

# Transport & Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 27 August 2013

## Waste and Recycling Update

Item number	7.15
Report number	
Wards	All

### Links

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Coalition pledges	<a href="#">P44, P49, P50</a>
Council outcomes	<a href="#">CO17, CO18, CO19</a>
Single Outcome Agreement	<a href="#">SO4</a>

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# Executive summary

## Waste and Recycling Update

### Summary

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This report updates the Committee on performance in reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfill and increasing recycling.

The positive trend in performance is continuing with the amount of waste sent to landfill so far in 2013/14 reducing by 2,604 tonnes or 7% when compared against the same period last year. Based on tonnage data for the period ending June 2013 and taking into account seasonal factors it is forecast that 129,830 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year, 7,419 tonnes or 5% less than the previous year. Further work is being undertaken to deliver further reductions in landfill and increase participation in recycling.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled is at its highest ever with 44.35% of waste having been recycled so far in 2012/13 compared to 40.9% for the same period in 2012/13.

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

Promoting public behaviour change is at the heart of improving recycling performance and further consideration is being given to other innovative approaches that can be used to capture the public's imagination and support a concerted campaign to increase participation.

Further opportunities to divert community recycling centre residual waste and litter bin waste away from landfill are being explored through the procurement of a processing contract.

### Recommendations

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1. To note the contents of the report.

### Measures of success

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

## **Financial impact**

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There is a £469,000 overspend on landfill costs at the end of June which is being offset by an under spend on recycling payments of £558,000 during the same period.

Based on performance to date the projection for landfill to the year end is currently 129,830 tonnes. Although this represents a 5 % reduction on same period last year it still exceeds the budget target of 118,000 tonnes. Further work is underway to increase recycling performance and bring landfill tonnages back within target.

## **Equalities impact**

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

## **Sustainability impact**

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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**

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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**

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## Waste and Recycling Update

### 1. Background

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- 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 The environment improvement programme, *improve it*, 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

- 1.3 The *improve it* programme aims to deliver transformational change in a number of environment services including Waste Services. The most significant waste targets in 13/14 were:
  - Reduced landfill tonnages – from 137,247 tonnes to 118,000 tonnes (14% reduction)
  - Increased recycling of waste to 50%
- 1.4 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.

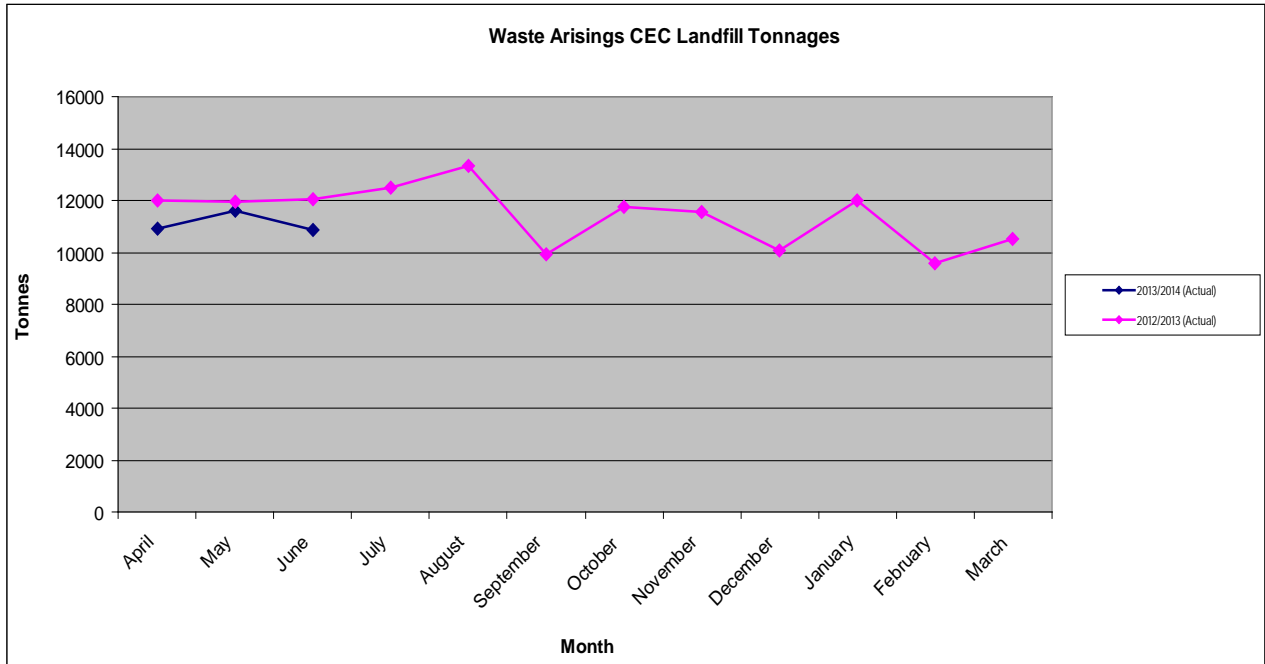
### 2. Main report

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#### Landfill

- 2.1 Landfill tonnage for 2013/14 totals 33,397 tonnes for the year to June 2013; this is a reduction of 2,604 tonnes or 7% on the same period in 2012/13. Although this represents a continuing positive trend in landfill reduction the rate of reduction needs to increase if the budgeted target is to be achieved.
- 2.2 Taking into account seasonal trends from previous years if the current levels of landfill and recycling performance remain as they are then the projected amount of waste sent to landfill would be 129,830 tonnes against a budgeted target of 118,000 tonnes. Work is therefore underway to bring forward a high profile communications and engagement campaign to support behaviour change so that more residents participate in the recycling services that the council provides and reduce the amount of waste that they send to landfill.

**Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)**



2.3 The landfill tonnage for June 2012 is 10,871 tonnes. This is a reduction of 9.7% on the corresponding period in 2011/12.

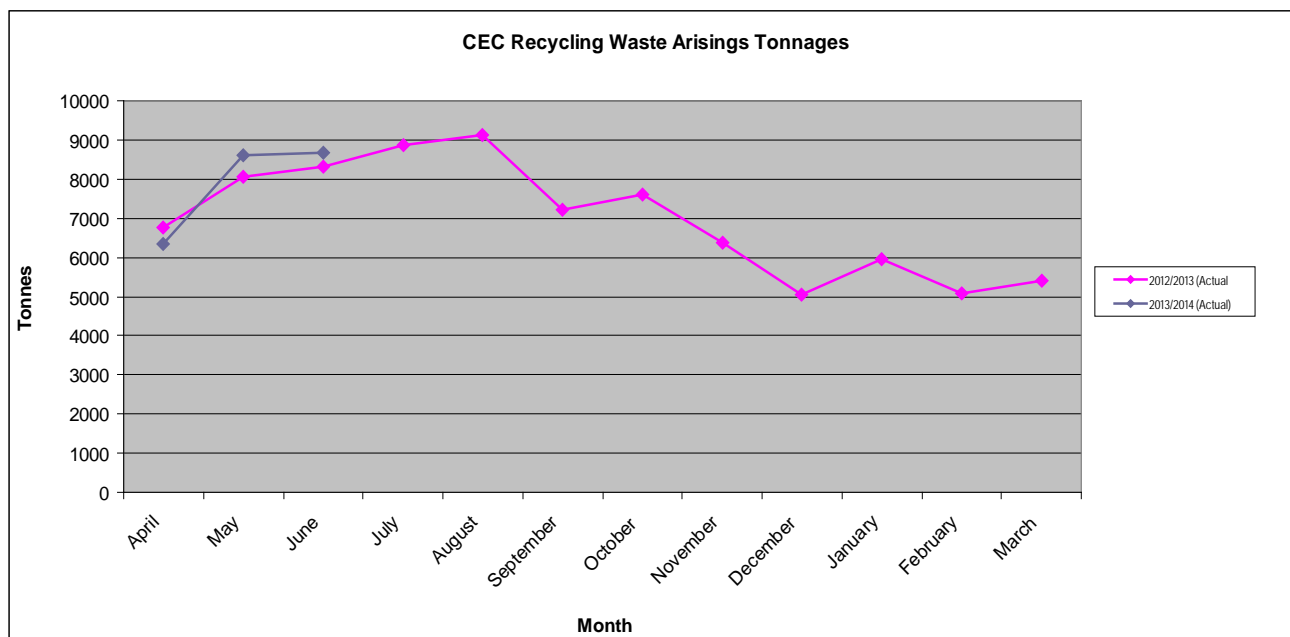
**Recycling**

2.4 The percentage of waste recycled (see table 1 below) including street sweepings between April 2013 and June 2013 is 44.4% compared to 40.9% for the same period in 2012/13.

**Table 1: Percentage of waste recycled 2012/13 & 2013/14 YTD**

	YTD June 2013		YTD June 2012		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate
Recycling	23,619	44.35%	23,128	40.88%	491	2.1%

**Chart 2: Recycling Tonnages 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)**



- 2.5 The tonnage of food waste recycled to date in 2013/14 totals 1,233 tonnes; this is an increase of 237 tonnes (22.8%) on 2012/13.
- 2.6 The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for April to June 2013 combined is 3,572 tonnes, this is an increase of 237 tonnes (7%) on the corresponding period in 2012 (3,336 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.
- 2.7 The tonnage collected through garden waste collections, packaging banks and CRC sites has also increased (see Table 2 below).

**Table 2: Year to date recycling by scheme 2012/13 & 2013/14**

	YTD 2013/14	YTD 2012/13	Difference
Kerbside Blue/Red Boxes	3572	3336	237
Garden Waste	7028	7001	27
Food Waste	1233	1003	229
Recycling Banks	1744	1922	-178
Packaging Banks	791	667	124
Trade	1099	1223	-124
CRC	5256	4799	457
Special Uplifts	879	946	-67
Other(incl street sweepings)	2017	2231	-214
<b>Total Recycling</b>	<b>23619</b>	<b>23128</b>	<b>491</b>

- 2.8 Recycling rates tend to reduce during the winter months as garden waste tonnages reduce so further actions are required to drive up the amount of material being collected through other recycling services, such as the red and blue box scheme but particularly in food recycling, if the 50% target is to be achieved.

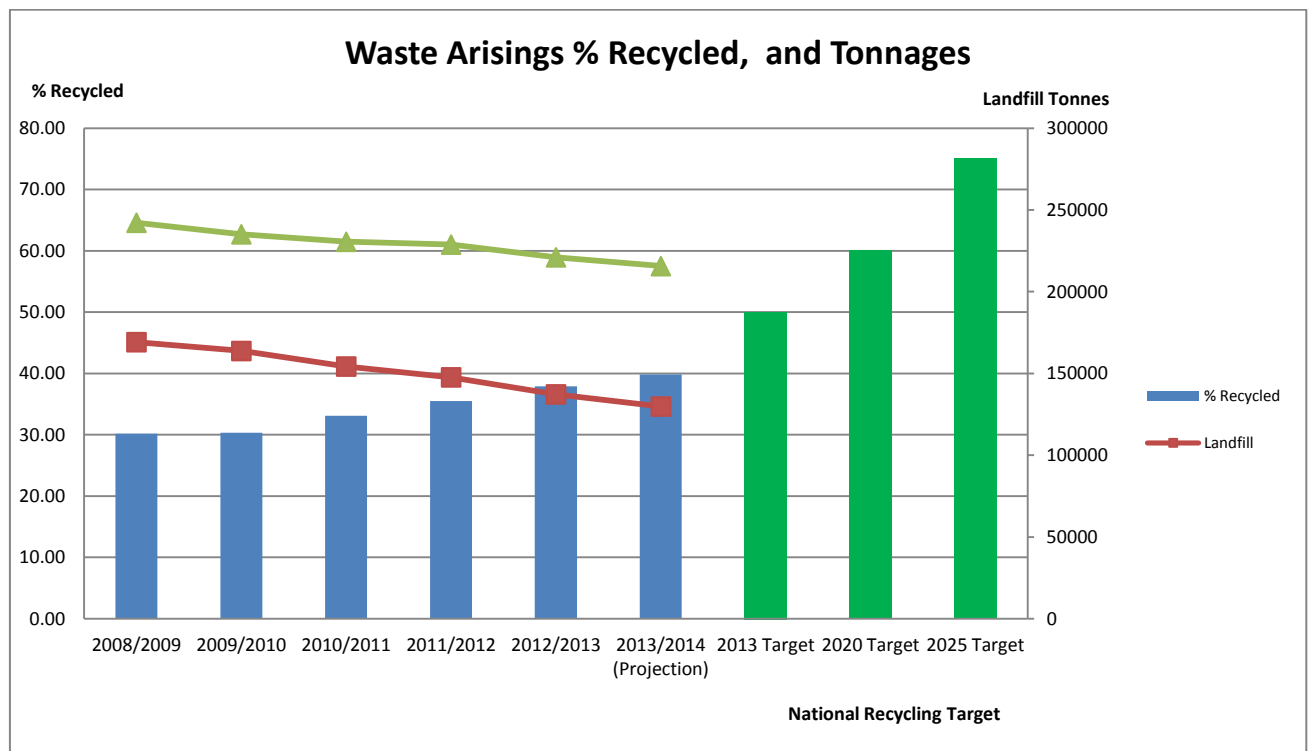
## Action being taken

- 2.9 Promoting public behaviour change is at the heart of improving recycling performance and Appendix 1 outlines some of the communications and engagement activity that have taken place since March and planned activities for 2013/14. However given that current rates of recycling need to increase by 10% a more concerted and intense campaign of public engagement is being worked up as a matter of priority. It is intended that this will have a high impact in order to bring actual performance in line with recycling and landfill targets within the current financial year.
- 2.10 Further consideration is also being given to other innovative approaches that can be used to capture the public's imagination and increase participation. Segmentation data is now available that will allow different communication methods to be tailored for specific audiences. A compositional analysis of the waste which remains in residual bins is also planned. This will identify the recyclable materials which still find their way to landfill and allow communications to be targeted further.
- 2.11 Recent customer research has shown that residents are motivated by a dislike of waste, environmental messages, conforming with societal norms and doing their bit for Edinburgh. Providing increased capacity, increasing access to glass recycling, providing better service information and operating a high quality service were all felt to be factors that would increase participation. Whilst the redesigned recycling service will address a number of these points, where possible these issues will be progressed ahead of implementation of the new service.
- 2.12 There is also an opportunity to recycle or recover a proportion of the residual waste from community recycling centres and litter bins. Trial loads of residual waste from community recycling centres have been sent to a number of contractors and up to 74% of the waste has been diverted from landfill. Litter bin waste is expected to yield lower levels of diversion because of the amount of contamination present although further measures to reduce contamination are being explored. Documentation is now being prepared for the procurement of a processing contract.
- 2.13 Work is underway to redesign recycling services and to increase participation by simplifying the service and making it easier to use and increasing capacity. The business case for the redesigned recycling service is the subject of a separate report to this Committee and if approved will see the implementation of the new low density kerbside collections in the latter part of 2014. It is projected that these changes when implemented would lead to an 8% increase in recycling.

## Long Term Trends

- 2.14 Between 2008/09 and 2012/13 the amount of waste landfilled has fallen by over 30,000 (18.8%). Whilst the overall reduction in waste arisings (8.7%) has contributed to this, the biggest factor has been the increase in recycling (14.8%) over the same period (see chart 3).
- 2.15 The number of properties in Edinburgh has increased by over 6000 (2.54%) in the last 2½ years. Based on 2013/14 forecasts the amount of waste landfill will have reduced by 17,839 tonnes (12%) in the same period.

**Chart 3:** Historical performance (waste arisings, recycling and landfill) and future targets



## 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To note the contents of the report.

### Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities



## Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	<p>P44 Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive.</p> <p>P49 Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill.</p> <p>P50 Meet greenhouse gas targets including the national target of 42% by 2020.</p>
<b>Council outcomes</b>	<p>CO17: Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are clean and free of litter and graffiti.</p> <p>CO18: Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production.</p> <p>CO19: Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.</p>
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<p>SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric</p>
<b>Appendices</b>	<p>Appendix 1 – Communications Activity</p>

Appendix 1 – Communications Activity

Project/subject	Detail	Communications activity	Key date
<b>Complete</b>			
Food waste recycling	Awareness raising campaign	Radio Print advert Bus sides Bus stop advertising Press ( <a href="#">general feature set up</a> ) Social media Plasma screens Web updates Lamp post signs Mailing of all recycling services and caddy sticker to 140,000 Internal briefings	March – April
Food waste recycling	Support of communal roll out of 35,000 properties	Teaser letters sent Leaflet on how to use service Briefings to neighbourhoods, community councils and elected members. Letters to concierges, factors and developers sent Door-knocking in areas	March – July
Garden waste	Compost giveaways events across the city	3 external websites promoted 1500 flyers distributed 40 posters 14 tweets sent, 169 click throughs 2 facebook posts with 1001 likes Posted on two other local facebook sites	30 April – 29 May
Reduce, reuse, recycle	Community roadshows	8 roadshows carried out city-wide.	March, April, May
Modernising waste	Changes to waste collection in city centre	Leaflets on new service in Old Town Follow up letters and maps Community engagement	May
TEC	<a href="#">Residents thanked for their recycling</a>	Press release Internal comms Web and social media updates	4 June
Recycle week	All recycling (17 – 23 June)	Social media campaign Recycling roadshow at Tesco, Hermiston Gait Neighbourhood updates	17 -23 June
Food waste recycling	Liners in libraries	Posters Press adverts Briefings for libraries Press and social media	June
<b>Planned</b>			
Food waste recycling	Awareness raising campaign	Bus stop, digital and radio advertising Community engagement and door knocking Caddies and instructional leaflets delivered with communal roll out	15 July ongoing