into the New Year and we were to record any incidents of vandalism or antisocial behaviour that occurs.

4.Incident Report from the Cleaning and Maintenance Supervisor. After work on 12/03/2025 I received a phone call at home from one of our cleaning operatives.

They had called to report an issue with someone in the Guildhall – Our cleaning and maintenance operative had attempted to close the toilet at 18:00 - but the individual in the cubicle was not leaving.

At 18:30 our female operative and I entered the ladies toilet, where I called who I was and that the toilet was being closed. The response we received was a mumble of sounds; we continued to engage in conversation, asking if the individual could open the door? The

door was locked and the individual continued to mumble. After a while I informed the individual, I would open the door from the outside and then our female operative entered the cubicle to ensure the persons dignity.

We found a person slumped off the toilet and wedged between the toilet and the cubicle wall. The person was of a stature that left them unable to get up from the position they were in. I assisted the person into a seated position on the toilet - this proved extremely difficult, as they continued to slump off the toilet. To stop the person falling back into the same position I wedged myself between them and the cubicle wall, so that they were upright and leaning against me.

Once the person was in a more comfortable position, our cleaning and maintenance operative recognised them.

We both encouraged the person to talk to us, asking what had happened? Were they injured in any way? Should we call for medical assistance? As time went on, they became more lucid - apologising and asking us to ring their relative and to go home. Our operative retrieved the person's telephone and gave it to them, but they could not type in its access code. We offered to help if they told us the code, after a couple of attempts we got into the telephone and located the relative's number - we put the phone on loudspeaker and asked the relative if they could come and get the person.

The relative arrived shortly afterwards to take them home. A considerable effort was needed to extricate and escort the person to a waiting taxi.

At 19:35 we were able to lock the Guildhall toilets.

5. Concerns of the Cleaning and Maintenance Supervisor. This has brought to my attention an issue with the accessible toilets that we leave open 24 hours. If this incident had happened when there were no members of the cleaning team around, the outcome could have been very different. That evening was very cold, and the position that the person found themselves in could have led to hypothermia and severe breathing difficulties - or worse.

5.1. I have asked that all accessible toilets be closed and padlocked when we lock up each block on health and safety grounds - so that we do not face this situation again.

5.2. I have been instructed to leave them open until the council debates the issue at the next full council meeting.

5.3 I am seeking written confirmation that I have advised closing but been told to continue opening unsupervised.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

6. Review of facilities in Cornwall. The Deputy Clerk contacted Cornwall Association of Local Councils and posed a question to Town Clerks across Cornwall. I enquired about opening hours of facilities and if accessible toilets were open 24/7. 5 Town Councils responded.

- Pelnyt – Radar key and closes at 4pm;
- Liskeard – reliably informed as closes at dusk;
- St Austell – 7am to 7pm (Radar key);

- Torpoint – 1 with Radar key open 24/7 and 365 days a year, 1 closed at dusk*;
- St Ives – Dawn till dusk.

*Torpoint passionately believed that a Town Council should have at least one facility open 24/7, 365 days a year – with ‘use at own risk’.

7.Conclusion. Officers feel that the decision to have two accessible facilities open 24/7 should be reviewed by Councillors. The original decision asked officers to record acts of vandalism and antisocial behaviour. Councillors should be aware of the added risk of a potential emergency being left undiscovered overnight. No acts of vandalism on these accessible toilets have been recorded since December 2024.

8.Resolution. Councillors are asked to Resolve to select Option 8.1 or 8.2 below for the future opening hours for these facilities.

8.1. Continue to operate the accessible toilets at the Guildhall and Millpool 24/7 with the signage as suggested in the corresponding risk assessment.

8.2. Accept the recommendation of the Cleaning and Maintenance Supervisor (5.1 above) and return to padlocking the accessible toilets at the Guildhall and Millpool when the toilet facilities are secured at dusk.

RISK ASSESSMENT: LOOE TOWN COUNCIL



Ref:	TITLE: Public Toilets Guildhall (24/7 - Unisex and Accessible facilities)								
Activity	Hazard		Initial Risk			Mitigating Controls	Residual Risk		
Description: Process or Activity steps	Identified Hazard	People at Risk	Severity: No Controls in Place (1-4)	Likelihood: No Controls in Place (1-4)	Hazard Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Controls in Place: All Controls must be valid in that they reduce severity, likelihood or both and are adequate in reducing risk to as low as reasonably possible.	Severity: Mitigating Controls in Place (1-4)	Likelihood: Mitigating Controls in Place (1-4)	Residual Risk Rating (H/M/L)
Cleaning of Floors and Walls	Slips, trips and falls resulting in injury	Public, Employees	2	2	M	Area clear of trip hazards. Slip resistant flooring installed throughout. Walls to ceiling height can be readily reached by hand or by using mop fitted to handle. No requirement to use step ladders.	1	1	L
Use of 240v Electrical Appliances	Electric shock resulting in injury / electrical burns	Public, Employees	3	2	M	No 240v electric appliances used in toilets for cleaning. Main electrical board located in high level locked cupboard inaccessible to public.	2	1	L
Use of Substances Hazardous to Health	Exposure resulting in acute / chronic ill health	Employees	2	2	M	Proprietary cleaners and sanitising products supplied in concentrated form and kept in secure cupboard. Diluted products used for cleaning. All staff use PPE and have been trained in safe use of chemicals. COSHH	1	1	L
Contaminated waste clearance incl. drugs paraphernalia	Contact resulting in infection	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Used sanitary items collected in clearly marked designated clinical waste bags for weekly disposal. Any drugs paraphernalia found handled using litter picker and disposed of using 'sharps' container. Protective gloves worn when handling waste.	3	1	M
Access / Egress & Use of toilets	Slips, trips and falls resulting in injury	Public, Employees	2	2	M	Good access to toilets. Slip resistant flooring throughout. Cleaners endeavour to maintain floor in a dry condition. Warning signs in place when floor is wet.	1	1	L

Use of toilets	Unsafe damaged or defective facility with potential for harm	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Toilets routinely checked for defects by cleaners. Defects reported to the Amenities Manager or Town Clerk who prioritises and actions remedial works.	2	1	L
Use of toilets	Contact with contaminated surfaces resulting in infection	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Toilets regularly cleaned and surfaces sanitised using proprietary sanitising products	2	1	L
Emergency Exit	Loss of lighting or fire resulting in difficult exit with potential for injury	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Clear access with natural lighting. Clear route to exit. Low level of fire risk.	2	1	L
Emergency	Toilets are open 24/7. Public use at own risk.	Public	4	2	H	Toilets in use and not locked at night. A sign is posted on the outside – facility is not monitored and used entirely at your own risk. Toilets are checked at opening, regularly across the day and when closing the rest of the facility.	4	1	M
Assessor: S Payne	Signature:					Date of Assessment: 12.3.2025	Review Date: 12.3.2026		

RISK ASSESSMENT: LOOE TOWN COUNCIL


Ref:	TITLE: Public Toilets Millpool (24/7 - Unisex and Accessible facilities)								
Activity	Hazard		Initial Risk			Mitigating Controls	Residual Risk		
Description: Process or Activity steps	Identified Hazard	People at Risk	Severity: No Controls in Place (1-4)	Likelihood: No Controls in Place (1-4)	Hazard Risk Rating (H/M/L)	Controls in Place: All Controls must be valid in that they reduce severity, likelihood or both and are adequate in reducing risk to as low as reasonably possible.	Severity: Mitigating Controls in Place (1-4)	Likelihood: Mitigating Controls in Place (1-4)	Residual Risk Rating (H/M/L)
Cleaning of Floors and Walls	Slips, trips and falls resulting in injury	Public, Employees	2	2	M	Area clear of trip hazards. Slip resistant flooring installed throughout. Walls to ceiling height can be readily reached by hand or by using mop fitted to handle. No requirement to use step ladders.	1	1	L
Use of 240v Electrical Appliances	Electric shock resulting in injury / electrical burns	Public, Employees	3	2	M	No 240v electric appliances used in toilets for cleaning. Main electrical board located in high level locked cupboard inaccessible to public.	2	1	L
Use of Substances Hazardous to Health	Exposure resulting in acute / chronic ill health	Employees	2	2	M	Proprietary cleaners and sanitising products supplied in concentrated form and kept in secure cupboard. Diluted products used for cleaning. All staff use PPE and have been trained in safe use of chemicals. COSHH	1	1	L
Contaminated waste clearance incl. drugs paraphernalia	Contact resulting in infection	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Used sanitary items collected in clearly marked designated clinical waste bags for weekly disposal. Any drugs paraphernalia found handled using litter picker and disposed of using 'sharps' container. Protective gloves worn when handling waste.	3	1	M
Access / Egress & Use of toilets	Slips, trips and falls resulting in injury	Public, Employees	2	2	M	Good access to toilets. Slip resistant flooring throughout. Cleaners endeavour to maintain floor in a dry condition. Warning signs in place when floor is wet.	1	1	L

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Emergency Exit	Loss of lighting or fire resulting in difficult exit with potential for injury	Public, Employees	3	2	M	Clear access with natural lighting. Clear route to exit. Low level of fire risk.	2	1	L
Emergency	Toilets are open 24/7. Public use at own risk.	Public	4	2	H	Toilets in use and not locked at night. A sign is posted on the outside - facility is not monitored and used entirely at your own risk. Toilets are checked at opening, regularly across the day and when closing the rest of the facility.	4	1	M
Assessor: S Payne		Signature:	Date of Assessment: 12.3.2025				Review Date: 12.3.2026		