

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the Coat of Arms of the City of Edinburgh. The crest includes a crown with four thistles, a shield divided into four quarters (top-left: a saltire, top-right: a stag's head, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: a bird), and a motto scroll at the bottom.

Agenda Item 6

Provision of Free Sanitary Products in Council Offices

Falkirk Council

Title: **Provision of free sanitary products in Council Offices**

Meeting: **Executive**

Date: **27 November 2018**

Submitted By: **Director of Corporate & Housing Services**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive on the provision of free sanitary products in Council Offices.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The Executive is asked to approve the introduction of free sanitary products in Council offices based on a 10% uptake and to agree this is kept under review to ensure appropriate provision is made.

3. Background

- 3.1 Over recent years access to sanitary products for females has evolved as a concern. This is linked to poverty related issues including “in-work” poverty. Consequently, the Scottish Government has committed to providing sanitary products to students at school, college and university across Scotland.
- 3.2 This provision commenced in Falkirk Council schools week commencing 17 September.
- 3.3 This has prompted the Council to consider the policy from a workforce perspective, to determine whether it is appropriate and practical to expand the free sanitary products policy into office based Council premises.

4. Considerations

- 4.1 Falkirk Council's workforce currently operates within approximately 200 locations (where the premises are managed by the Council).
- 4.2 This figure however, does not take into account locations which are not Falkirk Council managed premises, for example, cleaners working in Falkirk Community Trust or other external locations. Consideration will also need to be given to employees who do not have a specific work location, for example Personal Carers and Home Helps.

- 4.3 If the Council chooses to provide free access to sanitary products, it should be recognised that the provision will not be required in every location, for example, locations that have a male workforce.
- 4.4 The cost and resources of providing this provision will also need to be considered. Further details are noted below in section 6.
- 4.5 With regard to the workforce profile and poverty issues, all employees across Falkirk Council are currently paid the Scottish Local Government Living Wage which is normally comparable to/slightly higher than the Living Wage Foundation's recommended living wage. As such, the hourly rates paid to employees should positively support the aim of tackling poverty issues. There are however c1,300 female employees across all grades of the Council who work part time, and as a result of the hours they work, their annual take home pay is below the Living Wage Foundation's equivalent annual salary for full time hours. It must be recognised however, that some of these employees may have alternative employment which contributes to and increases their overall annual earnings; in some cases this may take them up to, or beyond, the annual equivalent of the Living Wage Foundation threshold.
- 4.6 The Council currently have c4,000 female employees aged between 16-55. This is the age range who may have most need for sanitary products.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 No consultation has taken place in relation to this proposal.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The Scottish Government currently provides funding to support the provision of sanitary products within schools for pupils. However, this funding would not cover any provision within Council offices and consideration needs to be given to the cost of providing the workforce with access to free sanitary products.
- 6.2 To calculate the costs, the Scottish Government suggest this is based on 8p per product, with an estimated 24 products required at each occasion an employee requires them (estimated to be 13 times per year), i.e., c300 products each year.
- 6.3 Based on poverty indicators, schools anticipate a 35% uptake of this provision. It is expected that the uptake within Council buildings would be much lower although at this stage there is nothing to confirm this. If however, an initial provision was made based on an approximate 10% uptake, the annual cost to the Council would be £10,000. This level of provision would enable the Council to assess the future needs and costs. The £10,000 will initially be found from existing budgets.

Resources

- 6.4 Initial stock has been ordered by Children's Services for schools.
- 6.5 Additional stock will require to be ordered for Council offices and work will require to be undertaken to determine the level for each of the various work locations. In addition, officers will need to be identified to take responsibility for ensuring the future ordering and replenishing of this stock.
- 6.6 The responsibility for ordering and replenishing of this stock may lie with colleagues providing cleaning services and further discussions on resourcing this will take place, if the provision of products is agreed.

Legal

- 6.7 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk

- 6.8 There are no risks from this report.

Equalities

- 6.9 An EPIA has been undertaken and there is a positive impact on equality and poverty in relation to the provision of free sanitary products.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.10 There is no sustainability or environmental implications from this report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Executive is being asked to consider the provision of free sanitary products for employees across the Council, within Council buildings, with the aim of tackling poverty issues associated with this.

Director of Corporate & Housing Services

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Date: 12 November 2018

APPENDICES

None

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

None