

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 22 September 2022

Motion by Councillor Staniforth – Provision of Sanitary Bins in Council Buildings

Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the information provided on the commitment to install sanitary bins in every toilet cubicle in all Council premises; and
 - 1.1.2 Note that the provision of additional sanitary bins would require an annual revenue budget of between £25,000 and £30,000 which is not currently available and would need to be considered as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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Report

Motion by Councillor Staniforth – Provision of Sanitary Bins in Council Buildings

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report provides further information on how the Council could meet the commitment made in June 2022 to install sanitary bins in every toilet cubicle on all Council premises.

3. Background

- 3.1 The following adjusted motion by Councillor Staniforth was approved by The City of Edinburgh Council on 30 June 2022:
- 3.1.1 To note that sanitary bins were currently only provided in women's and accessible toilets in council buildings.
 - 3.1.2 To recognise that trans men also needed sanitary bins to dispose of period products.
 - 3.1.3 To acknowledge that there were a variety of medical conditions that may require the use of wet wipes and other contaminated products such as incontinence pads that required safe disposal.
 - 3.1.4 To note that the flushing of these products was discouraged by Scottish Water and they were often discharged into our rivers during high rainfall events.
 - 3.1.5 To agree that having sanitary bins in all toilet cubicles, male, female and accessible would address health, equalities, and environmental issues.
 - 3.1.6 To therefore agree to the principle of installing sanitary bins in every toilet cubicle on all council premises and agree that a report should come to the Council meeting in August 2022 setting out how this commitment would be delivered.

4. Main report

- 4.1 As noted above in paragraph 3.1.6, the Council agreed in principle to install sanitary bins in every toilet cubicle on Council premises, recognising that sanitary products should not be flushed down the toilet as these can cause costly blockages in sewers and drains.

Legislation

- 4.2 The [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#) imposes a Duty of Care on any person who imports, produces, carries, keeps, treats or disposes of controlled waste, including sanitary waste. This is accompanied by a [Duty of Care – A Code of Practice](#), which sets out the Code by which the above legislation should apply in Scotland.
- 4.3 In respect of [welfare at work](#), the Health and Safety Executive have provided guidance for employers on welfare provisions which include providing for female employees a means of disposing of sanitary dressings.

Washroom Solutions Contract

- 4.4 The contract for Washroom Solutions across the Council estate has been awarded to Initial UK, through the Scotland Excel Framework. Initial were awarded sole supplier status by Direct Award.
- 4.5 The Washroom Solutions contract includes provision of sanitary bins, medical waste bins and nappy bins as well as hand dryers and other washroom solutions.

Current Provision

- 4.6 In total there are sanitary units in 311 Council buildings, with 3,417 units deployed across the Council estate. These units are typically deployed in all female toilet cubicles and in accessible toilets. The total cost of servicing these units per annum is £42,805.
- 4.7 The cost of providing and servicing sanitary units is determined by the type of unit deployed and the frequency of servicing. The frequency of servicing varies from twice weekly to every eight to nine weeks.
- 4.8 The current contract will expire at the end of September 2022. Scotland Excel are currently procuring a new framework for these services and the Council will directly award a new contract for Washroom Solutions shortly.
- 4.9 Data is not currently held on the number of toilet cubicles available across the Council estate, therefore it is not possible to determine how many additional units would be required. However, based on the information available, the financial impact section summarises an estimated cost for provision of units for all male toilet cubicles.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 As noted above, the current contract for Washroom Provisions will end on 30 September 2022. A new contract will be awarded once the outcome of the Scotland Excel procurement exercise is complete.
- 5.2 Should the Council agree to roll-out the provision of sanitary bins to all toilet cubicles across the Council estate, officers will work with the contract holder to manage the roll-out and any associated planning required. It is anticipated that this will be done on a site by site basis.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Based on the information available through the existing contract for Washroom Solutions, an estimated cost has been prepared which assumes the deployment of a single sanitary unit in every male toilet cubicle across the Council estate.
- 6.2 Based on the unit cost of providing a male sanitary unit with a servicing frequency of eight – nine weeks, the estimated cost to the Council is expected to be between £25,000 and £30,000 per annum.
- 6.3 There is currently no budget allocated to meet these costs. Therefore, any decision to roll-out sanitary units in male toilet cubicles would require funding to be made available to meet these additional costs. If Council agrees to proceed with this, this should form part of the Council's consideration of the budget for future years.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 As part of the procurement of the Scotland Excel Framework, service providers are asked to state their objectives in terms of environmental impacts. In discussion with Initial, they have confirmed their commitment to reducing plastic consumption and are actively looking to offset their carbon emissions wherever possible. Once the new contract is in place, officers can discuss with the successful provider if there are any further actions which can be taken to reduce carbon emissions e.g. through energy from waste processing.
- 7.2 Officers consider that the provision of sanitary units in all toilet cubicles to be an extension of existing practice and therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) would not be required.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Controlled Waste Regulations 1992](#)
- 8.2 [Duty of Care – A Code of Practice](#)
- 8.3 [Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools – Guidance for Scottish Schools](#) (August 2021).

9. Appendices

None.