

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 19 March 2013

Waste and Recycling Update

Item number	7.12
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P44
	P49
	P50
Council outcomes	CO17
	CO18
Single Outcome Agreement	NO14-LO30

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Executive summary

Waste and Recycling Update

Summary

This report updates Committee on performance in reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfill and increasing recycling. The report also provides an update on progress in implementing the policy of not collecting excess domestic waste.

The amount of waste sent to landfill so far in 2012/13 has reduced by 7,124 tonnes or 6% when compared against the same period last year. Based on tonnage data for the period ending January it is forecast that 137,953 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year, 9,716 tonnes (6.6%) less than in 2011/12.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled is at its highest ever with 39.06% of waste having been recycled so far in 2012/13 compared to 35.5% in 2011/12.

The continued roll out of food waste collections has resulted in increased amounts of food waste being segregated for recycling. In January 465 tonnes were collected which is the highest monthly tonnage since the scheme was introduced.

The policy of not collecting extra waste at the side of bins and overfilled bins was relaxed during the initial implementation of managed weekly collections to allow residents to get used to fortnightly collections of residual waste. The reintroduction of that policy on a phased basis started on 4 February 2013.

Only around 4% of bins are currently being presented with extra waste by the side or overfull. This waste is no longer being collected, bins are tagged, letters sent and visits made to offer advice and support. Enforcement action will be considered as a last resort if extra waste continues to be presented.

Initial indications are that the incidence of extra waste is reducing. Door knocking of affected households is yielding a positive response from 87% of those visited and 53% of those visited ordered additional recycling boxes.

Officers will continue to promote recycling through awareness raising campaigns and community engagement. A further report outlining the communications strategy will be brought to a future meeting of the committee.

Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

Measures of success

- Achievement of the Council's targets for increasing recycling and reducing landfill.

Financial impact

The reduced amount of waste that is projected to be sent to landfill this year will result in an estimated saving of £1 million.

Equalities impact

The content of this report is not relevant to the public sector equality duty of the Equalities Act 2010.

Sustainability impact

Increased recycling will help to divert waste from landfill and support the achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets, and reductions in local environmental impact.

Consultation and engagement

A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote recycling which includes door knocking, radio and bus advertisements and local events.

Further public consultation will be carried out in the first quarter of 2013/14, using demographically representative focus groups, with residents from both low and high density housing areas, in particular to identify the barriers to recycling and to shape the communications and engagement activities.

Background reading / external references

Waste and Recycling Update

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of Transport and Environment Committee on 15th January 2013 members requested regular updates on performance in reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and increasing recycling. It was also agreed at the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee meeting on 26th February 2013 to provide an update in the landfill tonnages and recycling report on the implementation of the Council's policy of not collecting excess domestic waste.

Landfilled Waste and Recycling

- 1.2 The *imProve it* programme aims to deliver transformational change in a number of environment services including Waste Services. The most significant waste targets in 2012/13 are:
- Reduced landfill tonnages – 131,222 tonnes
 - Increased recycling of waste - 40% of municipal waste
- 1.3 Significant progress in implementing the changes required to deliver both service improvements and landfill savings has been made including the implementation of managed weekly collections in September 2012.

Excess Waste Policy

- 1.4 Like many local authorities across the country (e.g. West Lothian, Scottish Borders and, soon, Glasgow) the Council has always had a policy of not picking up extra waste beside bins or overfilled bins. This policy was relaxed to allow residents time to adapt to the change to fortnightly residual waste collections, but starting on 4 February, the policy was reintroduced using a phased approach.
- 1.5 The phased approach includes the following stages:
- 4 February to 17 February: Crews collected but tagged bins that were overfilled, or had bags of waste beside them. A letter was sent to these properties to offer support with reducing waste and recycling.
 - 18 Feb – 3 March: Crews did not pick up any extra bags of waste beside bins, or empty bins if they were overfilled. A tag was placed on the bin

informing residents, a letter was sent and a visit arranged to provide advice and support on reducing and recycling waste.

- 4 March – 18 March. Crews did not pick up any extra bags of waste beside bins, or empty bins if the lid could not be shut. A tag was placed on the bin informing residents and an official warning letter was sent.
- From 18 March, crews will not collect extra waste put beside bins or emptying overfilled bins where the lid cannot shut. Environmental Wardens will investigate any cases of this happening, with the potential to issue a fixed penalty notice.

2. Main report

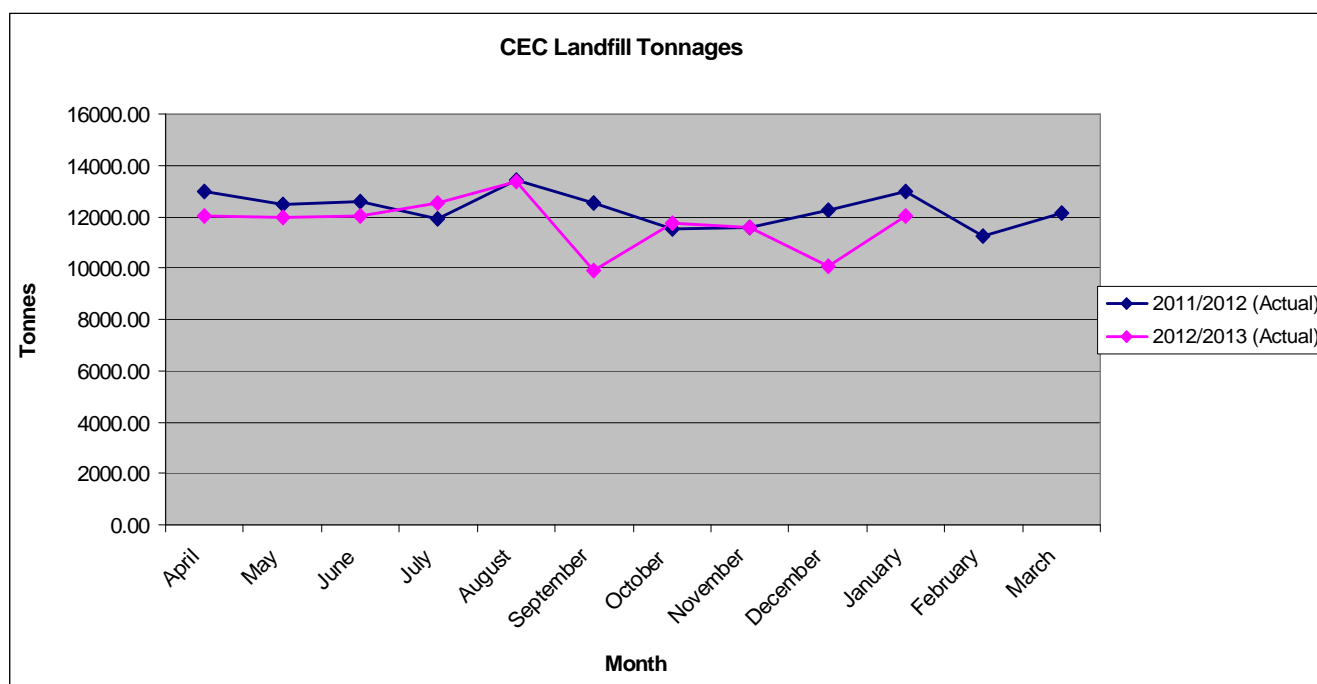
Landfill

2.1 Landfill tonnage (see Table 1 below) for the year to January 2012 totals 117,156 tonnes, this is a reduction of 6% on the same period in 2011/12. The projection for landfill to the year end is currently 137,953 tonnes. Although this exceeds the budget target of 131,222 tonnes it would still be a reduction of 7% or 9,716 on the year 2011/12. With landfill costs of approximately £98 per tonne this reduction represents a saving of nearly £1m.

Table 1: Landfill Tonnages 12/13 & 11/12

	YTD Jan 2013	YTD Jan 2012	Difference		12/13 Target	12/13 Year End Forecast	11/12 Year End Actual	Difference between 12/13 & 11/12	
			Tonnes	%				Tonnes	%
Landfill	117,156	124,280	-7,124	-6%	131,222	137,953	147,669	-9,716	-7%

Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 11/12 & 12/13 (YTD)



2.2 The landfill tonnage for December and January 2012 combined is 22,073 tonnes. This is a reduction of 12.5% on the corresponding period in 2011/12

Recycling

2.3 The percentage of waste recycled (see Chart 2 below) including street sweepings between April 2012 and January 2013 is 39% compared to 36% for the same period in 2011/12.

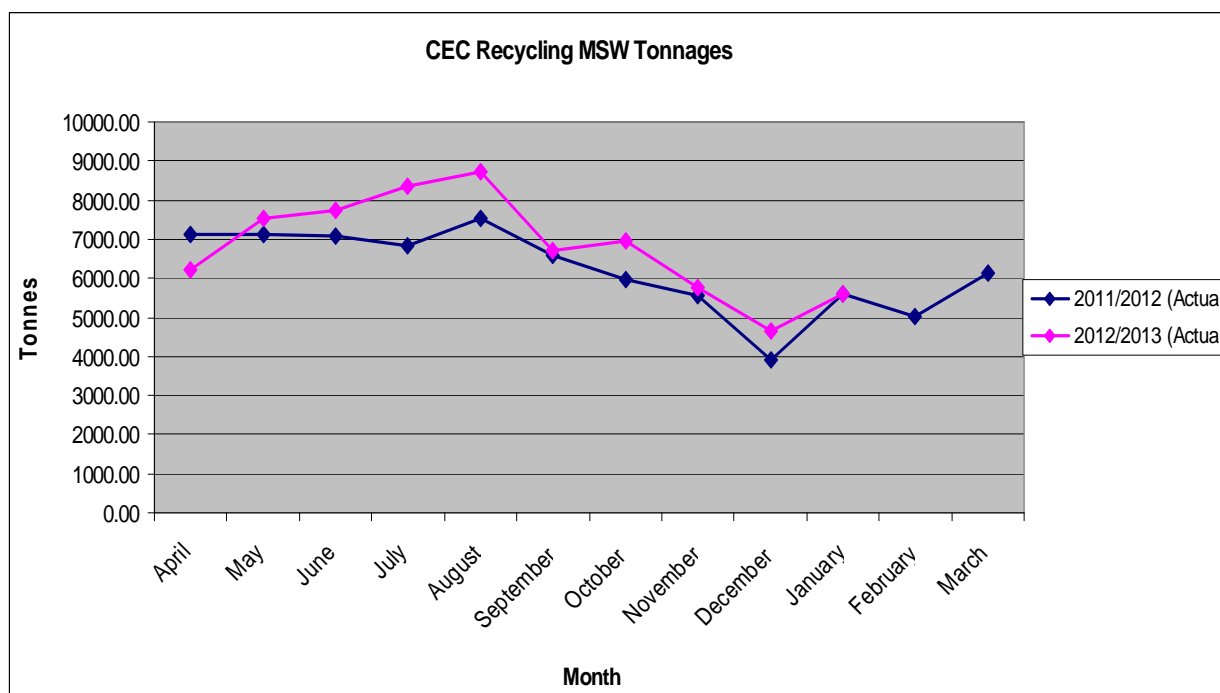
2.4 The percentage of municipal waste recycled for the period ending January 2013 was 37%. This means that residents and trade waste customers recycled 5,046 tonnes or 8% more than in the same period last year.

Table 2: Percentage of waste recycled 2012/13 & 2011/12

	YTD Jan 2013		YTD Jan 2012		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	%
Recycling - All Waste	73,343	39%	69,052	36%	4,291	6%
Recycling Municipal Waste*	68,260	37%	63,214	34%	5,046	8%

* Municipal Waste is all domestic and commercial waste collected by the Council excluding street sweepings

Chart 2: Recycling Tonnages 11/12 & 12/13 (YTD)



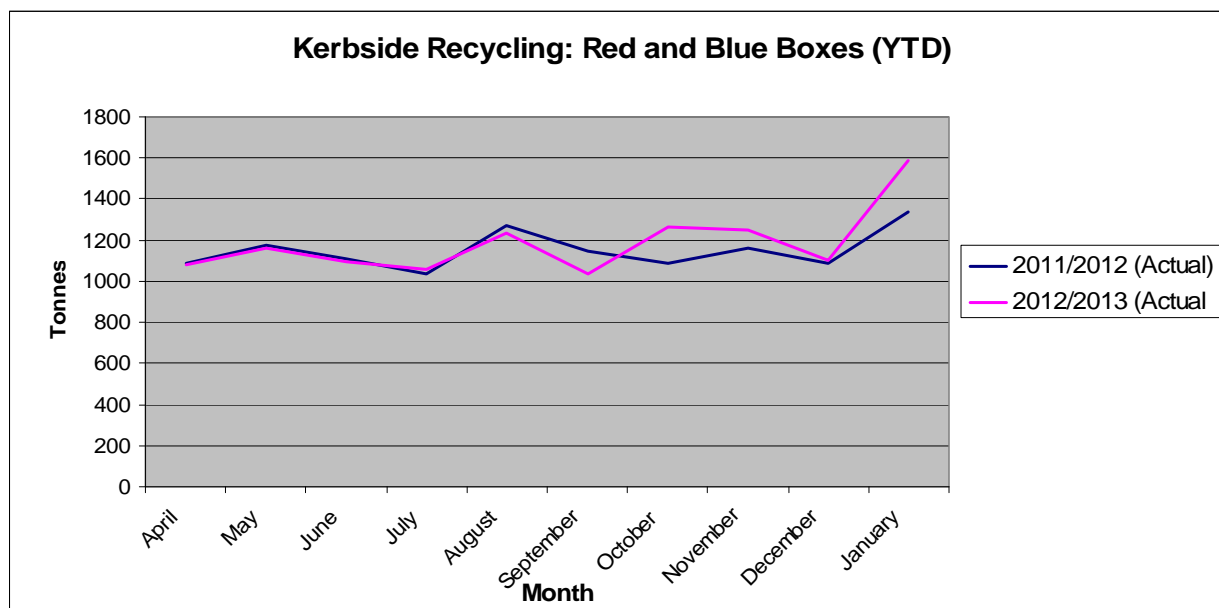
2.5 The projected year end recycling rate for municipal waste (see Table 3 below) is 37% compared to the target of 40%. The forecast year end recycling rate for all waste arisings is 39% compared to last year's actual year end rate of 36%.

Table 3: Year End Recycling Tonnages 12/13 (forecast) & 11/12 (actual)

	12/13 Year End Forecast		11/12 Year End Actual		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	%
Recycling - All Waste	86,749	39%	81,213	36%	5,536	7%
Recycling – Municipal Waste	80,646	37%	74,363	33%	6,283	8%

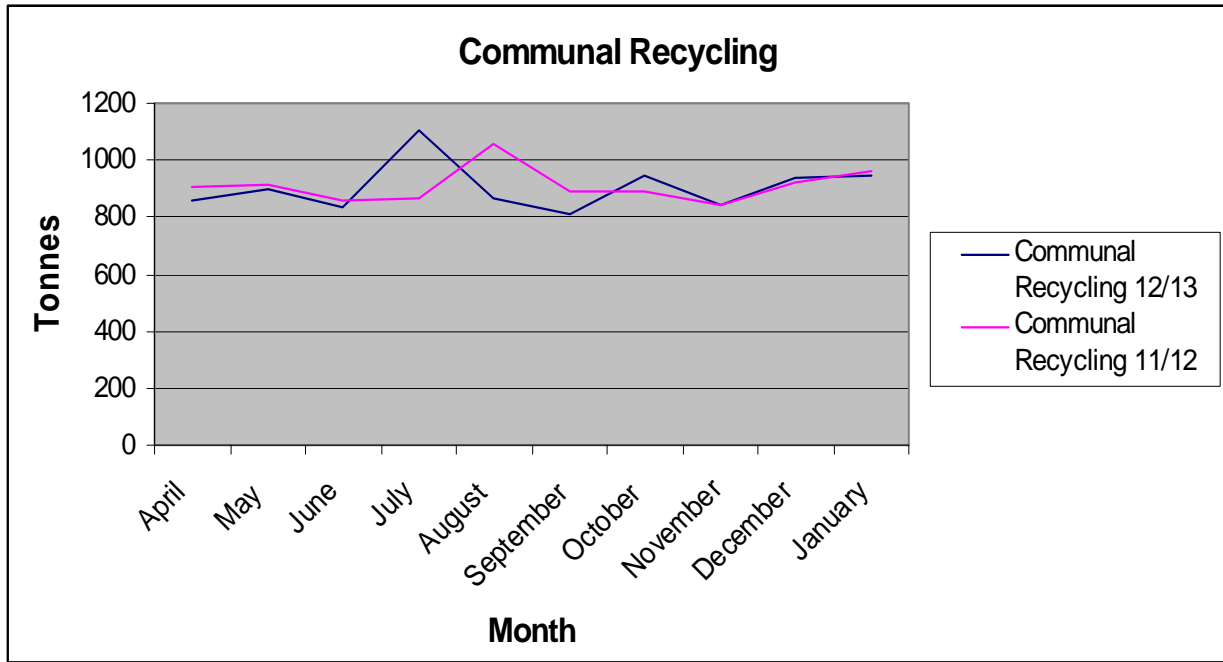
- 2.6 The recycling tonnage for December 2012 and January 2013 combined is 11,008 tonnes an increase of 6% on the corresponding period in 2011/12
- 2.7 The tonnage of food waste recycled for the year to end January 2012 totals 3,659 tonnes, this is an increase of 2,909 tonnes on the same period in 2011/2012. These increases can largely be attributed to the continued roll out of this service.
- 2.8 The tonnage of waste recycled through the kerbside red and blue box scheme for the year to end January 2012 was 11,866 tonnes, an increase of 366 tonnes or just over 3% on the same period in 2011/2012 (11,500). Chart 3 below indicates that much of this increase has occurred since the introduction of managed weekly collections. Recycling tonnages between September 2012 – January 2013 were 7 % higher compared to same period in the previous year.

Chart 3: Kerbside Recycling Tonnages 11/12 & 12/13



- 2.9 This contrasts with recycling tonnages from communal recycling points (see Chart 4) which are used predominantly by households who have not been affected by the change to managed weekly collections. Tonnages from communal recycling and packaging banks have remained at very similar levels to 2011/12 with an increase of 46 tonnes compared to the same period last year.

Chart 4: Communal Recycling Tonnages 11/12 & 12/13



2.10 The tonnage of kerbside box recycled for December and January 2012 combined is 2,692 tonnes, an increase of 11% compared to the corresponding period in 2011. The amount of paper collected continues to fall in line with the national trend and these increases should be viewed against the reduction of paper in the waste stream and general move by manufacturers to light weight packaging.

2.11 A graph showing annual recycling performance since 2006/07 can be found in Appendix 1.

Extra Waste

2.12 The re-introduction of the policy of not picking up extra waste beside bins or overfilled bins commenced on 4 February. The re-introduction of the policy is necessary to ensure consistent messages are being given to support the behaviour change towards increased recycling.

2.13 Since 18 February crews have not been collecting extra waste beside bins or overfilled bins. From 18 March Environmental Wardens will investigate any cases of this happening, with the potential to issue a fixed penalty notice.

2.14 At the time of writing data was only available covering the period up to and including 1 March.

2.15 The table below summarises the issues recorded so far in relation to extra waste and excess. To date the issues have been recorded with only 3.9% of the total collections that have taken place over the four week period with significant reductions between the first and second fortnightly collection cycles.

Weekly Overfilled and Excess Issue Summary							
Dates	Collection Week	Both overfilled and Excess	Excess Beside Bins	Overfilled	Total Issues	Total Bins due for collection	% Affected
04/02/2013 to 08/02/2013	2	452	1460	2404	4316	73154	5.90
11/02/2013 to 15/02/2013	1	372	592	1591	2555	66017	3.87
18/02/2013 to 22/02/2013	2	162	906	1610	2678	73154	3.66
25/02/2013 to 01/02/2013	1	183	255	1052	1490	66017	2.26
Total		1169	3213	6657	11039	282314	3.91

2.16 Visits are made by Recycling Advisers to properties where extra waste has been presented, to offer support and advice. Where residents are not in cards are left signposting households to where they can find advice and information on recycling.

2.17 Nearly a 1000 visits were carried between 4th February and 1st March to properties where bins had been tagged. Of these visits 32% resulted in contact being made with the householder and of these the large majority (87%) were positive with over 50% ordering new or additional recycling boxes or bins.

Conclusions

2.18 The amount of waste sent to landfill between April – January 2012/13 has reduced by 6% when compared against the same period last year. Based on the data available it is projected that 137,953 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year (although this projection may change depending on February's landfill figures). This is 9,716 tonnes or 7% less than in 2011/12 although higher than the budget target.

2.19 The proportion of municipal waste recycled is at its highest ever at 37% so far in 2012/13 compared to 34% in 2011/12.

2.20 The roll out of food waste collections to high density properties during the spring and summer 2013 is expected to have a further positive impact on the proportion of waste recycled. The roll out will be supported by a food waste communications and publicity campaign commencing later this month. Work is also taking place to review, enhance and extend communal recycling provision in order to improve access to recycling for households in high density housing areas.

2.21 A high profile and comprehensive communications and engagement campaign on waste reduction and recycling based on customer research is being developed for roll out during first half of 2013/14. A further report outlining the communications strategy will be brought to a future meeting of the committee.

2.22 The policy of not collecting extra waste at the side of bins and overfilled bins is also expected to have a positive impact on recycling although only around 4% of bins are affected. Implementation of this policy is designed to encourage households to operate within the managed weekly collection system while providing positive reinforcement to those who already are.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To note the contents of the report.

Mark Turley

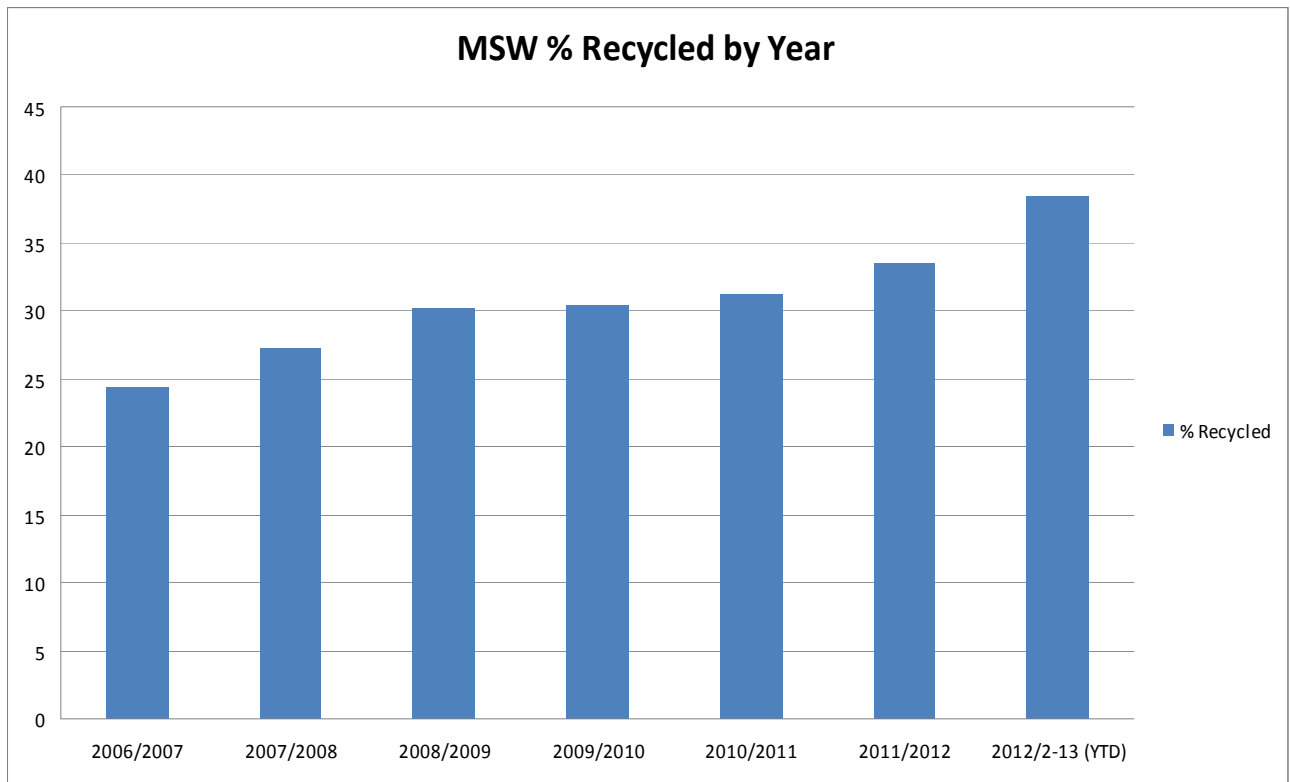
Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P44 Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive P49 Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill P50 Meet greenhouse gas targets including the national target of 42 % by 2020
Council outcomes	CO17 Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are clean and free of litter and graffiti CO18 Green – We reduce the environmental impact of our consumption and production
Single Outcome Agreement	NO14-LO30 Carbon emissions are reduced within partner organisations own activities particularly in the areas of waste and energy
Appendices	Appendix 1

APPENDIX 1

Chart 3 – Yearly comparison of percentage of municipal waste recycled.



Year	Landfill	Recycling	Total	% Recycled
2006/2007	200203.67	64572.13	264775.80	24.4
2007/2008	183695.46	68539.62	252235.08	27.2
2008/2009	169186.34	73033.57	242219.90	30.2
2009/2010	163787.83	71373.14	235160.97	30.4
2010/2011	154293.11	70033.52	224326.63	31.2
2011/2012	147668.64	74362.68	222031.32	33.5
2012/2-13 (YTD)	117156.00	68261.00	185417.00	36.8

