

Cabinet

Meeting date: 26 November 2024

Public Questions (1 total)

1. Question from Ian Mason to Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Public Realm, Councillor Izaak Tailford

I am concerned that those who are doing the bulk collections for CBC are apparently not insured to enter our properties. The result of this is that tenants with long-term health conditions/disabilities are being expected to carry domestic appliances such as fridge freezers and washing machines down several flights of stairs prior to collection. This is something they have neither the equipment or the training to do safely and are therefore being put at risk of serious injury. My impression is that the service has been designed for people who live in houses, with kitchens at ground level, and that no thought or provision has been given to those many residents who live in flats, this includes not only the long-term sick and disabled, but the elderly and pregnant women who just happen to live on the 3rd floor.

Cabinet Member response

Thank you for the question. I understand the concern and I am personally very keen to make sure we do what we can to help residents living with disabilities and long-term health conditions.

The Council's kerbside bulky waste service is delivered by a third party, Reclaim. Collections are booked via the Council and passed on to Reclaim to deliver the service. Reclaim rarely go into people's properties (dwellings or gardens) because the current arrangement is for kerbside pick-up, just like most of our other waste and recycling services, and it is priced accordingly.

Having said this, in special circumstances and at no extra charge to the council, Reclaim have entered properties where a resident has needed extra assistance for example, where age, medical condition or disability prevents someone from depositing their items at the kerbside and where they are unable to call on anyone for assistance.

Reclaim's insurance does extend to such work, but it is not part of the standard service and most residents have friends or family or can help take items to the kerbside. Where this is genuinely not possible assistance can be provided but should be reserved only for those in real need of help.

The service is priced on a kerbside pick-up basis to keep prices as low as possible. Entry pick-ups take much longer to do and they are not as straight forward.

Some of the common issues found when collecting furniture donations for resale are listed below:

- customer absent and unable to gain entry;
- customers asks for safety boots to be removed;
- items require dismantling;
- items require disconnection from gas, water or electricity;
- items were in place before internal structures were altered, e.g. smaller doors or radiators installed that prevent exit with item;
- Lack of preparation by customer, including:
 - route out blocked by furniture or other things,
 - fridges and freezers not defrosted and/or containing food items
 - unfriendly dogs present.

We need to keep number of Entry pick-ups as low as we can, to ensure the overall pricing of the service can remain as low as possible for residents. So we ask that residents use friends, family and neighbours to help them get items to kerbside where they can.