

# Transport & Environment Committee

10.00, Tuesday, 14 January 2014

## Landfill and Recycling Update

Item number	7.7
Report number	
Wards	All

### Links

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

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# Executive summary

## Landfill 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 6913 tonnes or 7.27% when compared against the same period last year. Based on tonnage data for the period ending November 2013 and taking into account seasonal factors, it is forecast that 130,624 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year, 6622 tonnes or 4.82% less than the previous year.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled this year to date is 40.6% compared to 39.6% for the same period in 2012/13.

A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote recycling which includes door knocking and most recently a campaign aimed at raising awareness of the benefits of food waste recycling.

This report also includes an update on complaint numbers. In 2013/14 there have been on average 511 complaints per week. This is 30.8% less than the average number of complaints per week in 2012/13 (738 complaints per week). With around 300,000 collections, this equates to a weekly complaint rate of 0.17%. This downward trend in complaints continued in November with 1,537 complaints received – an average of 389 a week.

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that Committee 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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Although the projection for landfill to the year end exceeds budget target, it is still a reduction of 4.82% compared to 2012/13 performance.

As of the end of November, a projected overspend on landfill costs is being partially offset by a projected under-spend on recycling.

## Equalities impact

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The content of this report has no implication 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, contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gases and reduce the demand on natural resources by recovering waste materials that can be used to manufacture new products.

## 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 with a particular emphasis on promoting the benefits of food waste recycling.

January through to March 2014 will see an increased focus on targeting recycling engagement and communications on the food waste recycling service, reminding residents on what and how to recycle food waste.

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. This research is helping to shape communications messages in future campaigns.

## Background reading / external references

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## Landfill and Recycling Update

### 1. Background

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- 1.1 At the 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. At the meeting on 27 August 2013, members requested that the performance reports also include updates on complaints made about waste services.
- 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 were to reduce landfill tonnages to 118,000 tonnes (from 137,247 in 2012/13) and increase the percentage of waste that is recycled 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.

### Complaints

- 1.5 There are 236,000 properties in Edinburgh that receive multiple refuse and recycling collections. On average there are 60,000 collections a day or nearly 300,000 a week. The service has set a target of reducing the number of complaints down to 1,632 a month (or 0.08% of all collections) or turnover of 400 a week – compared to an average of 738 a week in 2012/13.

## 2. Main report

### Landfill

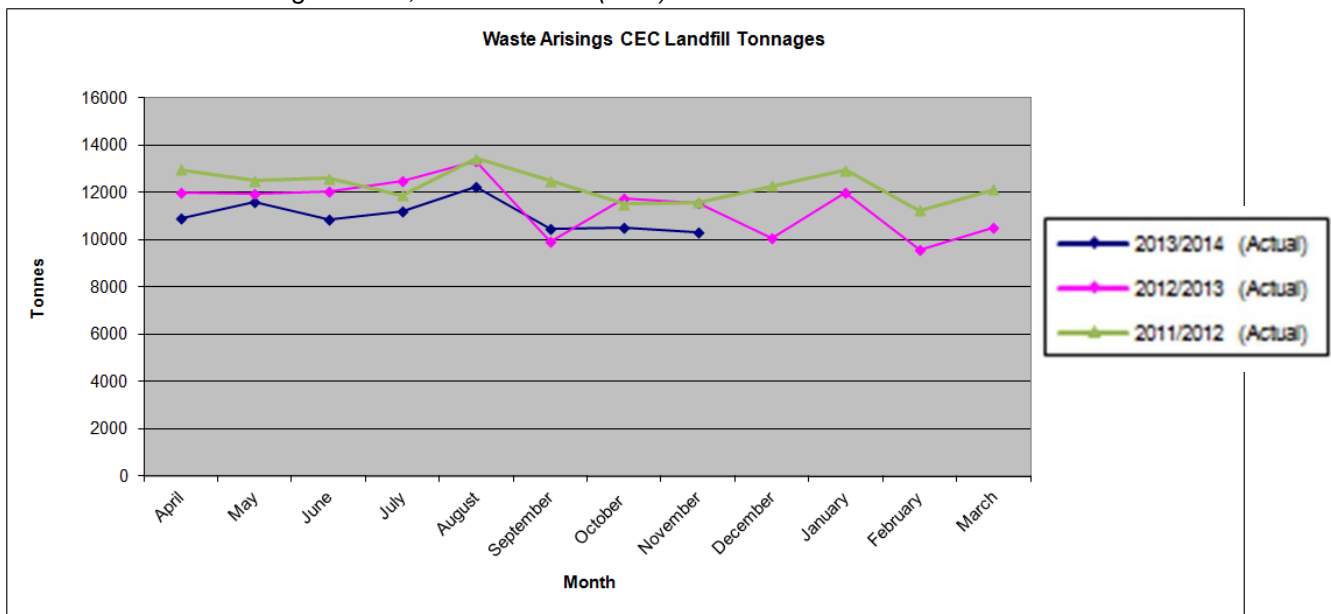
- 2.1 Landfill tonnage (see Table 1 below) for 2013/14 totals 88,170 tonnes for the year to November 2013; this is a reduction of 6913 tonnes or 7.27% on the same period in 2012/13.
- 2.2 The projection for landfill to the year end, taking into account seasonal fluctuations, is currently 130,624 tonnes. This would be a reduction of 4.82% or 6,622 tonnes on the year 2012/13. With landfill costs of £100.34 per tonne, this represents a reduction in landfill costs of just under £664,652.

**Table 1: Landfill Tonnes 13/14 & 12/13 YTD November 2013**

	YTD November 2013	YTD November 2012	Difference		13/14 Target	13/14 Year End Forecast	12/13	Difference	
			Tonnes	%				Tonnes	%
Landfill	88,170	95,083	6913	7.27%	118,000	130,624	137,246	6,622	4.82%

- 2.3 The landfill tonnage for November 2013 is 10,341 tonnes (see chart 1). This is a reduction of 10.6% compared to November 2012.

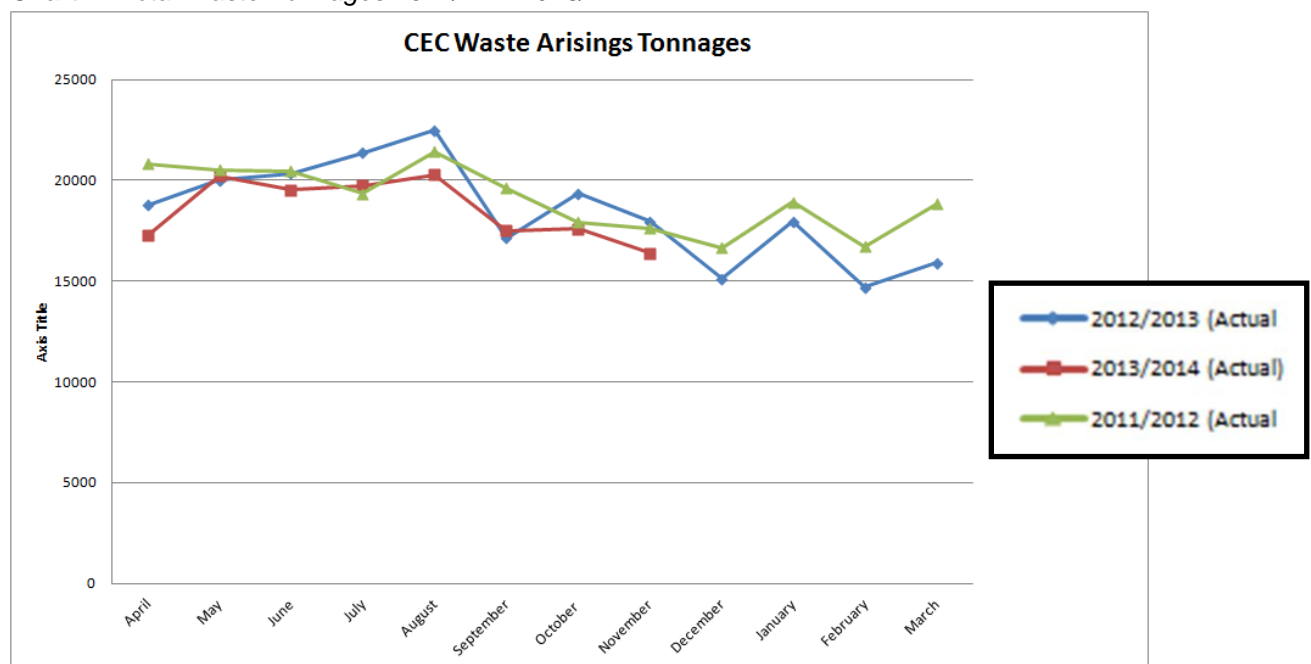
**Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 11/12, 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)**



- 2.4 There is not a simple correlation between the amount of waste landfilled and the amount recycled. There are multiple factors impacting on the amount of waste going to landfill that make the picture very complex. The overall tonnage of

waste arisings, the composition of that waste and other seasonal factors all impact upon performance. The total tonnage of waste has been falling each year (see Chart 2 below) although it is notable that the amount of waste collected year to date is 5.7% less than for the same period last year - a rate of decrease which is significantly greater than in previous years. This has contributed in part to a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill but it has also contributed to a decrease in the recycling tonnages collected year to date (see sections 2.5 – 2.10). This is partly due to the amount of some recyclable materials, such as paper, in the waste stream decreasing in line with national trends and the general move by manufacturers to light weight packaging. As an example since 2006/07 the amount of paper collected has dropped by 36%.

**Chart 2: Total Waste Tonnages 2011/12 – 2013/14**



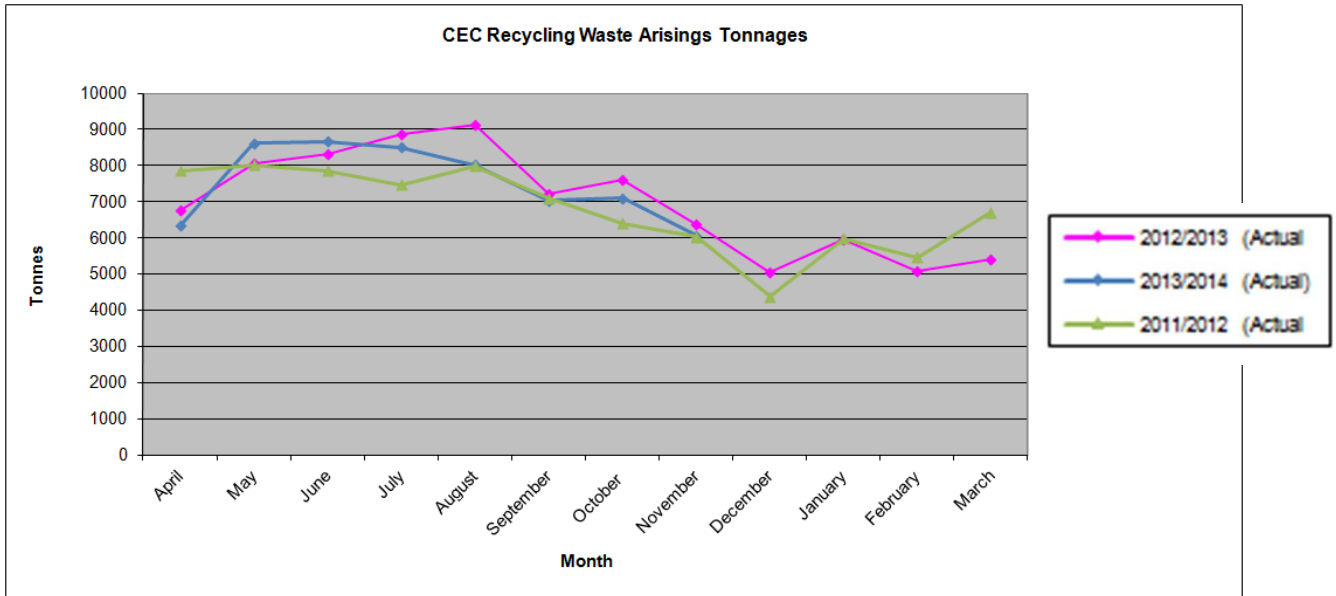
## Recycling

- 2.5 The percentage of waste recycled (see table 2) including street sweepings between April 2013 and November 2013 is 40.6% compared to 39.6% for the same period in 2012/13. Although tonnages are slightly lower than the same period last year (see chart 3), the decrease in the total amount of waste collected means that the percentage recycled has increased by 1% year to date.

**Table 2: Percentage of waste recycled 2012/13 & 2013/14 YTD**

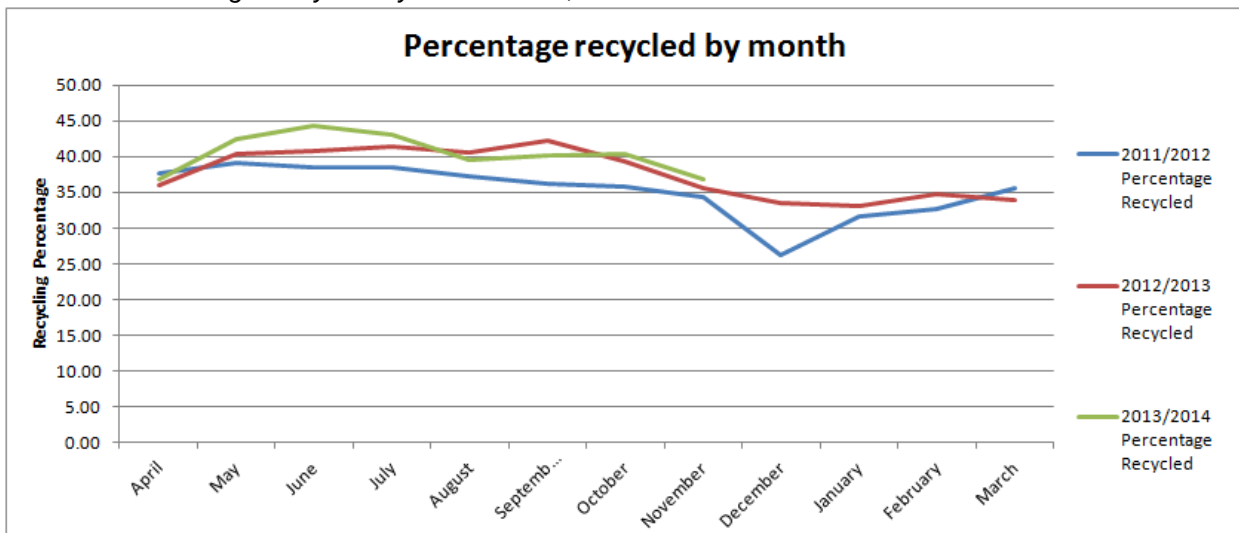
	YTD November 2013		YTD November 2012		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate
Recycling	60,320	40.6%	62,337	39.6%	-2,017	1%

**Chart 3: Recycling Tonnages 11/12, 12/13 & 13/14 (YTD)**



2.6 Chart 4 below shows the comparison of monthly recycling percentages for the last 3 years which shows that recycling percentages have shown significant improvement over the period, although the rate of improvement has slowed during 2013/14.

**Chart 4: Percentage Recycled by month 11/12, 12/13 and 13/14**



- 2.7 The tonnage of food waste recycled to date in 2013/14 totals 3,345 tonnes; this is an increase of 534 tonnes (19%) on 2012/13.
- 2.8 The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for April to November 2013 combined is 9,633 tonnes, this is an increase of 459 tonnes (5%) on the corresponding period in 2012 (9,174 tonnes).
- 2.9 The tonnage collected through Community Recycling Centre sites has also increased (see table 3 below). Although there has been a reduction in tonnages from packaging and recycling banks.

**Table 3: Year to date recycling by scheme 2012/13 & 2013/14**

Recycling 2013/14	2013/14	2012/13	Difference
Kerbside Blue/Red Boxes	9633	9174	459
Garden Waste	16726	17871	-1145
Food Waste	3345	2811	534
Recycling Banks	4550	5302	-752
Packaging Banks	1853	1859	-6
Trade	3168	3402	-234
CRC	13718	13438	280
Special Uplifts	2170	2302	-132
Other	2048	1824	224
Street Sweepings	3056	4354	-1298

- 2.10 Based on performance to date in 2013/14 the current projected year end recycling rate (see Table 4 below) is 39.2%.

**Table 4: Year End Recycling Tonnages 12/13 (forecast) & 11/12 (actual) 12/13 Year End Forecast**

	12/13 Year End Actual		13/14 Year End Forecast		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	%
Recycling - All Waste	83,835	37.9%	84,136	39.2%	301	1.3%

- 2.11 Following approval of the outline business case by this Committee at its meeting on 27 August, work is underway to implement a new redesigned kerbside recycling service which will replace the red and blue box scheme towards the end of 2014. The new service which will be easier to use, provide increased capacity and collect a wider range of materials will lead to an 8% increase in recycling.
- 2.12 Committee also requested that further work is undertaken to identify the most effective and affordable option for enhancing and expanding communal recycling



provision in the high density and tenemental housing areas of the city. The outcome of this work will be reported at the March 2014 meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee. In the meantime, Waste Services have been making small scale improvements including new clearer labelling of recycling containers and providing new recycling banks in response to requests from elected members and local communities. Improvements to the maintenance and management of on street packaging and recycling banks and those at other locations such as supermarkets are also being drawn up.

- 2.13 Waste Services have also recently awarded a contract for the treatment and disposal of waste from street cleaning and residual waste from CRC sites. It is estimated that this contract will result in a 4.6% increase in the Council's recycling rate over a full year.

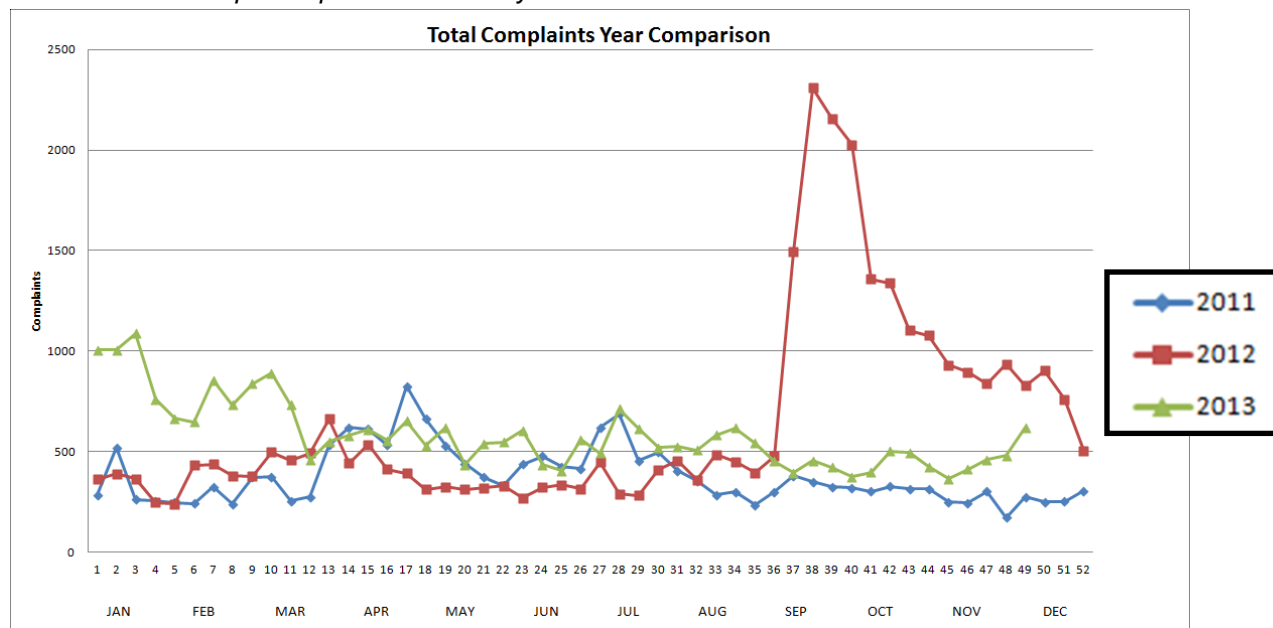
### **Communication**

- 2.14 A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote changes in public behaviour which will increase recycling and landfill diversion. This includes door knocking, improving and reviewing information provided on recycling services, engagement activity and promotional campaigns. The first phase of the food waste campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of this type of recycling has taken place in November and December. The next phase will run from January through until March 2014 and focus on what and how to recycle food waste.
- 2.15 Staff engaged in door knocking have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting food waste recycling routes and focussing on those areas more demographically likely to recycle. This year to date (1 April 2013 – 17 December 2013), 25,820 properties have been visited, with 10,460 residents being spoken to about recycling.
- 2.16 ARE, the successful Zero Waste food waste processing contractor, have offered to provide additional funding for the promotion of food waste and discussions are underway to agree the engagement of more recycling advisers to carry out additional door knocking.

### **Complaints**

- 2.17 Weekly complaint numbers since 2011 are shown in chart 5. The peak in complaints in September 2012 was associated with the implementation of new routes in refuse collection. Overall there has been a downward trend in complaint numbers since then.

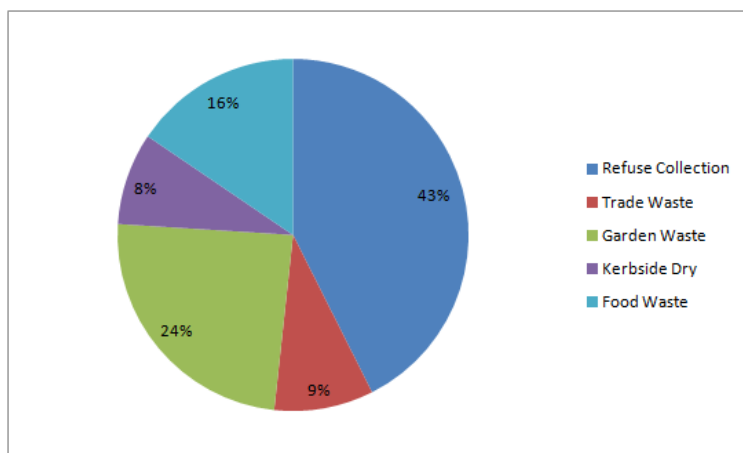
**Chart 5: Total complaints per week January 2011 to November 2013**



2.18 The weekly average in November was 389 complaints per week. This is 47% less than the average number of complaints per week in 2012/13 (738 complaints per week). The service received 1,557 complaints in the month of November against a target of 1,632 (4.6% better than target). It is worth noting when comparing complaint numbers with previous years that food waste collections were piloted from spring 2011 and rolled out across the city more widely during 2012/13. This added the potential for up to 200,000 additional collections per week.

2.19 The majority of complaints are about residual refuse collections (43%). Chart 6 shows the full breakdown by service area. Missed collections are the subject of 90% of all complaints.

**Chart 6** Complaints 2013/14 year to date by service



2.20 Although the incidence of complaints is very small compared to the number of collections carried out it is acknowledged that there is never an acceptable level of complaints and Waste Services continue to work hard to reduce the number

further.

- 2.21 The Confirm On Demand Environmental system went live in Waste Services and the Contact Centre as scheduled on Monday 16 December 2013. All enquiries, service requests and information requests are now being logged and progressed through Confirm. In addition to Confirm On Demand, the Confirm Connect (mobile solution) went live at Murrayburn with the Community Waste Officers, Trade Waste Sales Advisors and Recycling Advisors now able progress and log enquiries remotely. Confirm On Demand has been introduced to the front line supervisors in Refuse Collection who now have the responsibility of allocating work to their crews through the system. The implementation has gone relatively smoothly so far, the only issues occurring are primarily down to users learning and adapting to the new systems and processes.

Phase II of the Confirm roll out is due to commence mid January 2014. This will see a phased roll out lasting several weeks of the mobile working solution to refuse collection crews to enable them to carry out their routine and ad hoc work using Confirm Connect. Once fully implemented, it is anticipated that this will result to a further reduction in and a quicker resolution to customer complaints.

2.22 A programme of staff engagement and route reviews is underway to improve the reliability of collections and focus attention on a right first time approach. A more detailed analysis of complaints is also being undertaken so that more targeted action can be taken to reduce the numbers.

### 3. Recommendations

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3.1 It is recommended that Committee note the contents of the report.

#### Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

#### Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	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.
<b>Council outcomes</b>	CO17	Edinburgh's streets and open spaces are clean and free of litter and graffiti.
	CO18	We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production.
	CO19	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.
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	SO4	Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric
<b>Appendices</b>		Appendix 1 – Communications Activity

## **Appendix 1 – Communications Activity**

### **Door Knocking –**

- This year to date (1 April 2013 – 17 December 2013, 25,820 properties have been visited, with 10,460 residents being spoken to about recycling. Of those 9474 have had positive responses. In addition to this 6 advisors have supported the roll out of the communal food waste recycling service, providing advice to residents – this work is now complete.
- Staff have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting areas with those in the demographic categories which research shows are most likely to change their behaviour and focussing on food waste collection routes
- ARE, the successful Zero Waste food processing contractor, have offered to provide additional funding for the promotion of food waste and discussion are underway to agree the engagement of additional recycling advisers to carry out door knocking.
- Participation studies have been carried out in areas with higher and lower food waste tonnage to get a better understanding of current behaviour. This data is currently being analysed to produce actions and areas to focus on for forthcoming food waste communications and engagement work.
- Food waste advisors have been concentrating on areas with new communal service as this is funded by Zero Waste specifically for this work.

### **Renewing the signage on communal recycling bins –**

- A programme to replace stickers on recycling banks is 80% complete. This programme will be completed as soon as possible and residents in these areas will be surveyed to understand further how information can be improved.

### **Engagement –**

- Local groups that could be targeted will be identified e.g. those interested in sustainability / allotment holders etc and there is scope to see about joining up with other community groups such as mother and toddler groups etc, to reach out to different audiences and develop community champions.
- Staff continue to work with Changeworks and their volunteers.
- Different venues for additional events are being identified, e.g. road shows in supermarkets, leisure centres, cinemas, student campuses, Princes Street.
- Staff continue to work with neighbourhoods e.g. working in North neighbourhood where additional banks have been sited and properties highlighted by neighbourhood team visits.

### **Campaigns –**

- A further additional food waste awareness raising campaign has run and will be supported with a further phase of the campaign on what and how to recycle in the new year. This will include vehicle livery review to get more vehicles carrying recycling messages. There will also be a strong digital element to campaign as high percentage of residents are online. This will be combined with more

traditional elements. This campaign will run up until March 2014. Whilst the focus will be on food where ever possible will take holistic view to recycling and include all recycling.

- A student campaign ran on 2 September, with a Facebook competition and a series of events throughout Freshers Week to highlight the recycling services. Further events for students are planned in January and engagement work for the end of term is being planned now.