


<b>Services and Facilities Committee Meeting</b>	 Market Drayton Town Council
<b>Agenda Item: Future use of Newport Road Toilets</b>	
<b>Date: 9 February 2023</b>	
<b>Appendix : SF124</b>	

The following request has been received from Market Drayton Sustainable Communities CIC t/a Sustainable Market Drayton to use parts of Newport Road toilet block to store and distribute food for their food share initiative.

Discussions have previously taken place with Shropshire Council, as owner of the toilet block, regarding the future use of the building. A copy of their initial response is below.

## **Market Drayton Sustainable Communities CIC t/a Sustainable Market Drayton**

### **Who are we?**

Market Drayton Sustainable Communities CIC t/a Sustainable Market Drayton is a non-profit, asset locked community interest company limited by guarantee. Any income generated after running expenses/ wages can only be used to support the CIC's non-profit purposes or be given as grants to local community groups/ charities.

### **What is our purpose?**

The purpose of Market Drayton Sustainable Communities CIC t/a Sustainable Market Drayton is to educate & resource sustainable living in Market Drayton. We are doing this by sharing tips, tricks, info & resources via our dedicated website, social media channels and email marketing. We will also be hosting regular workshops on various sustainability topics including cookery. These workshops will be chargeable to bring in an income to support our other work, but we are also applying for grants to provided funded workshops alongside other local organisations, specifically in the area of cooking skills with a focus on using up surplus produce within our homes.

### **Why are we contacting Market Drayton Town Council?**

Following the success of our festive food shares where through our partners at neighbourly, fareshare & caboodle we were able to rescue surplus produce from 3 local supermarkets and distribute for FREE\* (\*We don't charge for the surplus produce but do ask people to make a donation to cover our running costs, the 4

shares over Christmas period made us around £200) to the local community via pop up food share tables.

We have been given the chance to collect surplus food from 10 local supermarkets/ restaurants through our links with the above organisations, however, to do this we would need a permanent home, where we could operate a couple of fridges and freezers to store food to comply with relevant environmental health requirements. This would also be a place where we could hold the food shares, to save surplus food going to landfill.

Similar schemes alongside box subscription schemes (which we are looking at) are run by:

- Newport Food Save & Share
- Taste not Waste from legate community food project
- The Highley Community Project
- Save it Discount Store – Telford
- Shrewsbury Food Hub
- Surplus to purpose

Along with many others.

### **Back to the point...**

Market Drayton Sustainable Communities CIC t/a Sustainable Market Drayton would like to request the use of parts of Newport Road Toilet Block. We would work with a team of volunteers to strip this right back, capping off any toilet's, fitting general sink alongside the handwash sink, ensuring electricity is compliant (installing a sub metre if needed to ensure accurate usage by ourselves can be recorded). We have applied for a grant to fund glass fronted fridges and freezers to enable display of the produce in a suitable manner (if unsuccessful we will fundraise for these items via the local community). We would also look at adding additional security to the access points due to vandalism, but hope that a more visible presence down there by teams of volunteers sorting and distributing food will help reduce the levels of this sort of behaviour.

### **The Original Response from Shropshire Council regarding a change of use of Newport Road Toilets.**

- Can a change of use be granted for part of the building to commercial use? **Initially any proposed change of use would require agreement in principle from SC (from an Estates perspective) because of the user restrictions in the agreed lease. If SC were happy with your proposals, you would then need consider whether formal planning consent is required for the change of use. In this respect, please refer any planning questions you may have to our planning team who can be contacted at**

[planning.northern@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.northern@shropshire.gov.uk). It would be standard practice to include a reinstatement clause in any revised agreement, whereby the Town Council would need to return the property to its original state at the end of the lease at Shropshire Council's discretion. This is unlikely to be enforced, however it is something you should be aware of.

- Can a change of use be granted for the whole of the building, if Town Council decide they do not want to provide toilet facilities in the future? This could be achieved by agreement between the respective councils, but the same comments apply as in the paragraph above.
- Would change of use require planning permission? Yes, it would. Once again, I would recommend contacting our planning team for further advice on this.
- Can the lease be changed to allow Town Council to sublet part of the building? Yes, this could be achieved but obviously will require the agreement of both councils. We would need to consider detailed proposals and look at the income that would be generated to determine whether this could be re-invested into this property or possibly reflected in the rent charged under the revised head lease.
- Would Shropshire Council consider an asset transfer of the building to the Town Council? Presumably you mean a freehold transfer. This can be considered in exceptional circumstances, but SC normally prefer long leasehold options for property transfers involving buildings. In this case SC would also need to consider possible redevelopment implications when the existing swimming pool reaches the end of its useful life.
- Would Shropshire Council extend the time of the lease? This could be considered depending on the details of your long-term proposals.
- Can the Town Council 'return' the toilet block back to Shropshire Council before the end of the lease? There is no provision for a break clause within the current lease, but it is always possible for both parties to agree an early surrender if they wish.