



REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 4 DECEMBER 2018

SUBJECT: LAUNCH OF COMFORT SCHEME

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from Committee to launch a Moray wide Comfort Scheme in partnership with local businesses.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III, (F) (6) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management and maintenance of public conveniences.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) **note the detail, benefits and processes for establishing a Comfort Scheme for Moray.**
- (ii) **approve the launch of a Comfort Scheme in partnership with local businesses during May 2019.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 15 May 2018, this committee noted the proposal to introduce a Comfort Scheme. Elgin is the only community with a BID comfort scheme in Moray and officers in Economic Development have explored opportunities for further comfort schemes. The council already participates in the Elgin BID comfort scheme by making facilities available in the Annexe and Elgin library. A number of hotels, cafes and taverns across Moray have shown a positive interest in participating in the scheme.
- 3.2 The scheme will provide a service that complements existing council toilet facilities and there would be no financial assistance from Moray Council. The businesses who wish to participate will however benefit from a potential increase in custom through increase in footfall in their premises and they will also have the additional benefit by way of publicity through Moray Council as a Comfort Scheme participant. It is anticipated that facilities in additional council buildings will be also be made publicly available.

3.3 The process to establish further Comfort Scheme arrangements for Moray would be as follows:

- (i) Appropriate businesses and public buildings are approached to assess whether or not they are interested in making their toilet facilities available for general public use.
- (ii) Those businesses and public buildings that are interested would be contacted by an officer to establish the range of facilities available and the times when they would be open. This service is made available to the public for free with no expectation that users will purchase goods or services.
- (iii) Where agreement between the Council and the business is agreed appropriate sticker would be erected on the outside of the premises. **APPENDIX 1** - illustrates the suggested design for the logo.
- (iv) The new Comfort Scheme toilets would be widely publicised through press releases, Council and other destination websites, applications and social media.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The Comfort Scheme would be in accordance with :- (i) the corporate priority - making life better for everyone in Moray, where there is a positive future for all, within a vibrant economy, with empowered and connected communities and (ii) Council priority - work towards a financially stable council that provides valued services to our communities.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has no statutory duty to provide Public Conveniences. The owners of the toilets continue to be responsible for the management of the toilet facilities included in the Comfort Scheme.

(c) Financial implications

The additional financial implications associated with this proposal are minimal and can be accommodated within existing budgets.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications from this proposal.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The Comfort Scheme would provide improved access to toilet facilities. It has been developed as a mitigating action following an equality impact assessment on the proposed closures of public toilets.

(h) Consultations

Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts), Equal Opportunities Officer, Reni Millburn, Principal Officer, Economic Development, and Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer were consulted and comments incorporated within the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Comfort Scheme approach will provide a service that complements existing council and community run toilet facilities and there would be no financial assistance from Moray Council. The businesses who wish to participate will however benefit from a potential increase in custom through increase in footfall in their premises.

5.2 Following further engagement with local businesses and facility managers of public buildings it is proposed that a comfort scheme is launched in partnership with local businesses across Moray.

Author of Report: Colin Bell, Environmental Protection Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: