

Executive Member Decision Part A – For Officer Completion

Date: 1st February 2024

Part i

Purpose of Decision

To authorise the use of £191,868 Changing Places fund grant towards provision of Changing Places toilet facilities at Decoy, Dawlish Warren and Dawlish Lawn.

Request Officer

Peter Briscoe – Projects Manager

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Executive Member

Cllr David Palethorpe – Executive Member for Estate, Assets and Car Parking

Progress

- 1 First Draft - **30th November 2023 (After members have responded)**
- 2 Consultation – **6th February 2024**
- 3 Discussion with Executive Member – **8th February 2024**
- 4 Initial local member/Chair(s) O&S consulted - **8th February 2024**
- 5 MO & S151 Consulted – **8th February 2024**
- 6 Check - any objections from 4 & 5 – **16th February 2024**
- 7 Executive Member approve for Consultation **20 February 2024**

Democratic Services

- 8 All Councillors consulted 20/1/2024
- 9 Call in completed 27/01/2024
- 10 Originating Officer advised 27/01/2024
- 11 Placed on Web 28/01/2024
- 12 Signed copy filed

1. Proposed Decision

It is recommended that the proposals set out in section 2 be approved and the Executive Member considers the main implications of the proposals in section 3 regarding the financial implications.

2. Background

The government wants to see a step change in the number of Changing Places toilets across the country. This is why at Budget 2021, the Chancellor announced a fund of up to £30.5 million Changing Places Fund to accelerate the provision in existing buildings in England. Changing Places toilets are larger accessible toilets for severely disabled people, with equipment such as hoists, privacy screens, adult-sized changing benches, peninsula toilets and space for carers.

Following an initial expression of interest from Teignbridge in the order of £219,000, three sites were identified in the towns of Newton Abbot (Decoy), Dawlish and Dawlish Warren. The grant for each of these sites is £40,000. Decoy and Dawlish Warren are well used resorts all year round, and the improvements would feed into their green and blue flag awards.

In addition, Teignbridge is acting as agent for applications received from Kingskerswell Parish Council and Teignmouth Town Council. The grant for these sites is £40,000 and £19,000 respectively. The local councils need to meet the grant deadline requirements in order to receive this grant.

The final site making up the £219,000 was central Newton Abbot. This site was dependent upon other town centre regeneration projects and has been deemed undeliverable until the final shape of those projects is resolved.

In March 2022, a total of £234,000 grant was indicatively allocated to Teignbridge.

The original deadline for the completion of delivery on all projects was 31 March 2024. However, the completion date was extended to 30 June 2024 for those projects which could evidence via a project change request a high level of confidence on delivery schedules. Newton Abbot town centre, Kingskerswell and Teignmouth could not meet the extension criteria.

As part of the project change request process and in recognition of the inflationary environment since the provisional grant award, DLUHC allowed grant from the original schemes to be reallocated to the three projects which could demonstrate and provide evidence of ability to be onsite by March 2024 and complete delivery by June 2024. Following the project change request, it was confirmed that up to £234,000 is available to complete the three schemes at Decoy, Dawlish Warren and Dawlish Lawn.

All three TDC sites have extremely specific site constraints which would restrict the use of providing a standalone purpose-built unit. These range from flood risk constraints, conservation area planning constraints and difficulties with providing a connection into a public sewer network. Although RISE offer a modular unit that would be pre-built, they would be unable to be used for these reasons. It was therefore agreed to look at options to use underutilised or vacant Council buildings within these three resorts. As a result of this assessment the following buildings were selected and a design carried out for each, which required technical sign off from Changing Places Support at Muscular Dystrophy UK

- **Decoy, Newton Abbot** – Former Rangers Office (vacant)
- **Dawlish Warren** – Former First Aid Room (vacant)
- **The Lawn, Dawlish** – Current Toilet Block, and Disabled Toilet (remodelling & refurbishment)

Upon sign off for these designs a subsequent competitive tender process was undertaken to seek a contractor to deliver the works for each of the sites, with the aim of having to projects completed by **31st March 2024**. This tender process concluded in September, with the aim of commencing works in October 2023.

3. Main Implications

Financial implications

Costings have been obtained as follows:

Decoy	£70,351
Dawlish Warren	£60,210
Dawlish	£61,307
Total	£191,868

This can now be completely covered by the Changing Places grant as per the outcome of the project change request.

The grant conditions state that sufficient future revenue funding must be identified for cleaning, repairs and maintenance of the Changing Places toilets delivered through the grant for the lifetime of the assets. While the average cost of maintaining a toilet cubicle in Teignbridge is currently £1,444 per annum, Changing Places toilets are larger and contain more equipment which will need regular maintenance. It is estimated the total annual maintenance cost for the three sites would be in the region of £9,000. There is also a requirement for inspections every six months to comply with LOLER (The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998). - estimate £250 per site per year. There is no specific budget available for these additional costs – they would need to be accounted for within the relevant budget headers such as repairs and maintenance, utilities, and cleaning, meaning potentially using reserves or other budgets to accommodate.

At the end of the useful life of the equipment, consideration would need to be given to capital replacement costs – around £15,000 to £20,000 per site at today's prices.

4. Legal implications

There is a requirement for inspections every six months to comply with LOLER (The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998).

5. Alternative Options

No alternative uses have been identified for the sites at Dawlish Lawn or Dawlish Warren.

The site at Decoy may potentially lend itself to an additional commercial kiosk, however this would be subject to asset review processes – there is no working alternative proposal at this time.

The Council are not bound to deliver all three changing place facilities, where grant funding has been provided, and an alternative option would be to simply reduce the number of sites completed under this scheme or return the funding to DLUHC.

6. Risk

If the grant is not spent by the end of June 2024, DLUHC are likely to request repayment.

Potentially high insurance costs associated with the risk of damage to specialist equipment located in a publicly accessible space, in addition to routine inspections, repairs and maintenance. Associated staff time requirement.

7. Justification

Large accessible toilets for severely disabled people - known as Changing Places were made compulsory for new buildings in England from 2021. There were more than 1,400 Changing Places toilets in the UK, compared with 140 in 2007, but more are needed to support the 250,000 severely disabled people.

These restrictions on finding suitable changing facilities for carers of disabled children, and disabled adults limits their ability to access open spaces and resorts. In line with the research undertaken for [MDUK by RiDC \(Research Institute for Disabled Consumers\)](#), these new facilities will enable the resorts to become more inclusive and further enhance both the blue and green flag awards for these areas. It will allow carers and disabled children/adults to have access to beaches and country parks, which they would otherwise be restricted for fear of sitting in soiled clothing or dirty nappies until they find a suitable toilet or return home. Without such suitable facilities carers would typically have to change a disabled person on a dirty public toilet floor.

All public spaces should cater for people with disabilities, so they don't have to suffer discomfort, embarrassment, or even injury without access to a Changing Place.

Democratic Services

Decision No 01-2024

Date of Implementation 1pm 27 February 2024 unless called in

Call in ?

Member Completion

I confirm the decision above

I agree with the justification above

I have no conflict of interest in making this decision having considered the provisions of the Teignbridge Code of Conduct

Signed David Palethorpe

Date 20 February 2024