

ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2022
REPORT ON: BIN CHUTE CLOSURE - BURNSIDE COURT EVALUATION
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
REPORT NO: 299-2022

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee on the closure of Burnside Court bin chute, and the actions to mitigate the impact on affected tenants, improve fire safety and increase recycling of household waste as approved by Committee (Article III of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24th August 2020 refers).
- 1.2 To seek approval for the closure of the bin chutes in the Council's 10 remaining Multi-Storey Developments (MSD's).

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the engagement with residents in Burnside Court and the joint working by staff to provide advice and support in relation to alternative means of waste disposal and recycling at this location.
- 2.2 It is further recommended that Committee approves the closure of the bin chutes at the rest of the Council's MSD locations over the next 12 months on a phased basis, with tenders being brought to Committee at the appropriate time as part of a rolling programme of such works across the locations.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the approval of this report. Provision for the costs to close the chutes have been included within the Housing HRA element of the Capital Plan 2022 2027 and Housing (HRA) Revenue Budget. Committee approved a tender report for the installation of fire rated doors including steel doors within the MSDs in April 2021 (Report number 115-2021) and a further tender report shall be brought to committee in respect of any internal fire stopping measures that are required when permanently closing the chutes.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Managing the risk of fire in high rise residential accommodation remains foremost in our considerations and a standing group of officers (including a representative from Scottish Fire & Rescue) continue to meet regularly to consider fire safety in Council MSD's.
- 4.2 Regular physical checks of these buildings are undertaken, fire risk assessments and action plans are in place and up to date. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service undertake regular inspection of high-rise common areas to ensure that effective housekeeping is in place, identifying and advising the Council of any issues which require to be addressed. Joint inspections are also carried out by Dundee City Council technical officers and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service both of which are reported on.
- 4.3 Committee previously approved the closure of the bin chute at Burnside Court meaning that the remaining 10 Council's multi storey blocks still have an internal bin chute for the disposal of household waste. Each chute empties into a bin room containing multiple bins that staff on site rotate on a daily basis so they do not overflow. Bins are emptied by Environment - Waste Management two or three times a week.

- 4.4 All household waste is disposed of down the same communal chute and there are no recycling facilities within the blocks to separate the waste. Recycling facilities are available externally to the buildings at some locations for residents and the neighbouring properties to use.
- 4.5 Each bin room has a sprinkler system installed as a fire suppression measure. Chutes are cleaned by a contractor on 3 monthly basis. A contractor is in place to unblock chutes which occurs regularly.
- 4.6 As outlined in the earlier Committee report, there are a range of issues relating to the existing bin chutes which were not designed to meet the needs of modern household refuse disposal which leads to the chutes becoming blocked on a regular basis due to the bulky nature of bin bags and items deposited. Such blockages increase the risk of fire. Fire suppression sprinklers are currently fitted in the bin rooms at each location but there are no means of suppressing a fire within the chute itself.

There are maintenance issues at some locations due to the age of the chutes and some chutes having to be partially closed off for a period of time while repairs were considered. Some chutes have been condemned and would require a full replacement which is not deemed a viable option. Where this action has been necessary we have not seen any increase in unauthorised dumping of household waste/items.

Most importantly, the current chute openings on landings do not meet recommended fire safety standards and are incompatible with modern day demands for refuse disposal both in terms of the volume of today's household rubbish and the lack of any recycling opportunities within the Multi Storey blocks.

- 4.7 The cost of repairs and maintenance of the chutes including repairs to chutes and fixings, cleaning, unblocking, maintaining sprinklers is approximately £60,000 per annum
- 4.8 Taking into account the issues highlighted, it is proposed that the most effective and viable option going forward is the complete closure of the existing bin chutes and replacement with alternative waste disposal provision in line with the Waste and Recycling Strategy for the City.
- 4.9 This will involve fully decommissioning the chutes and closing them at each MSD location and providing alternative waste disposal facilities external to the building.
- 4.10 To secure the existing chute rooms after closure, the doorway to each chute room on the landings will be secured with a lockable steel door and internal fire stopping measures would be installed at each floor opening and inside the chute as required.
- 4.11 The ground level bin rooms will be emptied and areas secured.
- 4.12 External waste disposal facilities will be installed at each block and tenants will be required to take their rubbish down to these facilities.
- 4.13 Checks will be carried out by staff onsite as well as daily inspections by Housing teams and out of hours inspections on a regular basis from the Safety & Alarm Response Centre (SARC) to ensure waste is not left on landings or in lifts. These checks will be very similar to the stairs and landing checks that are already undertaken by Caretaking and SARC staff.
- 4.14 Closing the chutes will improve fire safety across the multi storeys and installing external waste disposal facilities will allow recycling opportunities to be significantly expanded in line with Scottish Governments Circular Economy proposals and our current Waste and Recycling Strategy. In addition, if approved, this will provide an ongoing cost saving by reducing maintenance costs related to the bin chutes.
- 4.15 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service support the closure of the bin chutes to further enhance tenant safety in our MSD's based on the analysis outlined above.

5 BURNSIDE COURT - BIN CHUTE CLOSURE INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Prior to arranging the closure of the bin chute at Burnside Court, an engagement strategy was developed by a working group of officers made up of Housing, Environment, Construction and City Development. This included 12 week lead in to communicate and engage with residents prior to closing the chute. 3 letters and information leaflets were delivered to all properties in the block to provide information and to engage with tenants in advance of the closure. These were staged at 8 weeks, 4 weeks and 1 week before closure.

The first letter was issued in June 2021 and this informed the tenants of the proposed closure of the bin chute, and the associated changes to waste and recycling services. It also explained why and when this change was to take place, offered a link to the Council website for more detail and contact details for the Tenancy & Estates team should they have any specific queries or concerns. The information on the website also allowed tenants to log any concerns, queries or complaints that they may have and to highlight support needs in relation to the presentation of household waste under the new arrangements.

A second letter was distributed a 4 weeks later, giving more detail on the proposed changes and to keep tenants aware of progress and the proposals. This letter included pictures and diagrams of the plans. Enclosed within the letter was a fully illustrated service information leaflet, to help explain how to use the bins and where to obtain advice, should they need it.

The third letter was delivered in August 2021, advising tenants that the changes would be implemented on 16th August, with the chutes being permanently closed from 23rd August 2021.

The Safety & Alarm Response Centre (SARC) controllers/responders, who are regularly in the block, were supplied with food caddies and hessian bags. Tenants of the block were encouraged to collect these onsite, with the caddies useful for taking food to be recycled and the hessian bag to help transport any recyclable, or non-recyclable, waste to the communal containers located outside the block.

On the 16th and 17th August 2021, Tenancy and Estates staff were based onsite to engage with residents in Burnside Court to ensure they were aware of the changes and to offer advice and support as required.

- 5.2 When the chute was closed, there was feedback from residents regarding the size of bins and in response, smaller more accessible bins were provided.

Between January 2022 and August 2022, we carried out an extensive engagement in the form of a survey with the residents of Burnside Court. This engagement was to assess the impact, particularly on elderly residents and those with disabilities, of the bin chute closure at this location. We attempted to contact all tenants through their intercom, by telephone and by paper survey with all invited to provide feedback on the bin chute closure process, on communication throughout the process and on the alternative arrangements which had been put in place for waste disposal. The results are detailed below;

- 5.3 There are 84 flats in the Burnside MSD, with 4 void properties at the time of the engagement survey. Staff were successful in engaging with 46 residents (which equates to approx. 60%). We found that 89% of those who responded agreed that communication leading up to the change was adequate and clear. In addition, 83% confirmed that the changes were easy to adapt to and a number mentioning that they didn't use the bin chute prior to closure. A small number of respondents reported some concerns, mainly relating to the new external bins being full and overflowing. We took this feedback on board and have worked with colleagues in Waste Management and can confirm that some short-term collection issues, relating to Covid related absence, have since been addressed.

To support anyone with a disability or who might find lifting the lid of the communal bin, we installed smaller bins onsite. We are currently sourcing pedal operated bins for future locations.

- 5.4 In relation to the proposed bin chute closure programme for the remaining MSD's, it is proposed to carry out similar extensive tenant engagement, provide information and offer advice and assistance to tenants prior to and during the works. We plan to undertake a combination of information days/surgeries held with individual visits to tenants where required. Learning from our pandemic response, we would undertake more home visits to discuss matters in their own home to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved and increase the level of onsite surgeries.
- 5.5 We will implement a thorough engagement strategy with tenants and other stakeholders on the closure of the bin chutes. This will ensure that the views of tenants and other stakeholders are taken into account and will allow the Council the opportunity to provide the level of information required to ensure that tenants and other residents are fully informed. Other stakeholders will include but are not restricted to Dundee Federation of Tenants Association (DFTA), Dundee Pensioners Forum (DPF) and Dundee Access Group whom we have already engaged.
- 5.6 A variety of engagement methods will be utilised. A Frequently Asked Questions leaflet will also be produced in support of the engagement strategy and in line with the Council's current Recycling and Waste Management Strategy.
- 5.7 Tenant safety remains of paramount importance to the Council and we will continue to review our systems and processes to ensure that the Multi Storey Developments remain safe places to live for our tenants. Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, as key partners, are supportive of the measures to further enhance tenant safety in our MSD's, as outlined in this report.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment to identify impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. An impact, positive or negative on one or more of these issues was identified. An appropriate senior manager has checked and agreed with this assessment. A copy of the Integrated Impact Assessment showing the impacts and accompanying benefits of/mitigating factors for them is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Council Leadership Team, Dundee Federation of Tenants Association, Dundee Pensioners Forum and Dundee Access Group have been consulted in the preparation of this report and agree with its content.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

Elaine Zwirlein
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

Louise Butchart
Head of Housing & Construction

27 October 2022

Appendix 1: Integrated Impact Assessment Report

Author Responsible	Michelle Harrow
Author Title	Service Manager
Author Department	Neighbourhood Services
Author Email	michelle.harrow@dundeecity.gov.uk
Author Telephone	01382 434821
Author Address	5 City Square, Dundee, DD1 3BA

Executive Director	Elaine Zwirlein
Executive Director Title	Executive Director Neighbourhood Services
Executive Director Department	Neighbourhood Services
Executive Director Email	elaine.zwirlein@dundeecity.gov.uk
Executive Director Telephone	01382 434358
Executive Director Address	5 City Square, Dundee, DD1 3BA

Document Title	BIN CHUTE CLOSURE - BURNSIDE COURT EVALUATION
Document Type	Update
New / Existing Document?	Existing
Document Description	To update Committee on the closure of Burnside Court bin chute, as approved by Committee (24 th August 2020 report ref 18-2020), and actions to mitigate the impact on affected tenants, improve fire safety, increase recycling of household waste and to seek approval for the closure of the bin chutes in the Council's remaining Multi-Storey Developments (MSD's).
Intended Outcome	<p>It is recommended that Committee notes the engagement with residents in Burnside Court and the joint working by staff to provide advice and support in relation to alternative means of waste disposal and recycling at this location.</p> <p>It is further recommended that Committee approves the closure of the bin chutes at the rest of the Council's MSD locations, with tenders being brought to Committee at the appropriate time as part of a rolling programme of such works across the locations.</p>
Document Start Date	01/12/2022

Document End Date	30/11/2025
How will the proposal be monitored?	A further tender report will be brought to Committee for review and consideration of tenders submitted by contractors in respect of any required fire stopping works within the chutes.

Equality, Diversity & Human Rights

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Age				X	Elderly people may struggle to carry bin bags down to the bins outside the MSD. We will carry out a demographic check on all current tenants in each MSD as part of the engagement process and ensure we make direct contact with any older people to understand their particular needs and arrange for any advice and support that may be required including the completion of a support needs assessment and where appropriate link in with colleagues in DHSCP as required.
Disability				X	As above for people with a disability
Gender Reassignment		x			
Marriage & Civil Partnership		x			
Pregnancy & Maternity		x			
Race / Ethnicity		x			
Religion or Belief		x			
Sex		x			
Sexual Orientation		x			

Are any Human Rights not covered by the Equalities questions above impacted by this report?	None to address
---	-----------------

Fairness & Poverty

Geography

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Strathmartine (Ardler, St. Mary's & Kirkton)				X	

Lochee (Lochee / Beechwood, Charleston & Menzieshill)				X	
Coldside (Hilltown, Fairmuir & Coldside)				X	
Maryfield (Stobswell & City Centre)				X	
North East (Whitfield, Fintry & Mill O'Mains)				X	
East End (Mid Craigie, Linlathen & Douglas)				X	
The Ferry				X	
West End				x	

Household Group

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Looked After Children & Care Leavers				x	
Carers				x	
Lone Parent Families				x	
Single Female Households with Children				x	
Greater Number of Children and/or Young Children				x	
Pensioners – single / couple				x	
Unskilled Workers or Unemployed		x			Being unskilled worker or unemployed does not have a bearing on bin chute closures
Serious & Enduring Mental Health Problems				x	
Homeless		x			Being a homeless household does not have any bearing on bin chute closures
Drug and/or Alcohol Problems				x	

Offenders and Ex-Offenders				x	
----------------------------	--	--	--	---	--

Socio-Economic Disadvantage

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Employment Status				x	
Education & Skills				x	
Income				x	
Fuel Poverty				x	
Caring Responsibilities (including Childcare)				x	
Affordability and Accessibility of Services				x	

Inequalities of Outcome

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Cost of Living / Poverty Premium				x	
Connectivity / Internet Access				x	
Income / Benefit Advice / Income Maximisation				x	
Employment Opportunities				x	
Education				x	
Health				x	
Life Expectancy				x	
Mental Health				x	

Overweight / Obesity				x	
Child Health				x	
Neighbourhood Satisfaction				x	
Transport				x	

Environment

Climate Change

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Mitigating Greenhouse Gases	x				Recycling helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy consumption – Zero Waste Scotland
Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change	x				

Resource Use

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Energy Efficiency and Consumption	x				Making products from recycled materials requires less energy than making them from new raw materials – friends of the earth
Prevention, Reduction, Re-use, Recovery, or Recycling of Waste	x				Installing external waste disposal facilities will allow recycling opportunities to be significantly expanded in line with the current Waste and Recycling Strategy
Sustainable Procurement	x				

Transport

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Accessible Transport Provision		X			
Sustainable Modes of Transport		x			

Natural Environment

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Air, Land and Water Quality	x				
Biodiversity	x				Recycling limits the amount of resources needed to make new products helping to preserve biodiversity
Open and Green Spaces	x				

Built Environment

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Built Heritage		x			
Housing	x				Increasing our household recycling rate has documented benefits for everyone and supports delivery of Scotland's zero waste and circular economy ambitions

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Use the SEA flowchart to determine whether your proposal requires SEA.

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a Plan, Programme or Strategy as defined by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005	x
--	---

Corporate Risk

	P o s i t i v e	N o l i m p a c t	N e g a t i v e	N o t K n o w n	Explanation of Impact / Mitigations / Unknowns
Political Reputational Risk		x			
Economic / Financial Sustainability / Security & Equipment		x			
Social Impact / Safety of Staff & Clients	x				Closing the bin chutes reduces the fire risk in the MSDs
Technological / Business or Service Interruption		x			
Environmental	x				
Legal / Statutory Obligations		x			
Organisational / Staffing & Competence		x			

One of the three statements below will apply

The risk implications associated with the subject matter of this report are 'business as normal' risks and any increase to the level of risk to the Council is minimal. This is due either to the risk being inherently low or as a result of the risk being transferred in full or in part to another party on a fair and equitable basis. The subject is routine and has happened many times before without significant impact.	x	<i>(No further response needed)</i>
There are moderate levels of risk associated with the subject matter of this report. However, having undertaken a full analysis of the upside and downside risks there is a clear benefit in what is proposed and we are satisfied that adequate controls are available to mitigate the downside risks. The downside financial exposure to the Council is less than £xxx and this together with other areas of risk can be effectively managed.		<i>(No further response needed)</i>
There are considerable risks associated with the subject matter of this report. This is due either to a significant departure from the previous norm of Council activity, the nature of the proposals or the potential for substantial financial or other impact to be sustained. The report		<i>Proposed Mitigating Actions:</i>

incorporates the potential for losses in excess of £xxx should the downside risk materialise and/or there is potential for the Council's decision to be challenged and for significant reputational damage.		
---	--	--

This page is intentionally left blank