

Report to: **Overview Committee**



Date of Meeting 26th March 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Public Toilets Programme Review Options Appraisal

Report summary:

This report follows a Spotlight Briefing to Overview and Scrutiny Committees on 15th July 2025 and a report to Overview Committee on 30th September 2025. We have reached a key milestone in the programme for delivering against the outcomes of the 2021 Public Toilets Review. Phase 1 of the planned investment programme has now been completed alongside the transfer of some facilities to Town and Parish Councils and the sale/lease or closure of others.

There was a recommendation from September Overview to Cabinet:

1. That an options appraisal is undertaken to influence direction of travel informed through the debate, to include flexibility around capital expenditure and early engagement with Town and Parish Councils and that the timing of the options appraisal aligns with the forthcoming stewardship report to Cabinet, and
2. That Officers have regard to the discussions and comments made by the Overview Committee at its meeting on 30th September 2025.

In the meantime, during October – February there was dialogue with Town Councils in respect of stewardship of assets and in the context of a programme of community asset transfers to safeguard legacy of those assets but also to support our own MTFP challenges. It became increasingly evident that public toilets would play a large involvement, after all these are some of the most valued community assets in our towns owned by EDDC, and when looking at LGR, are some of those assets most at risk. We also know from those discussions that there's a strong appetite to take on, if that helps protect those assets. This then, and through a cross-party Portfolio Holder Working Group informed the February 4th Cabinet report that referenced public toilets and contiguous assets as being prioritised for asset transfer. It was acknowledged that the wider public toilets options appraisal still needed to come forward and hence the recommendation within the Cabinet report.

The recommendations from 4th February Cabinet included the following:

The principle, and community benefit, of transferring council-owned public conveniences to town and parish councils with the possibility of the concurrent release of proportional amounts of residual capital funding, subject to the timely review of the existing refurbishment arrangements, and potential transfer protocols, by the Overview Committee to ensure best value for both EDDC and the lower tier authorities.

Attached to this report is a Part B confidential Options Appraisal and recommendations from this Committee will then inform direction of travel.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Overview Committee:

- a) Considers the Options Appraisal attached to report
- b) Informed by the Options Appraisal, support the recommendation of Option 3 - that public toilets be transferred to Town and Parish Councils in current condition and with a dowry reflecting appropriate share of remaining approved capital budget
- c) Considers and recommends to Cabinet what role Overview Committee is to have as this programme moves forward

Reason for recommendation:

To inform Officers as to next steps.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Assets and Economy
- Communications and Democracy
- Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Environment - Nature and Climate
- Environment - Operational
- Finance
- Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Any new decisions made will be subject to a new Equalities Impact Assessment if deemed necessary

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Different options carry different risks as referenced within Options Appraisal.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
- Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- Resilient economy that supports local business
- Financially secure and improving quality of services

Financial implications:

The options presented outline the financial implications. The maximum cost option is to complete the programme of works as intended at an additional cost of £1.73m, this equates to an annual loan interest charge of £110k per annum with a minimum revenue provision required (principal repayment) of £69k, this is based on an assumed 25 year period.

Legal implications:

The legal issues are covered in the report (ALW/002512)