

Council will uplift flammable materials for free ahead of Bonfire Night

Residents living in parts of Edinburgh which were affected by anti social behaviour on bonfire night will be offered free bulky waste uplifts, in a bid to clear the streets of items which could be set on fire.

The service is one of a range of measures the local authority and fire service hope will curb any spike in unruly behaviour and fire-raising around 5 November.

Collection of big domestic waste items, such as furniture, mattresses and washing machines – which usually cost £5 per item – will be free of charge over a “limited period ahead of bonfire night” for communities in the south-west and north-west of the capital, with more details expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

Special street patrols will also aim to spot and remove flammable items in areas where there has been trouble previously, whilst residents are being urged to report fly-tipped waste which could be targeted and set on fire by unruly gangs.

Parts of the capital were effectively locked down on bonfire night last November, with people urged to stay at home as a

result of unruly gangs setting fires on roads and aiming fireworks at cars and emergency vehicles.

Police, ambulances and fire crews were deployed to deal with incidents in Niddrie, Sighthill, Drylaw and Pilton and had petrol bombs and bricks thrown at them, leaving two officers in hospital.

Despite the efforts to reduce the number of kids behaving recklessly, councillors said 2022 was "worse than usual".

Police Scotland had 10 'dispersal zones' in place and it is understood the force will implement them all again this year, whilst mobile CCTV cameras will be sent to problem areas to identify any troublemakers.

Simon Porteous, Family and Household Support Service Manager at Edinburgh City Council, said: "As part of the planning arrangements we have a number of different initiatives carried out right across the communities involving our colleagues in waste services and housing as well."

He said the "normal process will be followed" to book bulky waste collection, adding: "We will be looking at weeks of action planned in communities right across the city which will assist that process."

Cllr Val Walker, convener of the Culture and Communities Committee, said following "extensive damage to property" previously the local authority was working with partners to focus on "keeping people safe".

She said: "Across the city we want a coordinated, city-wide approach to know what plans there are for bonfire, what safety measures are in place, looking at the use of CCTV as well."

Meanwhile £4,000 will fund a range of activities being offered to youths from communities which usually see an increase in anti-social behaviour around Guy Fawkes' Night.

Offerings for young people last year included a trip to Alton Towers and activities at Ratho Retreat Centre.

But despite the Scottish Government introducing measures to prevent the misuse of fireworks in public places in June this year the effect will not be felt until next year by which time the council will have been able to consult on the implementation of the new laws.

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

This is the council report discussed at committee earlier in the week.



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