

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 4 June 2013

Waste and Recycling Update

Item number	7.14
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P44 P49 P50
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Single Outcome Agreement	ALL

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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 in 2012/13 has reduced by 10,422 tonnes or 7% when compared against the same period the previous year. The landfill for the year to end March 2013 totals 137,247 tonnes compared to 147,669 tonnes in 2011/12.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled is at its highest ever with 37.9% of waste having been recycled in 2012/13, compared to 35.5% in 2011/12.

The continued roll out of food waste collections has resulted in a 282% increase in the amount of food waste being segregated for recycling. In 2012/13, 4389 tonnes were collected compared to 1146 tonnes in 2011/12.

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 0.34% 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 is only being taken as a last resort if extra waste continues to be presented.

The incidence of extra waste is reducing. Door knocking of affected households is yielding a positive response from 90.5% of those visited and 51% of those visited ordered additional recycling boxes.

March and April saw communications focus on promoting participation in food waste recycling. Further campaigns are planned for later in the year.

The redesign of the recycling service is also expected to have a positive impact on recycling and this is the subject of a separate report to the committee.

Recommendations

1. To note the contents of the report.

2. To refer this report to the next performance Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

Measures of success

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

Financial impact

The actual tonnage sent to landfill was 6,023 tonnes more than the budgeted figure of 131,222 tonnes and represents a £525k overspend against the 12/13 budget, although it should be noted that this target was based the assumption that managed weekly collections would be implemented in June 2012 when in fact implementation did not take place until September. However the 10,422 ton reduction compared to 2011/12 landfill tonnages represents a saving of over £1m.

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.

Public consultation was held during the first quarter of 2013, using demographically representative focus groups, with residents from both low and high density housing areas. The research was commissioned to understand the general public awareness, perceptions and attitudes towards recycling communications.

Background reading / external references

Waste and Recycling Update

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of Transport and Environment Committee on 15 January 2013 members requested regular updates on performance in reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and increasing recycling.
- 1.2 At the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on 23 April 2013 members asked for further information on landfill and recycling performance which is also addressed in this report.
- 1.3 Following on from the Alternative Business Model (ABM) Review, Council agreed on 24 November 2011 to proceed with implementing the internal improvement plan for Environment Services. The improvement plan included proposals to move ahead with managed weekly collections alongside targets to significantly reduce landfill tonnages and increase recycling of waste. Managed weekly collections were implemented in September 2012.

Landfilled Waste and Recycling

- 1.4 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 were:
 - Reduced landfill tonnages – 131,222 tonnes
 - Increased recycling of waste - 40% of municipal waste
- 1.5 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

- 1.6 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.

2. Main report

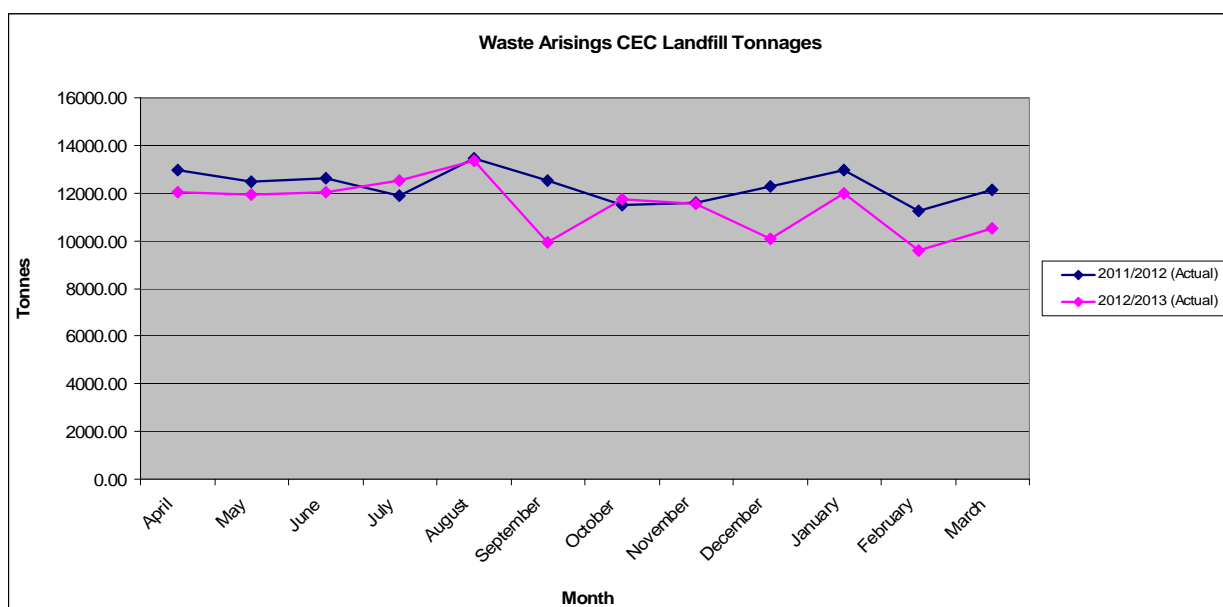
Landfill

2.1 Landfill tonnage (see Table 1 below) for 2012/13 totals 137,247 tonnes; this is a reduction of 7% on 2011/12. This is an improvement on the projection reported to the Committee in March when it was forecast that 137,953 tonnes would be sent to landfill. The 2012/13 tonnage exceeds the budget target of 131,222 tonnes although it should be noted that this target was based the assumption that managed weekly collections would be implemented in June 2012 when in fact implementation did not take place until September. Furthermore the amount of waste landfilled in 2012/13 was 10,422 tonnes less than in 2011/12 representing a saving of over £1m.

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

	12/13 Target	12/13 Year End Actual	11/12 Year End Actual	Difference between 12/13 & 11/12	
				Tonnes	%
Landfill	131,222	137,247	147,669	-10,422	-7%

Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 11/12 & 12/13

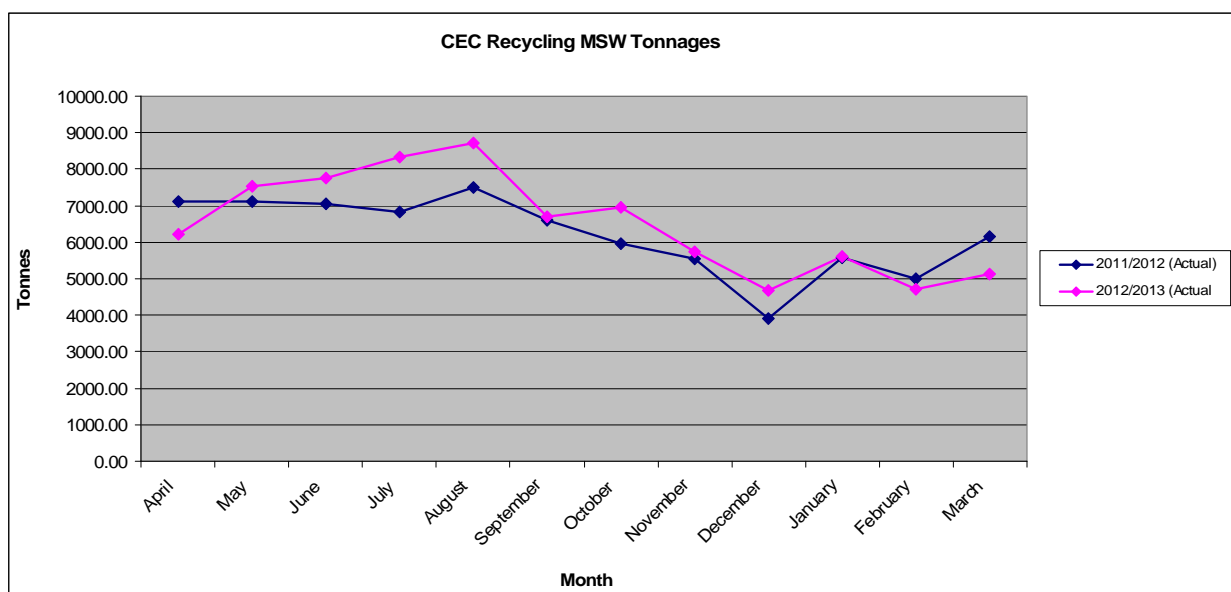


2.2 The landfill tonnage for February and March 2013 combined is 20,091 tonnes. This is a decrease of 3,298 tonnes or 14% on the corresponding period in 2012 (23,389).

Recycling

2.3 The percentage of waste recycled (see Chart 2 below) including street sweepings in 2012/13 is 37.9% compared to 35.5% in 2011/12. The total recycling tonnages collected in 2012/13 was 83,837 tonnes, an increase of 2,623 tonnes on 2011/12 (81,214 tonnes).

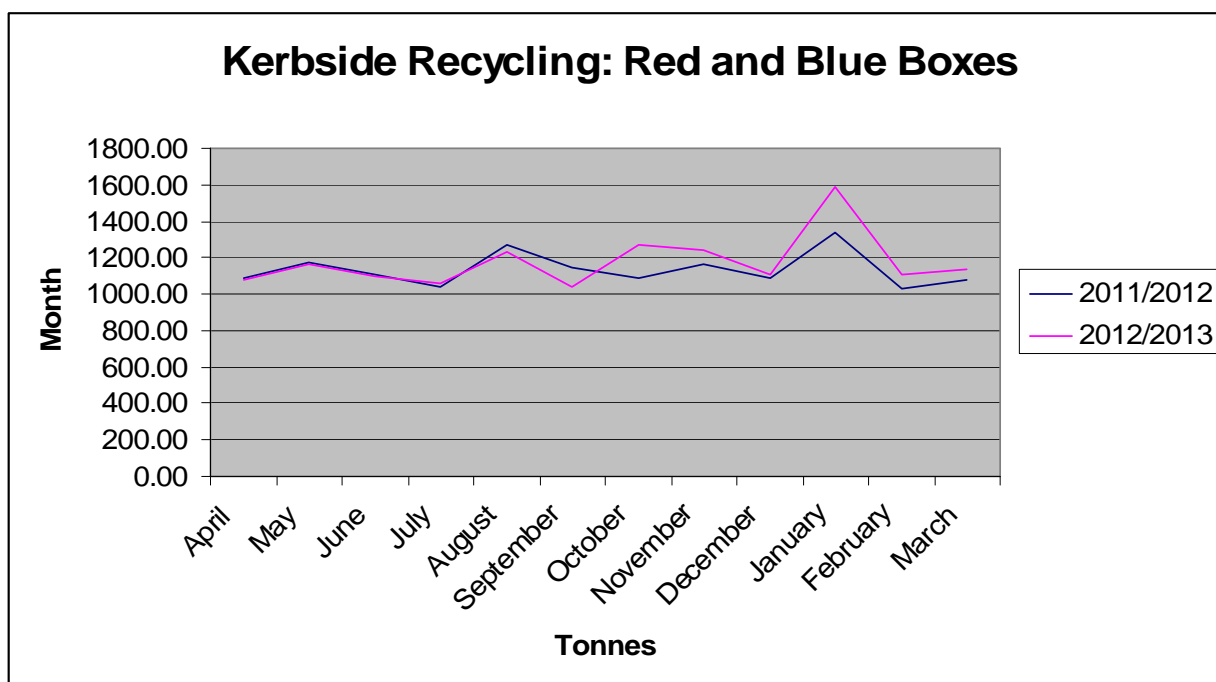
Chart 2: Recycling Tonnes 11/12 & 12/13



- 2.4 The recycling tonnage for February and March 2013 combined is 10,490 tonnes. This is a decrease of 1,671 tonnes (13%) on the corresponding period in 2012(12,161). The decrease can be mostly attributed to substantially less garden waste being collected in March (beginning of fortnightly collections) this year as a result of the unseasonably cold weather.
- 2.5 The tonnage of food waste recycled in 2012/13 totals 4,390 tonnes; this is an increase of 3,243 tonnes (283%) on 2011/12. These increases can largely be attributed to the continued roll out of this service.
- 2.6 The tonnage of waste recycled through the kerbside red and blue box scheme in 2012/13 was 14,107 tonnes, an increase of 495 tonnes or 3.6% on 2011/2012 (13,612).
- 2.7 The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for February and March 2013 combined is 2,242 tonnes, this is an increase of 130 tonnes on the corresponding period in 2012 (2,112 tonnes). 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.

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



Extra Waste

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 Since 4 February crews have not been collecting extra waste beside bins or overfilled bins. From 18 March Environmental Wardens began investigating any cases of persistent presentation of excess waste, with the potential to issue a fixed penalty notices.
- 2.10 At the time of writing data was only available covering the period up to and including 28 April.

2.11 The table below summarises the issues recorded so far in relation to extra waste and excess. Since 1 April 2013 breaches have been recorded with only 0.34% of the total collections that have taken place over the four week period which is a significant reduction compared to the figure of 3.9% during the first four weeks of the re-introduction of the policy.

Weekly Top Hatting and Excess Issue Summary							
Dates	Collection Week	Both Top Hatting and Excess	Excess Beside Bins	Top Hatting	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 01/03/2013	1	183	255	1052	1490	66017	2.26
04/03/2013 to 08/03/2013	2	169	272	1277	1718	73154	2.35
11/03/2013 to 15/03/2013	1	105	96	801	1002	66017	1.52
18/03/2013 to 22/03/2013	2	82	254	682	1018	73154	1.39
25/03/2013 to 31/03/2013	1	8	36	192	236	66017	0.36
01/04/2013 to 07/04/2013	2	59	72	263	394	73154	0.54
08/04/2013 to 14/04/2013	1	3	142	141	286	66017	0.43
15/04/2013 to 21/04/2013	2	3	96	28	127	73154	0.17
22/04/2013 to 28/04/2013	1	9	84	32	125	66107	0.19
Total		1607	4265	10073	15945	835116	1.91

2.12 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 Around 1400 visits were carried between 4 February and 28 April to properties where bins had been tagged. Of these visits 35% resulted in contact being made with the householder and of these the large majority (90.5%) were positive with over 50% ordering new or additional recycling boxes or bins.

Conclusions

- 2.18 The amount of waste sent to landfill in 2012/13 has reduced by 7% when compared against the same period last year.
- 2.19 The proportion of all waste recycled is at its highest ever at 38% in 2012/13 compared to 33% in 2011/12.
- 2.20 The roll out of food waste collections to high density properties has now been completed and is expected to have a further positive impact on the proportion of waste recycled. This was supported by a food waste communications and publicity campaign. 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 the completed customer research is being developed and will be considered at a future meeting of the Transport and Environment Policy Development and Review Sub-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 0.34% of bins are now 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.
- 3.2 To refer this report to the next performance Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

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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	ALL
Appendices	