

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Operational Delivery Committee
DATE	19 th January 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Managed student accommodation waste policy
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/21/262
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly
REPORT AUTHOR	Hannah Lynch
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Managed student accommodation waste policy.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Approves the proposed Managed student accommodation waste policy attached at Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The managed student accommodation waste policy is a newly created document to provide the managed student accommodation providers with clear guidance regarding the domestic waste recycling service provision; their waste management responsibilities; and the consequences of non-compliance with the policy.

The policy states the standard domestic service ACC will provide for managed student accommodation premises during term time (first week of September to last week of May), where appropriate and by agreement.

Out with the standard service, additional waste will not be collected unless there is a commercial arrangement in place. This policy will also protect the Council from providing chargeable services when the premises are operated on a commercial basis e.g. hotel, short-term let apartments.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Detail the standard service provided by Aberdeen City Council to managed student accommodation premises, where it is agreed that the Council will service the accommodation;
- Set out clearly, what is out with the service provision for managed student accommodation premises;
- Specify the responsibilities of the student accommodation operator in relation to waste management; and

- Ensure safe access and egress to bin stores for collection crews.

3.2 **Problems with the current waste service provision for managed student accommodation**

The policy is in response to ongoing and costly problems with providing managed student accommodation, a non-chargeable domestic service over and above the standard domestic collection a normal household would receive. The problems identified below for managed student accommodation also breach sections of the Council's waste and recycling policy.

3.2.1 Service: presently we provide an annual service including out with term time when certain student accommodation properties are being operated on a commercial basis. This continued service should not be occurring, as commercial waste must have a separate arrangement in place, as trade waste cannot be legally collected as part of a domestic collection.

It has been identified that in the majority of collections for managed student accommodation, additional waste is collected out with the agreed provision e.g. side waste, additional collections etc. Consequently, this is significantly impacting on the service due to this delaying collection routes with extra sorting and collecting of materials. The additional waste/ contaminated recycling is costly to dispose through the Residual Derived Fuel (RDF) process rather than being recycled.

3.2.2 Access: consulting with the collection crews and waste supervisors has identified that several of the managed student accommodation sites are not providing access to the bin stores/ locations during the waste and recycling service working hours. Frequently, the collection crew are instructed to empty bins at a particular time, or they must phone the management of the property to gain access. This is an unacceptable request, as other householders on the same route are not permitted to determine a particular time their domestic waste is collected, plus they must provide access to their waste from 7am onwards during collection days.

3.2.3 Collection of excess waste: these collections are currently being provided free of charge and this is particularly observed at the start and end of terms.

3.2.4 Site management of waste, Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) and food waste: The collection crews have identified that most sites have issues such as:

- bin stores not presenting each type of container;
- poorly laid out bin stores which impedes crews and residents' access to certain bins;
- litter and overflowing bins and bulky waste blocking access to the bins.
- Students having restricted or no access to DMR and/ or food waste bins reduces their incentive to recycle, consequently collection crews frequently record DMR and/ or food waste in the general waste bins.

Operational time is also wasted from cleaning excess litter in and around bin stores or moving bulky waste and/or other bins to gain access to the bins requiring emptying. Service and daily operation wise, this causes immense delays on an already burdened collection route.

Contamination: Communal food waste and DMR containers that are frequently contaminated with general waste is a significant issue for the Council. Firstly, there is a financial impact, as the contaminated recyclables can only be sent to the expensive disposal option of RDF.

There is also the potential legislative impact for the Council, as contaminated recyclables can only be disposed of as RDF which contribute towards the lowering of the overall recycling rate for the city, thus risking missing current and future key government recycling targets.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Currently the waste and recycling service is providing managed student accommodations with a collection over and above the normal domestic collection, which is unsustainable and costly to provide. Excess waste is uplifted free of charge and a domestic collection is still provided when the accommodation is run as a commercial entity out with term time.

Providing domestic waste collections only during term time (first week of September to last week of May); not collecting excess waste free of charge should result in immediate cost savings to both the Council and Service. Additionally, operational improvements will be immediately seen within the service.

Managed student accommodation properties managing their waste facilities as per the policy will result in better participation from students and reduced contamination in DMR and food waste. This will result in a more effective service with a lower overall cost to the authority as recyclables are cheaper to dispose of compared to RDF.

The continual review and development of this policy helps to ensure that there is clarity and consistency in the approach which will result in better service delivery.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The recommendations will ensure that the Council will comply with its legal obligations under the following legislation: The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended); The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and Waste Management Licencing (Scotland) Regulations 2011 which place duties on all persons who produce, keep or manage waste (including Local Authorities) to take all reasonable steps to apply the waste hierarchy and through statutory waste and recycling targets.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	<p>The management of managed student accommodation acceptability of policy content.</p> <p>Limiting potential to achieve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aberdeen's recycling target of 56% household waste by 2025. 2. LOIP Stretch outcome 13: Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 	M	<p>Reducing contamination through improved management of bin and recycling facilities.</p> <p>Provision of information for both accommodation management and the students to increase levels of reuse and recycling.</p>
Operational/ collection crew	<p>Manual handling issues with bins e.g. being too heavy to safely move</p> <p>Contact with hazardous materials.</p>	M	<p>Provision of adequate information and support to assist student accommodation operators and student residents to correctly store and use facilities.</p> <p>Manual handling training for collection crew.</p> <p>Monitoring impact implications, with appropriate action as necessary.</p>
Environment / Climate	<p>Risk of increased fly-tipping or littering due to contaminated bins not being emptied.</p> <p>Risk of excess waste out with service agreement, not being disposed of responsibly.</p>	M	<p>Provision of adequate information and support to assist the student accommodation providers and students.</p> <p>Monitoring impact implications, with appropriate action as necessary.</p> <p>Student accommodation operators being made aware of policy and their duty to organise collections out with the agreed service provision.</p>
Reputational	Managed student accommodation management	L	Engagement of regional/ national student accommodation management with the policy.

	acceptability of policy content.		<p>Regular meetings with site managers/ janitors to raise site-based issues and ensure they are aware of the policy contents.</p> <p>Ongoing communications, raising awareness of waste services and how to correctly use them.</p> <p>Appropriate training of Waste Team and Contact Centre Staff when dealing with managed student accommodation issues.</p>
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7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Place	<p>This policy aids improvements in the local environment by reducing the likelihood of littering.</p> <p>The policy supports the delivery of LOIP stretch outcome 13 (Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate).</p>
Aberdeen waste strategy	The policy aligns with Aberdeen's Waste Strategy and will assist Aberdeen achieving its target of recycling 56% of household waste by 2025.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	IIA completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

n/a

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Managed Student Accommodation Waste policy

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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