

# Edinburgh councillors to consider crack-down on illegal street traders

A crack-down on illegal street traders in Edinburgh is to being considered by the city council.

New enforcement measures to more pro-actively enforce laws on displaying goods for sale on pavements will go before Edinburgh councillors this week.

The most affected area would likely be the Old Town, with businesses selling items to tourists likely to be hit.

Current legislation prohibits the display of goods for sale on or over a pavement, with the council being responsible for enforcement.

At present, the council has few resources dedicated to enforcing unlawful street trading, with staff being redirected away from the task during the pandemic.

A report to councillors says that the new enforcement measures would involve taking a more aggressive stance on illegal street vending.

The first step by council enforcement officers or police would be to tell a street vendor violating the law to remove displayed items from the pavement by the end of the working day.

If this fails, a 'statuary notice' would be issued demanding that the goods be removed within seven days, notifying their

owner that the council could confiscate and store goods displayed on the pavement and charge the retailer with the costs of doing this.

Finally, if the vendor does not abide by this, the council would confiscate, wrap, photograph and store the goods, and provide them with an itemised list of what was taken.

The vendor would have 28 days to collect their goods, with them being destroyed otherwise.

If the vendor collects the goods, they would be issued with a letter explaining that if the goods are seen for sale again they would be taken and 'not be returned', and that the matter would be reported to the Procurator Fiscal with the possibility of a £1000 fine.

The report states that the action "is likely to be unpopular with retailers who have grown used to occupying the adopted footway for the display of goods for sale."

Further, it proposes changing the council's regulations around legal street vending to add rules around where displays take place, and how they look.

At present, traders with a valid street trading licence or permission to sell goods at certain private markets are allowed to present goods for sale on pavements.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter