
To: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board

On: 26 September 2023

Report by: Lead Officer

Heading: Charges for Bulk Items Uplift for the Elderly

1. Summary

- 1.1. At its meeting on 22 August 2022, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed an annual programme of activity for the Board for 2022/23. This included a review of charges for bulk items uplifts for the elderly as part of the programme of activity.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- 2.1. Note the progress contained within the report.

3. Background

- 3.1. Residents of Renfrewshire can request special uplifts if they need any bulky general waste collected from their home. This can be for between 1 and 20 items but cannot include hazardous, clinical, or toxic waste. Loose waste must be bagged or tied in manageable bundles where necessary. In addition, appliances such as washing machines, freezers, cookers etc are all charged individually and cannot form part of the 1 to 20 items.
- 3.2. Ground clearances are when residents have more than 20 items and the charge quoted is for a maximum of one hour's work. However, if officers visit and assess that it will take longer than this, they will contact the resident about the additional costs before commencing any work. Again, domestic appliances are charged individually and do not form part of a ground clearance.
- 3.3. Renfrewshire Council aims to collect item(s) as soon as possible within 14 days. Residents must ensure any white goods have their doors removed or place in

a position where no one can access it. Special uplift requests for white goods and general goods can be made at the same time, however white goods are charged separately.

- 3.4. The charges for 2023/24 are £37.15 for a domestic uplift (1-20 items) and £37.15 for each domestic white good. The ground clearance charges are £88.00 covering a driver, a waste collector, and a vehicle, for a maximum of one hour's work.
- 3.5. Residents who are council tenants are entitled to two special uplifts per year as part of their rent charge, this is paid for from within the overall Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This is achieved by providing their rent reference number when making their booking.
- 3.6. The current scheme provides no free, discounted or exemptions for this service for any other residents.
- 3.7. The board approved, the age of 65 to be assumed in relation to the term elderly for the duration of this review where this is practical. If an exception to this age is used, it will be clearly noted within the review.

4. Purpose of the Review

- 4.1. The key purpose of this review is to:
 1. Set out the current position in relation to bulk uplifts within Renfrewshire Council;
 2. Consider the impact of offering a free bulk uplift service for the elderly; and
 3. Identify any other mitigations that could be recommended for the elderly that the council could pursue within available resources.

5. Scope of the Review and Timescales

- 5.1. In relation to 4.1(1) above, the focus of the review is on research into demographics within Renfrewshire; in particular, the elderly population and current trends for existing service demand.
- 5.2. In relation to 4.1(2) above, the focus of the review is on assessing the financial and non-financial implications in relation to the provision of free bulk uplifts for the elderly.
- 5.3. In relation to 4.1(3) above, the focus on the review is exploring existing or potential options available to the elderly within Renfrewshire through partner organisations such as the third sector.
- 5.4. In relation to 4.1(3) above, consideration will be given to the existing services provided within neighbouring local authorities in relation to free bulk uplifts for the elderly to consider any benefits for Renfrewshire.

- 5.5. For clarity, the level of charges applied to bulk uplifts within Renfrewshire is outwith the scope of this review.
- 5.6. The review has progressed through 2023, with a conclusive report being submitted for approval to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board on 6 November 2023, and a final report to Council 14 December 2023. The table below provides an outline of the proposed timetable.

Timetable for Bulk Uplift for the Elderly Review

Date of Board Meeting	Stage of Review
23 January 2023 - Complete	Commencement of review
18 March 2023 - Complete	Continuation of review
22 May 2023 - Complete	Continuation of review
26 September 2023 - Current	Continuation of review
6 November 2023 - Revised	Report to Board
14 December 2023	Final Report to Council

6. Progress Update

- 6.1. The review has been progressing well and research has now been completed across all areas within scope. This section will provide an update on the findings since the 22 May 2023 report, with particular focus on the objectives within 5.3.
- 6.2. In this report, we explore existing or potential options available to the elderly through partner organisations such as the third sector within Renfrewshire; this is in relation to scope objective 5.3.
- 6.2.1 The Council currently provides information regarding the potential to recycle items of bulk uplift. As residents navigate through the special uplift request form on the internet, information is provided on the RE-USE scheme.
- 6.2.2 Items in good condition can be donated free of charge to a re-use scheme. Before arranging an, residents are asked to consider donating any items in good condition to a re-use scheme, and the national helpline for more information is listed as 0800 0665 820.

Examples of items that re-use organisations will accept are:

- Sofas and armchairs (fire regulation tags must be attached)
- Beds and mattresses (fire regulation tags must be attached)
- Wardrobes and chest of drawers
- Dining furniture
- Fridges, freezers, electric cookers, washing machines and tumble dryers
- Bicycles

- 6.2.3 The Zero Waste Scotland website allows residents to enter a postcode to find a list of charitable organisations in the area that can be contacted to discuss re-use options. This can be found at:
- <https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/pass-items-through-reuse-tool>.
- 6.3. Care & Repair Renfrewshire deliver free services to people who are older or have disabilities and live in Renfrewshire. This includes a minor repairs service; however, it has been confirmed that removal of bulk uplift items is not one of the services currently provided.
- 6.4. The Scottish Welfare Fund is a discretionary scheme run by Local Government and administered by each local authority, and aims to provide a safety net in disaster or emergency, or to enable independent living in the community. The fund should be available to people who do not have alternative means of paying for what they need; however, bulk uplifts are not currently an eligible cost.
- 6.5. There are five recycling centres across Renfrewshire where residents can recycle, re-use and dispose of a wide range of household materials directly. Residents must bring proof of residency in Renfrewshire, like a Council Tax bill or driving licence, to all sites to gain access.
- 6.6. The next report to Board in November will provide a final summary of the overall review and seek approval for its submission to full Council.
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Implications of this report

1. **Financial** - The outcome of this review could result in additional costs and loss of income to Renfrewshire Council.
2. **HR and Organisational Development** - None directly arising from this report.
3. **Community/Council Planning** - None directly arising from this report.
4. **Legal** - None directly arising from this report.
5. **Property/Assets** - None directly arising from this report.
6. **Information Technology** - None directly arising from this report.
7. **Equality and Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have not yet been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities

and human rights because the paper sets out the scope for a review process rather than proposing any changes to services. Impact assessments will be undertaken as part of the review, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. Any policy changes arising from the review will also be fully assessed.

8. **Health and Safety** - None directly arising from this report.
 9. **Procurement** - None directly arising from this report.
 10. **Risk** - The potential risk that the Council will overspend its approved budgets for the year will be managed at a Council-wide level by the Chief Executive and Directors.
 11. **Privacy Impact** - None directly arising from this report.
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** - Not applicable.
 13. **Climate Risk** - None directly arising from this report.
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List of Background Papers

Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Annual Programme approved 22 August 2022.
Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Charges for Bulk Items Uplift for the Elderly 23 January 2023.
Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Charges for Bulk Items Uplift for the Elderly 13 March 2023.
Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Charges for Bulk Items Uplift for the Elderly 22 May 2023.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Finance and Resources for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Finance Business Partner John Kilpatrick who can be contacted at john.kilpatrick@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Author: John Kilpatrick, Finance Business Partner