

## **Briefing note**

**To:** Health & Social Care Scrutiny Commission

**From:** Matt Little, Principal Strategy Officer, Local Economy Team

**Title:** Access to Toilet facilities – Business engagement

**Date:** 18 October 2023

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## **Introduction**

To date, the Local Economy Team currently plays no active role in support of delivery of a community toilet scheme. However, this briefing note provides the Scrutiny Commission with an outline of the range of business engagement channels that could be utilised to engage businesses and support delivery of a toilet access strategy.

### **1. Business e-newsletter and council website**

The council has a business e-newsletter that goes out to over 12,000 subscribers on a monthly basis. This could be used to digitally promote a Toilet Access scheme to a wide range of business across the borough.

We can also add a section on the business pages on the council website.

### **2. Town Centres and High Streets**

In line with the Council Delivery Plan commitment to promote thriving town centres and high streets, we have developed Town Centre Action Plans for Bermondsey, Camberwell, Canada Water, Elephant & Castle / Walworth, and Peckham. Working with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Business and Skills, officers are working closely with local businesses and other key stakeholders to further develop these action plans in line with local needs and challenges.

As part of ongoing town centre engagement, visits to the high streets in these areas are made (approx. monthly), which could be used to promote a Toilet Access Scheme to local shops. We could target specific types of premises or locations required. As the scheme rolls out we could target specific high streets depending on the number of sign ups and type of providers in each geographical area.

Additionally, we run regular (approx. bi-monthly) engagement events for local businesses in each of these town centres which could be used to promote a Toilet Access Scheme. Relevant officers can present the scheme to local businesses and explain the wider benefits and also how it can help attract customers, for example by bringing more people to the area and encourage them to stay longer.

### **3. Business Networks and BIDs**

There are five Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Southwark<sup>1</sup>, which meet regularly with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Business and Skills and officers. There are also various business networks<sup>2</sup> which we can use to promote a Toilet Scheme to their members and the potential benefits it offers.

### **4. Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)**

Community Southwark - the umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector in Southwark – can be engaged to promote a Toilet Scheme to VCS members.

Colleagues in our Communities Teams would work with key VCS organisations, who support our older residents, to feed into the development of a toilet scheme and promote to members across the borough.

Brief Ends

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<sup>1</sup> Better Bankside, Blue Bermondsey, Southbank (partial), Team London Bridge, and We Are Waterloo (partial)

<sup>2</sup> Including: Federation of Small Businesses (London), Southwark Chamber of Commerce, SE5 forum, Elephant & Castle business forum, and Peckham business forum (soon to launch).