



# **Charging Model Public Convenience Report February 2025**

## Contents

Background .....	3
Access Control Mechanisms .....	4
Door Control Systems.....	4
Paddlegates .....	4
Charging Income .....	5
Payment Type.....	5
Fee.....	5
Reasoned Scenario.....	6
Sales .....	6
Administration fee .....	6
Rental fee .....	6
Maintenance .....	6
Cash collection/delivery.....	6
Installation.....	7
Net income.....	7

## Background

The Environment and Leisure Committee approved the award of a service contract for minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences. A contractor was then appointed on a 1 + 1 basis from 1st April 2024.

The +1 option available within the tender was enacted for 25/26, the costs in excess of budget are c. £196k, due to both contract inflation and to the application of a further £100k budget reduction, as proposed by Finance Sub in 2023. This was corrected in the 25/26 budget setting but with the intention of conducting a full review during 25/26 to achieve the savings required in future.

Subsequently, a range of options are being explored to bring the budget into alignment with the costs. This includes charging members of the public a small fee for use of public conveniences.

Section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936 (as amended) gives local authorities a discretion to provide public sanitary conveniences in proper and convenient situations and may also charge fair and reasonable fees.

The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) found that the councils that did charge for public conveniences did not make a profit, based on the survey conducted in March and April 2024.

## Access Control Mechanisms

Generally speaking there are two types of access control used for public conveniences that charge a fee. That is, Door Control Systems and Paddlegates.

### Door Control Systems



© Healthmatic

A door control system provides a secure, effective and simple means of access control at the point of entry into a public convenience or for individual stalls. These are often able to be remotely opened and closed, give timed access, and manage utility efficiencies, through only operating lights etc when the toilet is operational. Door control systems can also be used on their own or combined with other systems. eg – Coin with Contactless.

### Paddlegates



© Healthmatic 2025

Although there are various types of paddle gates, they generally provide access to toilets, libraries and other public spaces, whether for the purpose of charging for entry, managing throughput by smartcard or simply to limit the number of people entering an area. Paddlegates are also compatible with Coins set to the desired tariff, RADAR Key, Contactless Card or RFID reader and Keypad entry.

## Charging Income

### Payment Type

Most access control mechanisms provide options for cash and/or contactless. However each, option has its own unique benefits and challenges.

For instance, while contactless payment is quicker it excludes those without access to contactless payment.

On the other hand, although coin systems are generally reliable and less prone to technical issues compared to electronic payment systems, they require manual transportation of coins and a target for vandalism.

### Fee

According to survey of councils in March and April 2024 by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), councils charge between £0.10 and £0.50.

Some councils offer residents the option of using discounted prepaid cards instead of paying directly with cash or bank cards.

## Reasoned Scenario

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
<b>Sales</b>	14,508.75	14,508.75	14,508.75
<b>Administration fee</b>	948.87	948.87	948.87
<b>Rental fee</b>	120.00	122.40	124.85
<b>Maintenance</b>	1,591.81	1,623.65	1,656.12
<b>Cash collection/delivery</b>	0	0	0
<b>Net income</b>	11,848.07	11,813.83	11,778.91

NB:

- Equipment and installations costs requires are estimated at 23,367.80
- Costs relating to vandalism not included here.

### Sales

Research conducted by Healthmatic details the impact charging can have on footfall:

- For residents, the impact of imposing a charge will depend on the quality of the toilets. In research carried out by local authorities, people say they would pay for toilets if they were clean, tidy and safe.
- A 20p charge will halve the usage for a quality toilet. At 50p this will rise to a 75% reduction.
- Tourists are less price sensitive to toilet charging than local people for two reasons:
  - Little knowledge of the alternative provision
  - An acceptance of charging while away from home
- The introduction of charging will therefore have less effect in those areas that are more tourist orientated. In addition, visitors are less price elastic meaning they are less sensitive to the actual level of the charge.
- The combination of low impact on volumes and low sensitivity to charging in more visitor orientated areas, means that charging will earn revenue without dramatically affecting the number of people seeking and using the toilet.

Based on the above an estimate of 29,018 visitors annually is used here across all 3 years. This figure is derived from the fact that the highest average daily footfall recorded in 2024 was 265 users. Over the course of a year equates to 96,791.25 annual visitors. However, using a £0.50 charge and accounting for a 70% reduction in footfall leave an estimated 29,018 visitors annually.

### Administration fee

The cashless payment operator typically charges 2.54% + 2pm for every transaction. This equates to a 6.54% administration fee on every sale.

### Rental fee

In addition to administration costs, there is also a nominal fee of £10 per month which can be assumed to increase every year in line with an average of 2% inflation.

### Maintenance

To ensure the smooth operation of the charging mechanisms, will require regular maintenance by skilled professionals. The increase in costs each year is in line with inflation.

### Cash collection/delivery

Secure cash collection/delivery firms normally charge around £17.50 per delivery of an value up to £5000.

However, eliminating the option of paying by cash reduces the costs of involved in cash collection and the risk of anti-social behaviour if cash was contained on site.

### Equipment and Installation

A paddlegate system offers a visual barrier but instantly opens once payment is made allowing for fast throughput. Paddlegates are better equipped at detecting tailgating compared with door control systems. They also act as a robust alternative to their turnstiles predecessors, providing access for wheelchairs, buggies and ambulant disabled people. A paddlegate system can also provide a secure and effective way of controlling access with fewer individual access points to maintain compared with individual stalls access systems.

### Net income

It is important that the net income is not a profit as there are other costs associated with public maintenance not included in these calculations.

For instance, other costs include;

- There is a hygiene service contract which is not included here as it would be required for either insourcing or outsourcing models.
- Maintenance and repairs costs as a result of vandalism are not included here and currently managed by the Property Team
- Maintenance, minor repairs and cleaning of the public convenience