

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	CP/33/24

Committee: Communities and Place

Date: 27 November 2024

Report Title: Approach to Public Conveniences and Action Plan

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 Councils in Scotland do not have a legal or statutory requirement to provide public conveniences. The Highland Council recognises the value of public conveniences used by local communities, travellers and tourists alike, and is committed to providing the service to support health, wellbeing, viable communities, and tourism in Highland.
- 1.2 Provision of public conveniences will be prioritised on Council owned and managed land. Opportunities for agreements with private parties, including the promotion of the Comfort Scheme, and other stakeholders should be reviewed subject to meeting the needs to communities and the Approach to Public Convenience and Action Plan.
- 1.3 The Council operates 70 public conveniences across Highlands and manages 4 sites via service level agreements. To supplement provision a comfort scheme is in place that offers grants to local businesses and community groups that allows the public to use their facilities without a transaction being required. There are currently 53 providers on this scheme.
- 1.4 This report sets out an approach to public conveniences and an action plan which sets out a framework for provision over the next 10 years.

The approach sets out the context and the four general principles which will underpin service delivery:-

- Provision
- Safety
- Access
- Cleaning maintenance

- 1.5 The Action Plan identifies future investment opportunities which can be fulfilled subject to funding.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. **NOTE** the contents of this report; and
- ii. **AGREE** the Approach to Public Conveniences and Action Plan, and that it is subject to funding

3. Implications

3.1 **Resource** - The Council currently operates 74 Public Conveniences throughout the Highlands. The function had a revenue budget of £939k (net).

The Capital Programme approved by Council on 14 September 2023 includes annual provision of £33k for 2024/25 up to 2028/29. The proposals in the Action Plan would be subject to additional funding becoming available.

3.2 **Legal** - The Council does not have a statutory responsibility to provide or operate Public Conveniences.

3.3 **Risk** - The proposals outlined in the plan are subject to funding becoming available.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - There are no known implications arising from this report.

3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report and any signage will comply with the Gaelic Strategy.

4. Impacts

4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.

4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.

4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment - Summary

4.3.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken on 30th October 2024. The conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.

4.3.2 The Screening process has concluded that there are no impacts.

4.3.3 Impact Assessment Area	Conclusion of Screening
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and Young People – <i>no impact</i>• Children affected by disability – <i>no impact</i>• Older adults – <i>no impact</i>
Socio-economic	<i>No impact</i>
Human Rights	<i>No impact</i>
Children’s Rights and Well being	<i>No impact</i>
Island and Mainland Rural	<i>No impact</i>
Climate Change	<i>No impact</i>
Data Rights	<i>No impact</i>

5. Background

5.1 Whilst not a statutory function, the Council is the main provider of public conveniences located throughout Highland, operating 74 sites.

Public Conveniences are an essential part of a community and contribute to all aspects of The Highland Council’s strategic priorities of sustainable tourism, health and wellbeing, and inclusion of communities.

The Council is committed to providing accessible, safe, and clean public conveniences to communities and visitors to the area.

5.2 This approach sets out a strategy for investment in public convenience should funding become available. The provision of capital and revenue funding is accepted to be minimal in the coming years. It is therefore important that a strategic approach is taken to investing in, and maintaining, public conveniences, now and in the future.

This approach sets out how decisions can be made based on agreed criteria to ensure best value is demonstrated, whether it is in repairing, renewing, transferring to a community or closing a site.

6. Approach and Action Plan

6.1 The Approach and Action Plan objectives are to:-

- Outline the Council’s role in the provision of Public Convenience
- Provide inclusive, accessible toilet provision, within facilities which are cleaned and maintained to cater for the needs of communities and visitors to the Highlands
- Provide design principles in relation to refurbishment, replacement, and installation of Public Convenience
- Set out the 10-year plan to guide operations and opportunities of Public Convenience in The Highland Council area

6.2 **Appendix 1** to this report sets out the approach and proposed action plan to 2034.

The Approach to Public Conveniences Action Plan will be reviewed annually and considered by the Communities and Place Committee.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

Date: 30 October 2024

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Background Papers: Public Convenience and Comfort Scheme [Agreements](#) 2023-2026
Update on Public Convenience Provision [November](#) 2023

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Approach to Public Conveniences and Action Plan

Approach to Public Conveniences and Action Plan 2024-2034



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REVISION INDEX			
Revision Ref.	Date	Description	Made By

SECTION 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Highland Council's Approach to Public Convenience and Action Plan sets out a framework for the provision of public conveniences within the Council area over the next 10 years, subject to this being the strategic direction the Council takes, and funding being available.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Provision

Councils in Scotland do not have a legal or statutory requirement to provide public conveniences. The Highland Council recognises the value put on public conveniences by local communities, travellers and tourists alike, and is committed to providing the service to support health, wellbeing, viable communities, and tourism in Highland.

Provision of public conveniences will be prioritised on Council owned and managed land. Opportunities for agreements with private parties, including the promotion of the Comfort Scheme, and other stakeholders should be reviewed subject to meeting the needs to communities and the Approach to Public Convenience and Action Plan.

Safety of Service Provision

The safety of the community and those employed to service and maintain the public conveniences will be prioritised over other considerations in the decision-making process including location, convenience, and the requirement for surveillance due to ongoing known anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Access

Public conveniences will be accessible, where possible, to all users and the Council will strive to achieve compliance to public convenience standards across all existing facilities, where possible.

Investment

The provision of capital funding is accepted to be minimal in the coming years. It is therefore important that a strategic approach is taken to investing in, and maintaining, public conveniences. Section 5 sets out what could be delivered if funding becomes available. Factors such as usage, community engagement, place planning, community take over and income generation will all form part of the decision-making process. Community ownership is the model we strive to achieve as they can develop their sites further and access funding unavailable to Highland Council.

SECTION 2 INTRODUCTION

Public conveniences are an essential part of a community and contribute to all aspects of the Council's strategic priorities of sustainable tourism, health and wellbeing, and inclusion of communities.

Background

The public convenience function was redesigned in 2018 due to budget restraints. The key principle was that there was not more than 15 minutes by car between public conveniences. 12 public conveniences were closed (Wick Camps, Thurso Harbour, Talmine, Keiss, Lybster, Halkirk, Mealmarket Close, Grantown Burnfield, Elgol, Fortrose, Rosemarkie, Avoch). 16 community asset transfers and leases have been supported since 2018 leading to several of the closed public conveniences being opened, enhanced and operated by communities.

Public Convenience Vision

Whilst not a statutory function, the Council is the main provider of public conveniences located throughout Highland. The vision is to provide accessible, safe, and clean public conveniences to communities and visitors to the area.

The Approach and Action plan will guide the provision of public conveniences that are owned and/or managed by the Council. There are other public conveniences located throughout the area which are not managed by the Council, for example those in libraries, community hubs, recreation centres, and these are not included in this Approach and Action Plan.

There are also many public conveniences in the region which are provided by other operators under the Council's Comfort Scheme. Comfort scheme providers receive a grant for allowing the public to use their facilities as a public convenience without a transaction being required. Comfort Schemes can be found in community halls, restaurants, cafes, ex Council public conveniences and recreational centres. Appendix 1 maps the location of these facilities.

What is a Public Convenience Approach and Action plan?

A public convenience is a room or public convenience with toilets or urinals and sinks (including composting facilities with hand sanitiser stations) for use by the public. This Approach and Action Plan details public convenience provision of the Council regarding management, location and condition.

The following principles set out values that define provision of public convenience in Highland

- Provision
- Safety
- Access
- Cleaning and maintenance

The Approach and Action Plan Objectives are to:

- Provide inclusive, accessible toilet provision, within facilities which are cleaned and maintained to cater for the needs of communities and visitors to the Highlands
- Outline the Council's role in the provision of public convenience
- Provide design principles in relation to refurbishment, replacement, and installation
- Set out the 10-year plan to guide operations and opportunities of public convenience in the Council area

Why Plan for Public Conveniences?

Developing an Approach and Action Plan for Highland involves input from various Council teams such as operations, maintenance and design. Member and community engagement is a corner stone of this place-based approach.

Past planning for public conveniences in Highland has not been a priority and has often resulted in poorly designed public conveniences which are no longer fit for purpose, difficult to maintain and do not meet the needs or expectations of users. Public conveniences often suffer from vandalism and attract other anti-social behaviour which can result in full closures or create a threatening environment for those intending to use them. Poorly maintained and/or vandalised PC can create a negative view of the community and result in less tourism trade for an area, along with creating difficulties for genuine users of a facility.

The Council currently cleans and operates 74 PC across the 10,000m² area of Highland. Capital funds were used during 2023/24 to refurbish facilities while other funding was secured during the same period to replace two PC and refurbish additional PC. The refurbishments have been carried out to ensure that facilities are accessible, provide baby changing for carers regardless of gender, include energy efficient and sustainable equipment, and are more welcoming and safe environments. The process of refurbishing, and/or installing new modular PC, is an expensive process which must be planned, coordinated, budgeted, and carefully managed.

The Approach and Action Plan for Highland will consider opportunities to further improve the existing PC while highlighting potential areas to expand the service, should a strategic

decision be taken to do so, drawing on ongoing dialogue with communities and local Members.

It is important that the Council has a clear approach and plan to guide future decisions which ensure that appropriate measures are in place for sustainable PC and operations which include improving the standards of existing facilities to reflect inclusiveness of user groups.

SECTION 3 POLICY CONTEXT

The Council does not have a legal or statutory requirement to provide public conveniences, although the Council is committed to providing the service to support health, wellbeing, viable communities, and tourism in Highland.

The Council offers comfort scheme grants to support external organisations in allowing noncustomers access to their toilet facilities. This is a low-cost solution to the provision of facilities. Grants range from £50 to £300 per month on a seven or twelve-month basis and the rate of grant is based on the scoring matrix which reflects the facilities available for public use.

An annual survey of scheme providers evidenced in 2021 that the scheme is highly regarded and successfully contributes to the provision of public conveniences in the region to ensure that there are additional facilities to support health, wellbeing, and tourism in the area.

The 2022 survey evidenced that 86% of providers found the scheme beneficial, with 94% wishing to become providers again when the current three years agreements come to an end. 50% believe that being part of the scheme has attracted more custom to their local communities and businesses.

The importance of public convenience provision as an essential service in the Council area has been identified in The Highland Council Sustainable Tourism Strategy. The Strategy highlights that the Council supports tourism through the services dedicated to the sector, such as the network of public conveniences. The 2019 visitor levy survey revealed that the most important investment in infrastructure is directed at the public convenience network of Highland (89.9% of 4180 responses).

Specifically, the Council will focus resources on sustaining a network of facilities across the Council area for use by visitors, residents and businesses making sure that these are high quality and maintained.

SECTION 4 OUR APPROACH

The Approach is structured into 5 sections, each of which represent a theme related to the provision of PC in Highland:

- Sustainability
- Community Toolkit
- Location
- Replacing or Refurbishing an Existing PC
- Design Principles

When assessing PC provision throughout Highland, there are no formal guidelines or frameworks to use as guidance for the provision and planning of PC. Historically PC were developed in urban areas and small villages throughout Highland in the 1960s and subsequently more modern PC were developed to replace the earlier ones in the early 2000s. Since then, there has not been a significant development of PC and only recently has there been progress with refurbishment of PC.

4.1 Sustainability

The Highland Council is committed to achieving carbon neutral climate change targets through sustainable design, service delivery and management of public conveniences. Sustainable design in relation to public conveniences include:

- Water management
- Solar electric
- Internal and external materials
- Use of natural light and ventilation
- Environmentally friendly cleaning products
- Environmentally sustainable fixtures and fittings

Existing public conveniences have limited features and opportunities for promoting environmental sustainability. The Highland Council reviews and monitors data to identify the public conveniences with the highest levels of energy, water, and utilities consumption. Where possible, existing public conveniences will be refurbished and upgraded rather than demolished and sustainable design principles will be incorporated.

4.2 Community Toolkit

PCs are considered a community asset, and the Council encourages communities to operate and enhance their local facilities. This could be by way of a community asset transfer or a lease to operate. To support communities with this approach, a Community

Public Convenience Facilities Toolkit is currently being developed. This is being designed to guide community groups through the process of taking over the operation of a community public convenience. The guide will provide step by step instructions and can steer the decision-making process to determine if taking on the operation of a local public convenience is feasible. It is recognised that circumstances will vary, and the Toolkit will provide a collaborative approach for communities interested in providing a public convenience.

4.3 Location and Distribution

The Highland Council area covers 9,905 square miles (not including the Islands within The Highland Council area) which is 11.4% of Great Britain and 32.9% of the land area of Scotland and has a population of 235,710 (2022 Census). The area is rural in nature with many small rural villages and seven larger urban areas. The Highland Council is geographically diverse and covers a third of the land area of Scotland which includes the most remote and sparsely populated areas of the UK.

The Highland area includes the famous route of the North Coast 500 (NC500) which has dramatically increased visitor numbers (29,000 in 2015 the first year of the routes promotion). The area also attracts cruise ships with one port alone anticipating 118 ships through the 2024 season and 230,000 tourists disembarking into Highland for tours and activities. Tourism is the main economic driver, and tourists depend on public conveniences as part of their visit.

There are 74 Council operated PC located throughout the area along with 53 Comfort Schemes (*appendix 2*). It is considered that in all areas of Highland there is a Council public convenience or comfort scheme within a 20-minute drive.

There are many different methods of PC provision in Highland and due to the variety of PC providers there is not a consistent approach or standardised dataset providing the exact number of total PC available to the public in Highland out with the Council's provision.

This Approach and Action Plan has considered the 74 PC which are directly managed by the Council and located throughout the area. These facilities are standalone and are not co-located within other premises. There are a mix of rural, village, and urban locations throughout the area offering a range of PC from very basic to more modern and including showers. However, many PC require refurbishment and modernisation to support increasing visitor numbers, public requirements, and environmental considerations to contribute to the Council's climate change ambitions.

The Council strives to provide accessible PC 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year round, however, on occasion due to vandalism and anti-social behaviour there has been a need to have opening and closing of facilities, to reduce incidents at specific facilities. CCTV are considered where anti-social behaviour continues. Local opening and closing

agreements are available to communities and automated locking systems can be installed where appropriate.

4.4 Replacing or Refurbishing an Existing Public Convenience

Funding to improve provision is always going to be challenging. Should funding become available, the following considerations should be met when planning to refurbish or replace a PC in the same or nearby location. Demonstrating a high level of need is the first step in determining if a PC should be replaced or refurbished in the same location.

A data driven approach will be taken. High level need must be demonstrated before consideration will be given to the project. There must be evidence from the community or the Council's knowledge of the community, confirming that an existing PC is not functioning and providing adequate provision to accommodate the needs of the community.

The 10-year plan, financial allocations, budget pressures and external factors will also be taken into consideration to determine if the project can be progressed.

Public Convenience Condition

A Public Convenience is considered in poor condition if the following apply:

- The Public Convenience is unsafe or dangerous
- Fixtures and fittings no longer work and there are obvious signs of wear (locks, doors, flushing and taps)
- The Public Convenience is unhygienic and difficult to clean and maintain

Usage Levels

Usage levels can be obtained through communication with cleaning teams, Supervisors, Facilities Officers, local businesses, and communities or through formal footfall counters. If the public convenience has a low level of usage the removal of the public convenience may be more appropriate and sustainable than replacement or refurbishment. Where this is most cost-effective outcome, the Council will seek to replace it with a CS.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social behaviour includes (but is not limited to) a wide range of undesirable activities such as vandalism, sexual activity, loitering, drug and alcohol related activity, violence, fire raising, damaging the public conveniences fixtures and fittings.

Public conveniences which suffer from ongoing anti-social behaviour are more likely to close as replacement/refurbishments may not be sustainable at these public conveniences. Where this is most cost-effective outcome, the Council will seek to replace it with a Comfort Scheme.

Facilities within the Public Convenience

A place-based approach will determine whether the public convenience is fit for purpose in that location.

The type of public convenience and internal layout may vary depending on the location of the public convenience. For instance, if the public convenience is near a beach does it have external showers, if it is in an urban area does it have internal showers?

Closing an Existing Public Convenience

If deemed appropriate to close an existing public convenience a range of other considerations should be reviewed. In all cases, every effort will be made to engage with a local business to become part of the CS. There is an agreed PC Closure Protocol and Procedure which is in place (*appendix 3*).

Considerations

- **Is there adequate justification for the closure of an existing Public Convenience?**

The closure of an existing public convenience without replacement will require consultation with local Members and communities. Community safety, health and wellbeing need to be demonstrated that the closure of the public convenience is beneficial to all. Where there is a high level of community benefit with the closure of the public convenience rather than retention justification is more likely to be granted.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Anti-Social behaviour includes (but is not limited to) a wide range of undesirable activities that can include vandalism, sexual activity, loitering, drug and alcohol related activity, violence, fire raising, damaging a public conveniences fixtures and fittings.

In facilities where anti-social behaviour continues and cannot be improved upon through design principles, then a full closure should be agreed, and removal of the public convenience should be considered. This will require consultation with local Members and communities. Community ownership is the model we strive to achieve as they can develop their sites further and access funding unavailable to Highland Council.

- **Condition of the Public Convenience**

A public convenience condition is considered poor when the following are applicable:

- The public convenience is unsafe or dangerous
- Fixtures and fittings no longer work and there are obvious signs of wear (locks, doors, flushing and taps)

- **Usage Levels**

Usage levels can be obtained through communication with cleaning teams, Supervisors, Facilities Officers, local businesses, and communities or through formal footfall counters. If the public convenience has a low level of usage, then closure of the public convenience may be more appropriate and sustainable than replacement or refurbishment.

4.5 Consideration to Design Principles

Before a public convenience is recommended for removal the function of the public convenience needs to be assessed against the design principles. If a public convenience cannot be retrofitted to meet the principles, then closure should be considered as the future option for the public convenience.

- **Location and Design**

Location and design principles have been established to guide future provision of public conveniences in The Highland Council area. The principles have been developed on best practice and should be followed when developing a new public convenience or upgrading an existing public convenience.

The design of a new public convenience or refit of an existing public convenience is fundamental to sustainability. Adequate and good design brings together a range of internal and external factors and provide consideration to what is inside, outside, and nearby to the public convenience.

Most of the Council's public conveniences are older and lack natural light, adequate sight lines, ventilation and are perceived to be unhygienic, unsafe and falling into a state of disrepair.

- **Location Principles**

- Locate public conveniences to promote security and natural surveillance
- Orientate public conveniences to allow natural ventilation and light where possible

- Locate in accessible locations to maximise visibility to street/open spaces to enhance security
- Ensure all public conveniences are accessible for all and include baby changing in each designated room
- Adequate signage to include directional signs must be incorporated to minimise obstructions
- Incorporate low level landscaping and around public conveniences to ensure the space is easily maintained and sustainable whilst allowing access for all
- **Design Principles**
 - Public convenience design must take into consideration the local environment and character
 - Do not obstruct public convenience with dense landscaping, vegetation or barriers and ensure entrances and doors have direct line of sight from public entry ways
 - Use construction materials which are durable, robust, sustainable, vandal resistant and ensure that the internal areas offer optimal natural light and is well lit
 - Use signage, which is understood by all, using symbols which are easily recognisable
 - Use fixtures which are robust, easy to maintain, comply with public convenience standards, meet DDA compliance, are sustainable, and easy to obtain for replacements
 - Consider environmental sustainability at every stage of the design and incorporate appropriately

Other Considerations

The following headlines highlight items that need to be considered in the design of a new or refurbished public convenience.

- **Fixtures and Fittings**

There are a variety of internal and external fixtures and fittings installed in public conveniences, many of which are outdated and no longer fit for purpose. The basic fixtures and fittings in all public conveniences to include:

- Toilet pans
- Sinks
- Urinals
- Dispensers

There can be an expectation that more should be provided in a public convenience such as what may be seen in a private public convenience for paying customers. The aim is to

provide a consistent approach of provision across its estate, however in facilities which suffer from anti-social behaviour and vandalism these public conveniences may not have toilet seats, hand soap, and only carry the most basic provisions.

- **Public Safety**

There are several public conveniences in the Council area which are known locations attracting anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Although a public convenience can be perceived as unhygienic, dangerous, or unsafe, users will continue to frequent the public convenience due to the area geography and distances between facilities.

There are several factors as outlined below that contribute to negative safety perception:

- Lack of integration of public convenience to streetscape
- Public convenience obstructions and dark spots due to poor landscaping, overgrown vegetation, no line of sight for passing surveillance
- Age and condition of public convenience
- Presence of vandalism and subsequent deterioration of the public convenience
- Loitering
- Lack of light
- Bad odours, lack of cleanliness, broken/faulty and dated fixtures and fittings

The Council aspires to upgrade facilities and improve on service provision through offering modernised facilities rather than additional public convenience. Whilst utilising the opportunity to reduce and minimise anti-social behaviours such as vandalism, sexual activity, drug and alcohol related activity and illegal dumping of chemical waste continues. Public and employee safety must be the focus and be prioritised over any other considerations.

Design can be used to minimise and deter anti-social behaviour and contribute to public and employee safety. The following points should be considered during design:

- Maintain a light environment to reduce the likelihood to expose users to risk
- Use surveillance through passing public, CCTV and varied cleaning times
- Discourage loitering by not placing public seating near the public convenience
- Keep all entrances clearly visible from the street and other public areas

The Council can employ the following to combat anti-social behaviour:

- Installation of CCTV
- Installation of automated locking systems
- Local open/closing Agreements

- Motion sensor lights
- Time-limited quick maintenance reaction times
- Daily cleaning and reporting of issues
- All old public conveniences in poor structural condition and subject to significant and repetitive anti-social behaviour and vandalism should be considered for upgrade or decommissioning.

- **Signage and Promotion**

The Council will maintain clear, consistent, and accessible signage on the public convenience. The signs will include graphics where appropriate and accessible signs will be posted on disabled public conveniences. Wayfinding and directional signage will be installed on pavements and roads as required to help the public find and locate the public convenience. Every public convenience will host informational signs to include contact details for reporting maintenance issues.

Informational signs will be installed internally and externally as required specific to a public convenience and legislation needs. Specifically, no smoking signs will be installed in all facilities as they are legally required, CCTV signs will be installed where CCTV is located on a public convenience and no dumping of chemical waste signs will be installed in every public convenience.

Temporary signage will be used to inform of closures to public conveniences due to maintenance and vandalism. The temporary signs will indicate where the next available public convenience is located. Other forms of signage on public conveniences will include seasonal closures for the seven facilities closed from the end of October to the start of April. Refurbished and multi-agency funded public conveniences will have additional signage highlighting the various funders.

The web based public convenience and comfort scheme map located on the Council's web public convenience will remain up to date and highlight current closures. The map details the location and features of the public convenience and comfort schemes. A QR code will be linked to the map and used on signage to raise awareness and promote the location and availability of Highland Council public convenience.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/283/community_life_and_leisure/814/highland_council_public_toilets

SECTION 5 ACTION PLAN 2024-2034

This section sets out the aspirations for a 10-year action plan for refurbishment of public conveniences across the estate where possible, we will continue to encourage community involvement or ownership in operating local public conveniences, through CAT or leases, where possible.

Actions are allocated timeframes as follows:

- Short term 1-3 years
- Medium term- 4-6 years
- Long term 7 or more years

Many of the actions identified in the action plan are dependent on allocation of internal funding, availability of contractors, availability of materials, all of which will impact on delivery timescales. Partnership working with other Highland Council services will ensure external funding opportunities are maximised.

Table Key

- CAT Propose a Community Asset Transfer, the facility could be transferred to a community group
- Ref Propose a refurbishment to upgrade the public convenience
- Min Minor maintenance works, ongoing as required
- Con Propose to construct a new public convenience
- Alt Propose to seek alternative provision

Public Conveniences Action Plan

Public Convenience	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Acharacle			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Achmelvich			
Actions	New build, continue to maintain and manage		
Achnasheen	Alt		
Actions	Currently closed		
Alness			
Actions	Currently closed		
Ardersier	Alt		
Actions	Currently closed		

Ardgay	Min	Ref	
Actions	Refurbish as funds become available		
Aviemore			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Beauly	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Bettyhill			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Ballachulish	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Bonar Bridge			
Actions	Currently closed		
Brora			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Carrbridge	Min		Con
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Castletown			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Clachtoll			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Cromarty			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Corran Ferry	Con		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Dingwall	Alt		
Actions	Currently closed		
Dunbeath			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Dornoch	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Drumbeg			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Dunnet			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Durness			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Dunvegan	Ref		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Fort Augustus	Min		Con
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Fort William	Alt		
Station Brae			

Actions	Currently closed		
Fort William Viewforth	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Gairloch			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Glencoe			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
Golspie	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Glenmore			
Actions	New build, continue to maintain and manage		
Grantown	Alt		
Actions			
Whin Park			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
A9 Kessock North Bound		Ref	
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Kilchoan			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Kingussie	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Kinlochbervie			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
Kylesku			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Lairg			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Latheron			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Lochaline			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Lochcarron			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Lochinver			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
Melvich			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Muir of Ord	Alt		
Actions	Currently closed		
Nairn Courthouse Lane	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		

Nairn West Beach	Ref		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Newtonmore	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Old Shoremore			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Portmahomack			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Portree		Ref	
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Raasay	CAT		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Reay			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Rhiconich			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
Rogart			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Rogie Falls			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Sconser			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Silverbridge	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Scourie			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		
Smoo Cave			Ref
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Strathpeffer			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Storr	Min		
Actions	New build, continue to maintain and manage		
Tain	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Tarbet			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage. Opening and closing agreement in place		
Thurso	Min		
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Tongue			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Uig			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		

Ullapool		Ref	
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Watten			
Actions	Continue to maintain and manage		
Wick			
Actions	Recently refurbished, continue to maintain and manage		

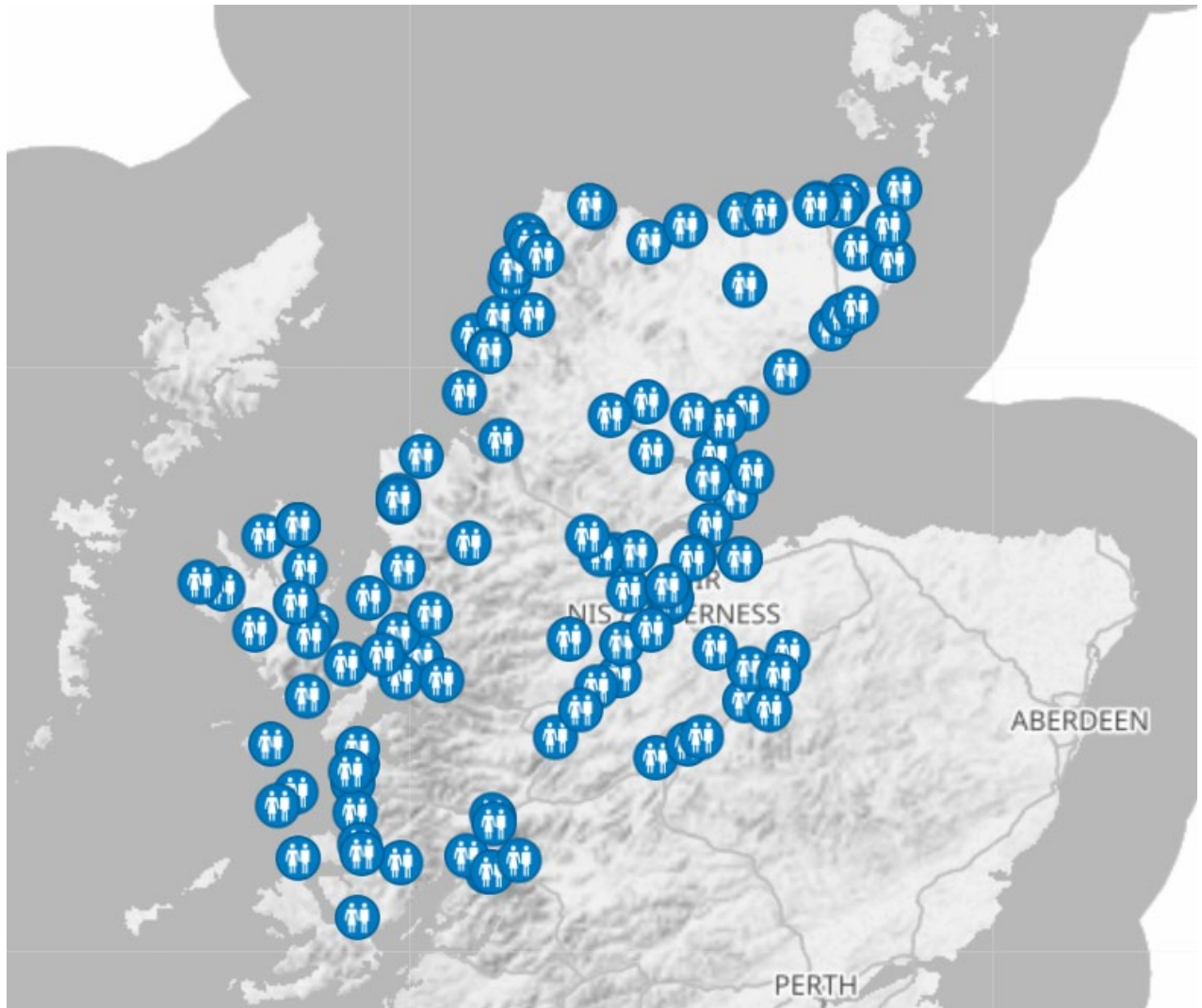
Operational Actions

Action	Timescale
Continue to operate and manage public conveniences and monitor requirement to increase convenience provision through the Highland Comfort Scheme	Ongoing
Consider on a case-by-case basis requirements for specific operations due to ongoing vandalism and anti-social behaviour	Ongoing
Engage with stakeholder to discuss potential for new public convenience provision as part of the growing tourist trend in Highland and where there are gaps in provision	Medium
Continue to assess requests for upgrades or new public conveniences from community and other stakeholders, apply the CAT framework outlined in the Community Toolkit	Ongoing
Improve signage to public conveniences to ensure they are all adequately signposted including directional road signage	Short
Ensure that all new public conveniences are accessible	Ongoing
Ensure that all refurbished public conveniences specifications consider long-term sustainability and vandal resistant measures are incorporated into the design principles	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to improve public convenience provision in the planning process and as part of negotiations with stakeholders	Ongoing
Standardise fixtures and fittings across the public convenience estate	Short-Medium

Continue to review and monitor public convenience energy and water consumption	Ongoing
Continue to refurbish and upgrade existing public conveniences rather than close, sell and demolish where possible	Ongoing
Review and update condition of public conveniences every 5 years	Ongoing
Maintain and keep web public convenience map and information including Comfort Schemes up to date	Ongoing
Continue to review Capital Works plan and update with new projects where applicable	Ongoing
Continue to utilise inspections to review cleaning performance	Ongoing
Review opportunities to install solar panels, LED lighting, trace heating and similar upgrades to public conveniences	Short
Review opportunities to remove and upgrade where possible dated equipment such as hot water heaters to reduce Highland Council's carbon emissions	Short- Medium
Continue to identify and install methods of income generation through the honesty boxes and charging systems	Medium

SECTION 6 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Map of Highland Council Operated Public Conveniences



Appendix 2 – List of Comfort Schemes Locations

Acharacle	Portree
Achiltibuie	Poolewe
Applecross	Rosemarkie
Arisaig	Rum
Armadale	Shieldaig
Aultbea	Staffin
Avoch	Strontian
Balintore	Thurso
Broadford	Tomatin
Cannich	Tougal Morar
Caol	Traigh Beach
Dores	Wick
Drumnadrochit	
Eigg	
Elgol	
Forsinard	
Fortrose	
Foyers	
Gairloch	
Glendale	
Glenelg	
Glenuig	
Glenshiel	
Helmsdale	
Invercassley	
Invergarry	
Inverness	
John O’Groats	
Keiss	
Kilmallie	
Kinlochewe	
Kinlochleven	
Kyleakin	
Laggan	
Lybster	
Mallaig	
Minginish	
Muck	
Nethybridge	
North Kessock	
Plockton	

Appendix 3 – PC Closure Protocol and Procedure

Introduction

The Highland Council operate over 70 public conveniences.

There are occasions when a site must be closed or partially closed. Closure could be due to the facility requiring a routine repair, some maintenance work, due to vandalism, or a refurbishment project.

Maintenance

When maintenance work, reactive or planned, is required at a site, it is important that this is conducted as quickly as possible to minimise disruption to users. This can be dependent on costs and availability of labour and materials.

Where possible, only the facilities requiring maintenance will be closed. i.e., the ladies, the gents, or where provided the disabled facilities. Signage will be displayed with alternative arrangements for users. If a site must close, signage will direct users to the nearest alternative public convenience.

Vandalism

Sites being closed due to vandalism causes unnecessary distress to service users, communities and the Council resulting in significant reparation costs the funds of which could otherwise be used for site investment / improvement.

Where a site has been vandalised a record of the vandalism and cost to make good will be maintained. Unlike other routine maintenance works where we will try to keep open part of the facility, when a site is vandalised, we will consider closing the whole facility based on risk.

The threat of further damage can be high where a site is being specifically targeted and the most effective way to reduce further damage to the facility is to implement a full closure.

If the damage caused is significant the site will be closed immediately and will remain closed pending discussion with Ward Members including how the site can be operated sustainably in the future.

In addition to Ward Members, Officers will also liaise with community groups and discuss alternate options including a community asset transfer (CAT) or lease, which allows communities to manage and run the facilities within the community. This also enables the Council to then offer a Comfort Scheme payment that can contribute towards the running costs of the facilities.

Staff in the Communities and Place Service will be responsible for advising the Community Development Manager of any closures, permanent or otherwise and when sites re-open.

Corporate Communications will lead on all communications and messaging to the public.