

Published in The News - Portsmouth: Thursday 12 October 2017

PUBLIC toilets in Gosport shut because they were being used by drug users have been reopened.

Gosport Borough Council [closed the toilets by the ferry terminal and in Jamaica Place back in August](#), after finding used needles and syringes, blood, vomit and general drug paraphernalia on an almost daily basis.

Both sets of toilets have not only been deep cleaned but have had 'sharps' bins installed – designed to safely hold needles and other sharp objects, replaced.

The council says that the new bins are more secure and have been placed higher up to reduce misuse.

According to the council, the idea of using blue lights in the toilets to discourage drug use was considered, but government guidance is against this idea.

Leader of Gosport Borough Council Cllr Mark Hook said: 'Our prime concern is the safety of the public – not just the users of these facilities, but the staff who clean them too.'

'The new bins do not mean we're condoning drug use. We're all doing our best to clamp down on it, but if it does happen then we must provide a way of making sure needles are safely out of the way.'

'We're working with police and other agencies on the issue of anti-social behaviour, and next week councillors will decide whether to introduce an order that would give us more powers to tackle such problems.'

At a Gosport Borough Council meeting last night, Cllr Graham Burgess said: 'A lot of work has been done by this council and I must thank Cllr Philip Raffaelli for his medical experience.'

'We have put lockable sharps bins in all the toilets and if the toilets are not up to cleanliness standard, people can contact streetscene.'

The ferry terminal facilities will be open from 7am to 7pm initially – but the council hopes that the service will return to 24-hour opening soon.