

**Environment and Transportation Department,
Block 2, Floor 6,
Civic Offices,
Dublin 8.**

15th July 2022.

**To Each Member of the
Climate Action, Environment & Energy Strategic Policy Committee**

Budget Amendment for Proposed Reintroduction of Free Bulky Household Waste Collection.

Existing Policy Framework

The budget amendment to reintroduce a free bulky household waste collection service delivered by Dublin City Council (DCC) is in direct contradiction to European, National and Local policy governing waste disposal and specifically ignores the overarching Polluter Pays Principle.

Current situation

DCC provides a not for profit on demand service for bulky household waste which is successful and services all properties in the administrative area. DCC also accepts Bulky Household Waste at 2 Civic Amenity Sites with appropriate charging structures in place for acceptance of both small and large volumes of various waste streams: €15 per car, €20 estate car or SUV, €40 car and trailer, €70 Van/Double Axle Vehicle. WEEE (incl white goods), Bottles, Textiles and Mixed Dry Recyclables are accepted free of charge.

Online sites and Charity Shops provide a means of donating or selling for free some bulky household products increasing Reduce-Reuse-Recycle principles.

Drawbacks of Free Service

Reintroducing a free service would undermine the ability to provide an on demand service and the use of the 2 DCC Civic Amenity facilities.

‘Dumping tourism’ is incentivised whereby non-residents or commercial operators may take advantage of the free service and drop off waste in areas where collection is taking place.

As previous collection was only on a nominated day, once every 3 years, in a locality or street all residents may not have had an opportunity to avail of the service if they are away from home when the collection takes place.

Presentation of items for disposal is not managed, and non-accepted items may be presented without opportunity for DCC to reject collection of these items and advise customers directly of alternative disposal options.

Private apartment dwellers and residents of private estates were previously excluded from availing of the service (23.5% of private households in the Dublin City area excluded)

Benefits of Current Service

The current service provides for the efficient use of limited resources without requirement for additional funding.

The service complies with waste policy and the polluter pays principle.

On demand collection service is available all year round to all private households so bulky waste can be disposed of when required.

Households also have an option to use our Civic Amenity sites to dispose of bulky materials if they so wish at a reduced cost.

Alternative Solutions for budget amendment funding:

Dublin City Council is not in favour in the provision of the free service on the basis outlined above. In response to this request a number of alternative proposals have been identified.

Possible alternatives would include:

- a. Designated funding for additional **Anti-dumping Initiatives** across city areas €100,000 for each area, to include projects to abate, create awareness and prevent illegal dumping, previous successful projects supported the community in many ways, reclaiming space, greening, biodiversity projects to name a few. A great way for each area to improve areas locally and gain community engagement. **Total Budget: €500,000.**
- b. **Comhairle na nog:** engaging and setting a challenge for illegal dumping solutions, competition for top ideas and the implementation of most feasible in conjunction with group and councillors, prize for top group idea and budget to roll out. **Total Budget: €150,000.**
- c. **Picker Pals:** The Picker Pals educational programme is run by VOICE Ireland and offered free to participating schools. Picker Pals involves motivating pupils to become environmentally aware and active through fun stories and worksheets. It gives children and their families the tools to take real hands-on action to tackle the local issue of litter. During the 2021/2022 academic year, 82 classrooms within Dublin City Council took part in the primary school litter-picking initiative at a cost of €380 per class. Dublin City Council provided €7,600 and the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications provided the remainder. To fully fund the Picker Pals programme in Dublin City Council schools for the 2022/23 academic year at its current level would require an investment of €31,160. You can find out some more information about the programme at the following website <https://voicereiland.org/project-work/picker-pals.php> **Total Budget: €31,160.**
- d. **Circular Skills Workshops for Residents:** It is proposed to organise a suite of free educational workshops for residents throughout Dublin based on prolonging the lifetime of goods, in line with the principals of the circular economy. It is proposed to collaborate with local libraries to host these events. The workshops will provide practical demonstrations and information to upskill participants on clothes repair at home, furniture upcycling, bicycle maintenance and composting at home. The Rediscovery

Centre are potential collaborators for this project (*subject to procurement*). Each workshop is estimated to cost €350. To provide 40 workshops would require a budget of €14,000 with an additional €5,000 required for materials, room hire and light refreshments. **Total Budget: €19,000.**

Summary

The Waste Management Services Division is of the opinion that the current bulky household waste service works very well, is well used and accepted by customers, is operated at low cost and is available to all households in the DCC area and as such the service should not be altered in any way. Some 3000 orders are estimated in 2022 in its current form.

If any additional services are to be supplied, the Environment & Transportation Department recommends that options A, B, C & D are the most appropriate solutions.

Providing free disposal days or weeks at Civic Amenity sites has been explored. Access to the sites is restricted and any significant increase in traffic would create traffic management issues. Even with the best made plans these days have become a health and safety concern and not appropriate in the public realm. Not having a limit on the number of items that could be disposed of, could also lead to abuse of the service by unlicensed collectors or commercial operators.

Decreasing the cost of the on-demand service is not favoured as the service is already operated on a not for profit basis and any significant reduction could lead to increased unmanageable demand resulting in delays in providing service.

Executive Summary

The reintroduction of a free service is not recommended as it provides for a less frequent service that is not available to all households and places a significant additional annual budget requirement on DCC. It is not in line with waste policy and is open to abuses. The reintroduction of a free service would undermine the ability to provide an on demand service and discourage use of the Civic Amenity facilities.

Liam Bergin

Executive Manager