

Agenda item 4

For decision: Whether to financially support a proposal to establish a Changing Places toilet facility in the Market Yard car park.

Author: Charlie Orr, Projects Officer and Paul Wynne, Town Clerk

Summary

This report proposes FTC contributes £5,000 to the proposed Changing Places toilet facility in the Market Yard. This amount to be taken from the existing Community Toilet Scheme budget.

Background

The campaign for a Changing Places toilet in the town has been long running. Earlier this year, MDC committed itself to supporting the campaign and will consider a report being tabled at its Cabinet meeting on Monday 9 October to deliver one.

Changing Places toilets enable people with profound and multiple learning disabilities as well as many other physical disabilities to use the toilets safely and comfortably. There are currently no such facilities in Frome, the nearest being Warminster and Trowbridge. The provision of a Changing Places toilet would make the town centre significantly more accessible to people with disabilities and their families/carers.

The proposed site of the Changing Places facility is within the MDC toilet block in Market Yard and £17,700 is needed to complete the project of which MDC is proposing to allocate £8,500 from the s106 fund from the Mendip Lodge development.

In addition to this, the report proposes to fund the ongoing maintenance and cleaning of the facility (£3,000 per annum) and to project manage and procure the installation. It is expected that this will be done before Christmas.

This leaves a funding deficit of £9,200. The report to MDC's Cabinet suggests that this could be met by a crowdfunder project application, where the crowd would rise half the amount and FTC match this or the Mayor's Grant Scheme. Clearly, the Mayor's Grant scheme would not be appropriate given there is a maximum grant of £300.

Discussion

Both Cllr Kate Bielby and Kate Hellard do not believe a crowdfund project is appropriate, as it would fall to a small group of parents/carers to launch and manage in addition the campaign itself is likely to have limited appeal to a wider audience. Our experience is that appeals of this size are very difficult to deliver.

Other sources of funding via grant applications to external bodies are also thought to be extremely limited with lengthy lead in times, but we will ask our external fundraiser for advice on this.

Given that this campaign has been supported by FTC in the recent past, existing FTC budgets have been interrogated to source the outstanding £9,200. It is proposed to use the £5,000 Community Toilet Scheme budget with the expectation that MDC will fund the remaining £4,200. At the time of writing we do not know whether MDC would be amenable to this. The Community Toilet Scheme was planned to be re-launched in the early new year following a planned discussion at Town Matters on 15 November. So long as a re-launch was agreed at that meeting we could easily postpone it until April in the new financial year. This is so long as Cllrs agreed to allocate £5,000 in next year's budget.

Recommendation

Allocate £5,000 from the Community Toilet Scheme towards the cost of the Changing Places toilet in the Market Yard with the expectation that MDC would allocate the remaining balance of £4,200.