

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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meeting date: TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2023  
title: CHANGING PLACES PROECT  
submitted by: ADAM ALLEN - DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: WINSTON ROBINSON – HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek Committee approval for the proposed Changing Places toilets in Ribchester be removed from the Capital Programme for the year 2023/2024, to be replace with a future bid to the Levelling Up Fund Round 3 when/if this is announced.

1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - To help make people's lives healthier and safer.
- Corporate Priorities - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
- Other Considerations – To contribute to the Council's Mobility and Disability objectives.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 14 March 2023 Committee recommended to Policy and Finance Committee that the Changing Places Scheme be included the capital programme for the year 2023-2024.

2.2 The Changing Places Scheme comprised the provision of three highly specialist disabled toilets at Ribchester, Edisford Bridge and the Castle Grounds.

2.3 The scheme is wholly financed by the Levelling Up Fund Round 2, subject to a number of conditions, one of which is that the monies should be spent before the end of March 2024.

2.4 The Changing Places toilets need to shadow the existing toilets at the three locations to take advantage of sharing the existing local infrastructure and utility services.

## 3 ISSUES

3.1 Unfortunately, following investigations it has been found that a buried low-voltage electricity cable is present within the proposed site in Ribchester.

3.2 The utility company responsible for electrical infrastructure, Electricity North-West Limited (ENWL), has informed officers that the cable will cost an estimated £12,000 to divert and more importantly the work will only be undertaken at the earliest within 14 weeks after receipt of the up-front payment. A firm timescale or guaranteed completion date cannot be obtained from ENWL.

3.3 The costs for the diversion of the power cable at Ribchester were not included in the original Levelling Up submission.

3.4 The delay caused by diverting the power cable will take the three-toilet scheme delivery beyond March 2024. The administrators of the Levelling Up Fund have told officers

that monies allocated for the financial year 2023-2024 will not be allowed to slip into the following year 2024-2025.

- 3.5 Following discussions with the department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), It is proposed that the Council delivers the Edisford Bridge and Castle Grounds toilets this financial year to ensure completion and that officers make a new submission to any Levelling Up Fund Round 3 when/if this is announced, for the toilets at Ribchester. This removes the risk to the Council of ENWL not completing the works and a subsequent loss of funding.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The provision of the Changing Places toilets at Edisford Bridge and the Castle Grounds will make the beauty of the Ribble Valley more accessible for the severely disabled and their carers. It is essential that the Council be able to comply with the requirements of the Levelling Up Fund when commencing projects. The Council will explore the requirements of electricity provider and any legal agreements required in advance of submitting a bid for round 3 funding.
- Financial Implications – The works at Edisford Bridge and the Castle Grounds are fully funded by the Levelling Up Fund and can be delivered this financial year within budget. There is a risk that the Ribchester Changing Place toilets may not be approved at Round 3 by the Levelling Up Fund, however there is a greater risk that ENWL will not complete the required cabling works in time meaning the Council would have had to bear the cost of the scheme. There remains some level of risk around being able to complete the remaining two elements of the scheme within the funding deadline of 31 March 2024. Additionally, tenders have not yet been received for the works, so it is unknown at this stage whether the remaining schemes will be able to be completed within the funding envelope.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – Council enhances its reputation as a Council promoting diversity, disability and mobility.
- Equality and Diversity – None as a direct result of this report.

#### 5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Approve the removal of the Ribchester Changing Places Toilet from the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 submission for delivery in the year 2023-2024.
- 5.2 Approve a submission to the Levelling Up Fund Round 3, when/if this is announced, for the monies to deliver a Changing Places Toilet in Ribchester.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

For further information please ask for Winston Robinson, on extension 4523

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