

<b>Environment and Climate Change Committee Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	18/03/25
<b>Report Title</b>	Contract extension for the minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences.
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins
<b>Head of Service</b>	Martyn Cassell
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Alister Andrews, Environment Services Manager
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1 To extend the existing public convenience cleansing and minor maintenance contract into the final year, ending on 31/03/26

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The current minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences contract expires on 31st March 2025. The current contract has a one year extension clause. This paper recommends extending the contract into the final year to allow time for a full review of public conveniences to be completed and discussed by Members.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 In June 2023 the Environment Committee agreed to re-tender for a 1 + 1 year contract to start from 1st April 2024.
- 2.2 On 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Environment Committee recommended to award a contract for the cleansing and minor maintenance of public conveniences. The funding was agreed through the policy and resources committee.
- 2.3 The contract provides a service that opens and closes all of the public conveniences within the borough; cleans them to the appropriate standards; replenishes consumable items; and undertakes minor maintenance. Other more major repairs such as broken tiles, sinks, bowls or structural elements are reported to property services for repair via a separate property maintenance contract.
- 2.4 The contractor also undertakes routine deep cleans at each facility and toilets may be kept open later for special events.
- 2.5 The current list of public conveniences consists of:

- The Forum, Sittingbourne (attended – shared attendant with Central Avenue)
- Central Avenue, Sittingbourne (attended – shared attendant with The Forum).
- Rose Street, Sheerness (attended)
- Central car park, Faversham (attended)
- Leysdown Beach Services (attended seasonally)
- Minster Leas
- Park Road, Faversham
- Milton Regis High Street
- Queenborough Park, Queenborough
- Bartons Point, Isle of Sheppey
- The White House, Minster
- Oare Gunpowder Works Visitors Centre, Faversham
- The Spinney, Leysdown
- King George V Playing Field, Sittingbourne
- Milton Creek Country Park
- Beachfields, Sheerness

2.6 Performance from the existing contractor has been in line with the specification, with very few complaints regarding the service provided. Monitoring of the contract by Swale Council officers show very few concerns in contractor performance.

2.7 The public convenience cleansing and minor maintenance contract has been delivered by Monitor Cleaning Services Ltd since April 2017.

2.8 A project manager has been appointed to undertake a full review of public conveniences within the borough, ahead of deciding how the service will operate beyond March 2026. This will consider different operating models, usage, condition surveys and locations of other provision. This work is well underway and will be reported back to this committee later in the year.

### **3 Proposals**

3.1 To approve an extension into the final year of the existing contract. If extended, the contract will expire on 31/03/26.

### **4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

4.1 Do not extend the contract and manage the service in-house. This is not recommended as the review is looking at all operating models and the data will inform future committee decisions.

4.2 Do not extend the contract and stop delivering the service. This is effectively a decision to close all public conveniences in Swale as they could not be managed sufficiently without the resources to do so.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The extension does not need public consultation as the service would remain the same under the extension.
- 5.2 The project reviewing the service is currently engaging with town and parish councils. Public consultation will follow once Members have discussed the original data of the review.

## 6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Appointing a contractor that meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money contributes towards all the corporate priorities.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>This expenditure was approved by Members at full council on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025.</p> <p>The value of the extension is estimated at £380,500. This is variable due to usage and one-off requests for extended opening times.</p> <p>The full review of public conveniences will determine usage and provide recommendations on assets and funding options for the future.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>The procurement of a service provider was advertised in line with the contract legislation requirements.</p> <p>The Public Health Act 1936 gives Local Authorities a power to provide public toilets, but it does not impose a duty to do so.</p>
Crime and Disorder	Some toilets are currently partially attended to ensure that facilities are kept up to the necessary standard, but also to deter crime and disorder. The risk of damage and anti-social behaviour may increase in unattended facilities. The opening and closing times are structured to avoid times of the day when anti-social behaviour is more prevalent. These can be altered accordingly to site specific issues.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The current service provider provided evidence of how they intend to reduce their impact on the environment through a variety of methods such as water usage reduction or by using more environmentally sensitive cleaning products. Bidders were scored accordingly prior to tender award.

Health and Wellbeing	The public convenience facilities operate in line with government guidance to ensure they remain safe. Such facilities are appreciated by members of the public and they have obvious health and well-being benefits.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	The appropriate safeguarding requirements were identified in the specification of the tender and the contractor has to abide by these safeguarding levels.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>Many of the perceived risks were identified and discussed at contract award. These included financial risks and the risk of increased vandalism.</p> <p>Part of the procurement process ensures that contractors are fully competent, particularly in the area of health and safety. The current service provider's competence is evidenced through their membership of CHAS contractors Health &amp; Safety Assessment Scheme, and ROSPA (Royal society for the prevention of accidents) and ISO accreditations for ISO14001:2015 and ISO9001:2015</p>
Equality and Diversity	All Swale Council public conveniences provide for a range of disabilities. Signage has supported the 'Not every disability is visible' campaign at all sites.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

## 7. Appendices

None

## 8 Background Papers

- 1) The provision of minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences – procurement of new contract. (29th June 2023)  
<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/g3967/Public%20reports%20ack%20Thursday%2029-Jun-2023%2019.00%20Environment%20and%20Climate%20Change%20Committee.pdf?T=10>
- 2) Procurement of minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences service (17th January 2024)  
<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=356&MId=3969&Ver=4>