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**Report of the DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

**Committee : Executive Board**

**Date: 17th June 2009**

**Subject: Council Deputation - Provision of changing place toilets in Leeds**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

All

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Standard disabled persons toilets do not provide sufficient space or facilities to enable carers of persons with severe physical disabilities to use them safely. Nationally the Changing Places Campaign is seeking to promote awareness of changing places toilets and to encourage their provision in public places.

In Leeds, the All Mean All Group has been campaigning for the provision of a changing places toilet in the City. The group attended the Council meeting on the 22nd April to request Council support for such facilities in the City Centre.

This report identifies what actions have been taken to date in responding to the needs of this group and recommends further action that the Council can undertake to enable the provision of changing places toilets in the city.

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To provide information on the benefits of Changing Places Toilets and both the national and local campaigns seeking to increase the provision of such facilities in public places.
- 1.2. To provide information on the action taken to date in responding to the demands of the local campaign.
- 1.3. To make recommendations as to further assistance that can be given in relation to the provision of changing places toilets in Leeds.

## 2. **Background Information**

- 2.1. Changing Places is a national campaign promoting the provision of Changing Places toilets for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and other disabilities. These facilities also serve their carers who often find themselves in inappropriate and physically damaging positions/actions in standard disabled persons toilets. The national campaign believe that without proper facilities and sufficient space a disabled person is put at risk and their carers risk their own health and safety by attempting to change people in toilets that are not fit for purpose or other places that are inappropriate and potentially dangerous.
- 2.2. A changing place toilet is one with enough space for both disabled people and their carers, and has appropriate equipment e.g. a height adjustable changing bench and a tracking hoist system amongst other features. The changing places campaign would like to see such facilities in a range of public places such as in City Centres, Shopping Centres and Leisure Complexes. The Changing Places website list 67 locations across the UK where a changing place facility is open to the general public, and a further 14 which are planned.
- 2.3. Provision of such facilities can make a tremendous difference to the lives of disabled people and their carers by allowing them to visit locations knowing that access to appropriate toilet facilities will be available. It is estimated that nationally there are many thousands of people who would benefit from such facilities including around 40,000 people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.
- 2.4. Adult Social Care has taken a co-ordinating role in relation to this matter and a working group of officers have been meeting to identify potential sites where such a facility can be located in Leeds. The Councils asset management board has agreed to support the working group in taking this work forward.

## 3. **Main Issues**

- 3.1. The Leeds based All Means All Group is an independent group of people from Leeds with high support needs who have similar goals in relation to improving their lives by:
  - having better health
  - having access to the things they would like to do
  - having better information and communication
- 3.2. The group have identified the provision of a changing place toilet would enable them to have greater access to Leeds City Centre and be able to live more fulfilling lives.

Specifically the group is asking:

- (i) for a changing places toilet to be provided in Leeds City Centre
- (ii) people to understand the importance of such facilities for people with severe disabilities
- (iii) and that all new large scale developments include a changing places toilet.

The All Means All Group have obtained 1600 signatures on a petition in relation to the above and are receiving support for their campaign from the Leeds learning disability partnership board.

- 3.3. Locally there are 292 adults with a learning disability in Adult Social Care or Health day services with profound physical support needs in addition to their learning disability. There are 425 school children with profound and multiple disabilities or physical disabilities. In Leeds there are 55,000 people over the age of 65 with limiting long term illnesses and many other people under the age of 65 with severe physical disabilities. All of the above are potential users, as would disabled people from outside the city who may wish to visit Leeds
- 3.4. The regional valuing people support team has arranged an event on the 24<sup>th</sup> June in Keighley to promote changing places toilets and highlight national success stories. The

event is particularly aimed at Learning Disability Partnership boards who have been asked to send a team of up to 5 people.

- 3.5 The Leeds Carers strategy contains a commitment to supporting the development of changing places toilets and to this end has earmarked funding of £30k for building / refurbishment works.
- 3.6. A group of officers, with representation from the Leeds Learning Disability forum, has been meeting in order to respond to the needs of the All Means All Group and other people who would benefit from the provision of such facilities.

This officer group has undertaken a number of tasks including:

- (a) Identifying appropriate sites within Leeds City Centre where a changing places toilet can be sited.
  - (b) Agree a specification for a Changing Place toilet in line with national guidance.
  - (c) Promoting awareness of the advantages of changing places toilet across the Council.
  - (d) Considering how the development process (planning DC, planning LDF, PFI schemes) can support the provision of future facilities
  - (e) Preparing a priority list of development types where changing places should be included in line with national guidance.
  - (f) Researching the revenue and capital costs of changing places toilets.
- 3.7. As changing places toilets contain equipment of value and which needs maintenance, it was considered appropriate to limit the search for potential sites to those where toilet facilities are already in existence and there are supervisory arrangements in place. The group are seeking to have 3 sites operational by 31 March 2011.
- 3.8. Space for the provision a changing places facility has been identified within the Central Library terrace bar redevelopment on the headrow. Whilst the final costings for the refurbishment have yet to be finalised, it is hoped that this facility will become operational during this financial year. Other City centre based sites are also being explored. The new 'Trinity East' Development in Leeds city centre identified a Changing place facility in the planning application which has been approved. However it should be noted that this development is now on hold.
- 3.9 The officer group has agreed a specification (based on national guidance) for a changing place toilet which will be used in Leeds. This specification is taken from the new BS8300:2009 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice'. In relation to the additional running costs of a changing places toilet as compared to that of a traditional disabled toilet, these have been calculated at less than £3K per annum.
- 3.10. Executive Board on 14th January approved a report on the transformation of day services for people with learning disabilities. That report recommended that large, traditional centres should be replaced by more local service provision in community based locations. Budget provision has been made available to assist in delivering these changes and it is considered that the provision of further changing place toilets will form part of this transformation programme, although these are unlikely to be City Centre based.
- 3.11 In relation to new developments, the group is taking a proactive role in ensuring that consideration is given to the possibility of including changing places toilets in new Council developments. The new leaf leisure centres at Armley and Morley will both contain a changing place toilet and this facility will be requested as part of the preparatory work for the new Wellbeing Centre at Holt Park.

- 3.12 More generally in relation to new developments , the officer group is now working on the preparation of a strategy for changing place toilets in Leeds. It is proposed that the strategy should contain a commitment that future building developments commissioned by the Council which are for use by the general public, will consider provision of a changing place toilet if they would otherwise have contained a standard disabled toilet. Further work is needed to define more clearly the types of development that would be covered by such a commitment , and where such facilities could best be located. It is envisaged that flagship schemes such as the new Arena would be covered by this commitment.
- 3.13 In addition consideration is also being given as to how the planning process can assist in ensuring further provision of changing place facilities in developments which are not commissioned by the Council. This will include the potential for the use of S106 monies to provide new facilities.
- 3.14. The Council's Asset Management Board ( AMB) is aware of the changing places initiative and is supporting the work being undertaken by the officer group. In particular AMB have offered to assist in the development of the above strategy. It is recommended that a further report be brought back to Executive Board in six months time which details a strategy for the provision of changing place toilets in Leeds.

#### 4. **Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

- 4.1. There is a growing demand at a national and local level for the provision of changing places toilets. The production of a strategy for the future provision of Changing place toilets in Leeds would be seen as a very positive step not just in relation to those most likely to use the facility but from disabled people generally.

#### 5. **Legal and Resource Implications**

- 5.1. The Disability Discrimination Act and other equality legislation require Council's to make appropriate arrangements for people with disabilities. The Disability Equality Duty which came into force in December 2006 introduced general and specific duties for public authorities. The provision of more appropriate toilet facilities for people with severe disabilities can be seen as actions which will help meet the Council's responsibilities in this area.
- 5.2. Financial Provision exists with the carers strategy amounting to £30k which will be used to establish 3 city centres based toilet facilities by 31 March 2011.
- 5.3. Further funding is available within the ASC learning disability day centre transformation programme to provide changing places toilets as part of the planned development of more localised facilities for people with learning disabilities.
- 5.4. The additional running costs of a changing places toilet have been estimated at no more than £3K.

#### 6. **Conclusions**

- 6.1. The need for and benefits of changing places toilets have been identified in this report. Officers will continue to explore potential sites for city centre based facilities and will work on the development of a strategy for the future provision of changing places toilets in Leeds.
- 6.2. Funding has been identified to provide 3 city centre based changing place toilets in Leeds. A specification for a changing place toilet has been agreed which can now be used for the provision of this facility in new developments.
- 6.3. A strategy in relation to the provision of changing place toilets is being prepared which will contain a commitment by the Council to consider the provision of changing places toilets in appropriate new developments which would otherwise have contained a traditional disabled toilet.

## 7. **Recommendations**

7.1. Executive Board is asked to:

- (a) To note the actions being taken to provide city centre based changing places toilets,
- (b) To note the work undertaken to agree a specification for a changing places toilet,
- (c) To request a further report be prepared in six months time which will recommend a strategy for the provision of changing places toilets in Leeds.

### **Background documents referred to in this report:**

1) Deputation from the All Means All group to Leeds City Council 22 April 2009

2) BS8300:2009 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice'

3) Changing Places campaign website : <http://www.changing-places.org>