

Date received:	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Date responded:	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Subject:	Cost of vandalism in public toilets

Question:

- 1) Please provide how much money has been spent on fixing vandalised toilets over the last five years. Please break this down by year. From 2018 to date in 2023.
- 2) A breakdown of any other costs in relation to vandalism in public toilets i.e legal fees, over the same five years as above, broken down by year.

Response:

The Council is unable to provide you with the information for parts 1 and 2 of your request because we do not keep a record of incidences of vandalism. Whilst we cannot provide the information you have requested we have included the following information which we hope will assist with your request.

The Council does not record incidences of vandalism because in the vast majority of cases, these incidences are more accurately defined as anti-social behaviour.

At a meeting of the Environmental Services Committee held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2023, Committee Members had been presented with a report titled "**Vandalism in Public Toilets and Pay Per Use**" for reference below is an extract from the report which defines anti-social behaviour;

***"For reference, anti-social behaviour in this context includes, smoking, drinking alcohol, drug use, toilet roll strewn around and deliberate blocking of toilets or basins to flood the area, general littering. Vandalism refers to physical damage to fixtures and fittings, graffiti and serious examples of anti-social behaviour".***

The Council's public toilets are operated under a cleaning contract which is provided by an external contractor; Healthmatic. Generally, anti-social behaviour is dealt with as part of the daily cleaning regime, and included in the contract sum. For acts of vandalism where there is physical damage, there are two scenarios;

- 1) Healthmatic units – these are designed to be vandal proof, so apart from damage to the doors, very little occurs to internal fixtures and fittings. The Healthmatic contract includes cleaning and maintenance and within that contract sum, there is a provision for dealing with door and other sundry repairs. Thus, unless the door is damaged beyond economic repair there are no additional costs to the Council.

- 2) Non-Healthmatic units – traditional fixtures and fittings, but include the Healthmatic door entry system. Again, the vast majority of incidences in these units are of an 'anti-social' nature. As these units now form part of the Healthmatic contract, refitting a toilet seat or a soap dispenser for example is included in the Healthmatic contract price, however, if the item needs replacing this would be funded from the Repairs & Maintenance code within the Public Conveniences budget.

In essence, there is an annual repair and maintenance budget but this includes all maintenance and repairs which fall outside the items covered within the Healthmatic contract, both vandalism and general repairs and maintenance. It may also include elements of planned maintenance (see 2020/21 budget below).

For information below is the budget for the previous 5 years:

- 2023/24 – £3.1k
- 2022/23 – £3k
- 2021/22 – £3k
- 2020/21 - £13k
- 2019/20 – £2.9k

In reference to your query on legal fees, I can confirm that the Council has not incurred any legal fees in relation to vandalism in public toilets.