

# Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 3 June 2014

## Landfill and Recycling

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Item number       | 7.13 |
| Report number     |      |
| Executive/routine |      |
| Wards             | All  |

### Executive 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, and provides year end figures for the financial year 2013/14.

The positive trend in performance is continuing, with the amount of waste sent to landfill in 2013/14 reducing by 4685 tonnes, or 3.4%, when compared against 2012/13. In total, 132,564 tonnes was sent to landfill in 2013/14. The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled this year was 39.3%, compared to 37.9% in 2012/13.

This report also includes an update on complaint numbers. In the first 3 months of 2014 (January – March), there have been on average 507 complaints per week. This is 36% less than for the same period in 2012/13. With around 460,000 collections per week this equates to a weekly complaint rate of 0.11% of all collections.

### 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>              |

## Landfill and Recycling

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that Committee;

- 1.1 Notes the contents of the report.

### Background

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- 2.1 At the meeting of 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.

#### **Landfilled Waste and Recycling**

- 2.2 The *improve it* Programme aimed to deliver transformational change in a number of environment services including Waste Services. Amongst the most significant waste targets was the aim to reduce landfill tonnages to 118,000 tonnes (from 147,668 tonnes in 2011/12), and increase the percentage of waste that is recycled to 50%.
- 2.3 Significant progress in implementing the changes required to deliver both service improvements and landfill savings have been made, including the implementation of managed weekly collections in September 2012.

#### **Complaints**

- 2.4 There are 236,000 properties in Edinburgh which receive multiple refuse and recycling collections. On average there are approximately 90,000 collections a day and 460,000 collections a week.
- 2.5 The service met its target for complaints in March 2014. A total of 1,569 complaints relating to refuse collection and recycling were received, against a target of 1,632 complaints. This equates to a complaint rate of 0.085% of all collections in March.

## Main report

### Landfill

- 3.1 Landfill tonnage in 2013/14 (see Table 1 below) was 132,564 tonnes - this is a reduction of 4,685 tonnes, or 3.4%, on 2012/13.
- 3.2 With landfill costs of £106 per tonne, this reduction represents a saving of some £496,610.

|          | 13/14 Target<br>tonnes | 13/14<br>tonnes<br>(actual) | 12/13<br>tonnes<br>(actual) | Difference |      |
|----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------|
|          |                        |                             |                             | tonnes     | %    |
| Landfill | 118,000                | 132,564                     | 137,249                     | 4,685      | 3.4% |

Table 1: Landfill Tonnages 13/14 & 12/13

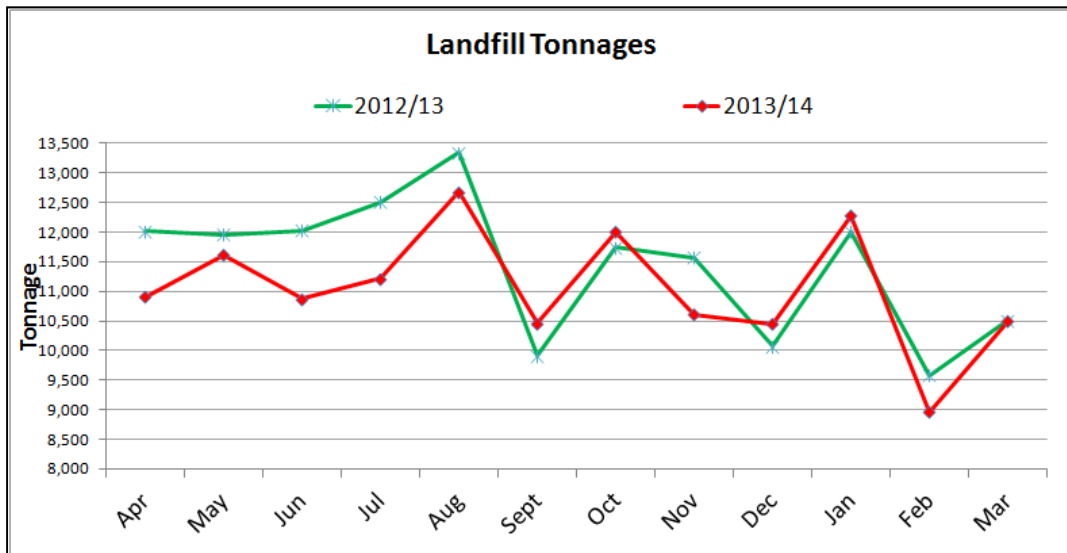


Chart 1: Landfill tonnages 12/13 & 13/14

- 3.3 A total of 10,494 tonnes of waste was landfilled in March 2014. This is a decrease of 0.1% compared to March 2013. Chart 1 above details the trends in monthly landfill tonnages. Table 2 below, compares landfill tonnages in 2013/14 to those of 2012/13.

|              | Apr    | May    | Jun    | Jul    | Aug    | Sept   | Oct    | Nov    | Dec    | Jan    | Feb   | Mar    |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| 2012/13      | 12,014 | 11,954 | 12,033 | 12,513 | 13,344 | 9,917  | 11,743 | 11,568 | 10,066 | 12,007 | 9,584 | 10,507 |
| 2013/14      | 10,907 | 11,619 | 10,871 | 11,220 | 12,676 | 10,455 | 12,011 | 10,606 | 10,454 | 12,284 | 8,967 | 10,494 |
| % difference | -9.2%  | -2.8%  | -9.7%  | -10.3% | -5.0%  | 5.4%   | 2.3%   | -8.3%  | 3.9%   | 2.3%   | -6.4% | -0.1%  |

Table 2: Landfill comparison per month

3.4 The total tonnage of waste has been falling each year (see Chart 2 below), with the amount of waste in 13/14 being 1.2% less than 2012/13. 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 3.5 – 3.12). This is partly due to the amount of some recyclable materials in the waste stream, such as paper, decreasing in line with national trends and the general move by manufacturers to lightweight packaging.

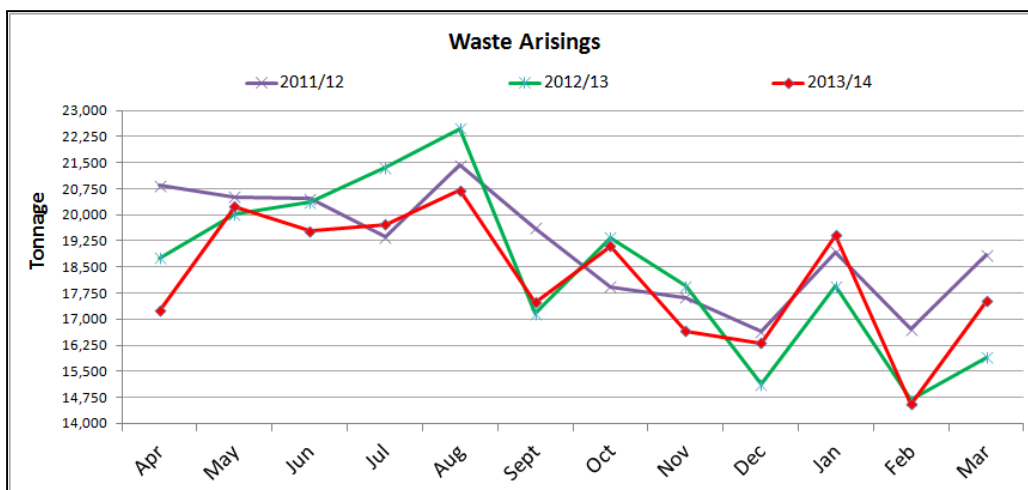


Chart 2: Total Waste Tonnages 2011/12 – 2013/14

### Recycling

3.5 The percentage of waste recycled in 2013/14, including street sweepings, is 39.3% compared to 37.9% for 2012/13 – an increase of 1.4% (see Table 3 below and Chart 3 overleaf).

|           | 2013/14 |        | 2012/13 |        | Difference |        |
|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------|------------|--------|
|           | Tonnes  | % Rate | Tonnes  | % Rate | Tonnes     | % Rate |
| Recycling | 85,916  | 39.3%  | 83,835  | 37.9%  | 2,081      | 1.4%   |

Table 3: Percentage of waste recycled 2012/13 & 2013/14

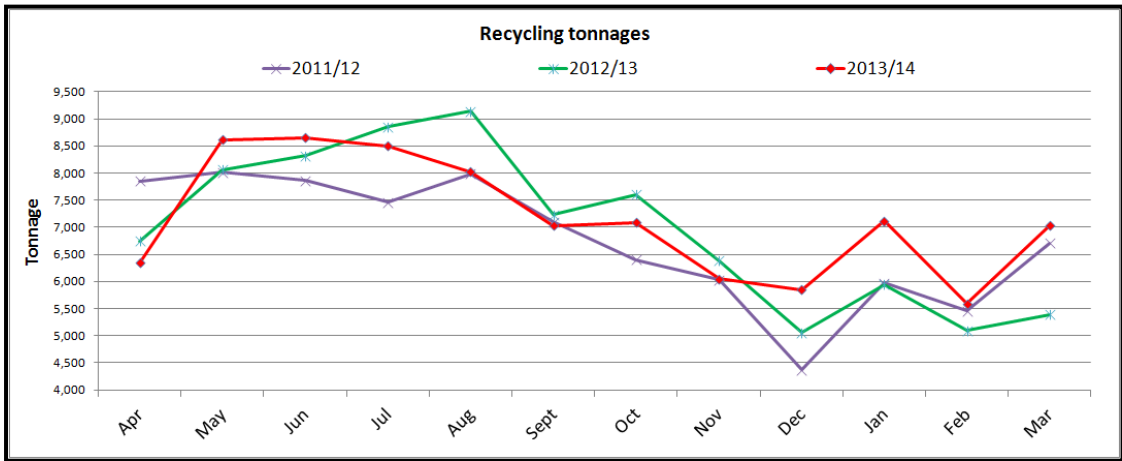


Chart 3: Recycling Tonnages 11/12, 12/13 & 13/14

3.6 A comparison of monthly recycling percentages for the last 3 years (Chart 4 below) illustrates that recycling percentages have shown significant improvement in recent years.

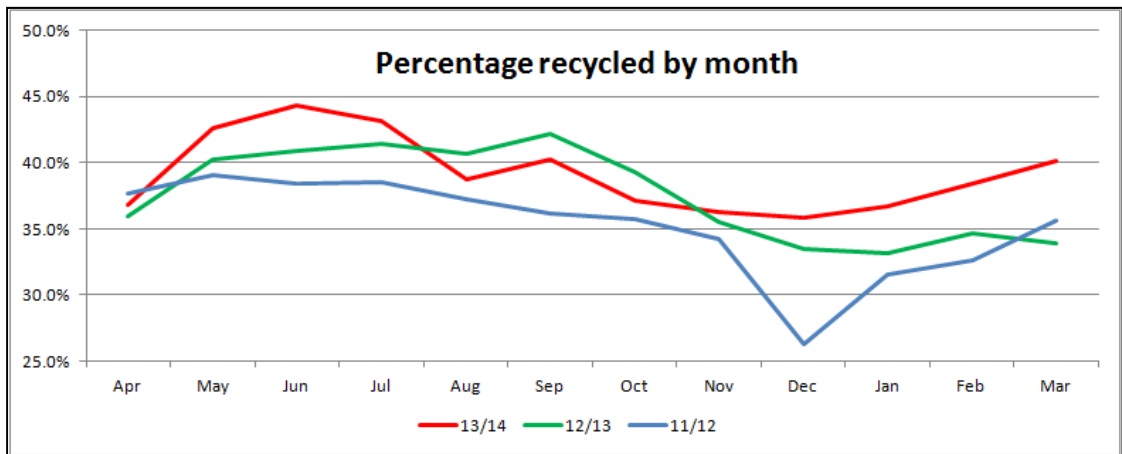


Chart 4: Percentage Recycled by month 11/12, 12/13 and 13/14

3.7 Table 4 (overleaf) provides further details of the main sources of recycled waste. The tonnage of food waste recycled in 13/14 totalled 5,138 tonnes - this is an increase of 749 tonnes (17%) on 2012/13. The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for 2013/14 (blue and red box combined) is 14,589 tonnes which is an increase of 482 tonnes (3.4%) on 2012/13. The tonnage collected through packaging banks and Community Recycling Centres (CRC) sites has also increased by 15%. Conversely tonnages collected through recycling banks and street sweepings decreased by 856 tonnes (11%) and 1,151 tonnes (20%) respectively. Further work is ongoing to understand the reasons for these decreases.

| <b>Scheme</b>                 | <b>2013/14<br/>tonnes</b> | <b>2012/13<br/>tonnes</b> | <b>Difference<br/>tonnes</b> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Kerbside Blue/Red Boxes       | 14589                     | 14107                     | 482                          |
| Garden Waste                  | 19789                     | 19847                     | -58                          |
| Food Waste                    | 5138                      | 4389                      | 749                          |
| Recycling Banks (bring sites) | 6793                      | 7649                      | -856                         |
| Packaging Banks               | 3337                      | 2982                      | 354                          |
| Trade                         | 4829                      | 4926                      | -97                          |
| Community Recycling Centres   | 21257                     | 18379                     | 2877                         |
| Special Uplifts               | 3179                      | 3210                      | -31                          |
| Other                         | 2416                      | 2604                      | -188                         |
| Street Sweepings              | 4590                      | 5741                      | -1151                        |
| <b>Total Recycled</b>         | <b>85916</b>              | <b>83835</b>              | <b>2081</b>                  |

Table 4: Year to date recycling by scheme 2012/13 & 2013/14

- 3.8 New contracts to extract recyclable material deposited in residual waste skips at the Community Recycling Centres (CRC) sites, as well as waste obtained via manual street sweeping and the emptying of street litter bins, commenced in November 2013. As of the end of March 2014, with the contract running for 18 weeks, 4300 tonnes of waste has been processed through these contracts with 2800 tonnes being diverted from landfill. We anticipate that in 14/15 5,500 tonnes will be recycled via this contract that in previous years would have been sent to landfill. This equates to a 2.5% increase in our overall recycling rate.
- 3.9 Following approval of the outline business case by this Committee on 27 August 2013, work is underway to implement a new redesigned kerbside recycling service which will replace the red and blue box scheme in a phased programme commencing late summer 2014. The new service will collect a wider range of materials, will be easier to use, and will provide increased capacity. We anticipate that, once fully rolled out, the new service will increase the overall recycling rate to in excess of 46.3%.
- 3.10 Committee also requested that further work be 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. Following

approval by Committee at the 18 March 2014 meeting, Waste Services will be piloting different approaches to communal recycling starting in Autumn 2014.

### **Communication**

- 3.11 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. Most recently, this included a city-wide campaign to encourage food waste recycling, focussing on what food can be recycled and how, this ran from February through until April 2014.
- 3.12 The majority of the food waste campaign and engagement has now been completed, with more than 24 events being held throughout the city, and engaging with 1192 residents at these. Staff have been door knocking residents, with more than 70,000 properties visited, and communications were also sent on how to recycle food waste to all 210,000 households who receive the service.
- 3.13 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**

- 3.14 Weekly complaint numbers since 2011 are shown in Chart 5 below. The peak in complaints in September 2012 was associated with the implementation of new refuse collection routes. Overall, there has been a downward trend in complaint numbers since that time. When comparing complaint numbers with previous years it is worth noting that food waste collections were piloted from spring 2011 and rolled out across the city more widely during 2012/13 to some 150,000 kerbside customers who receive a weekly service.
- 3.15 The service received 1569 complaints in the month of March against a target of 1632 (3.7% less than target).
- 3.16 Although the incidence of complaints is small compared to the number of collections, it is acknowledged that there is never an acceptable level of complaints. Waste Services continue to work hard to reduce the number further.

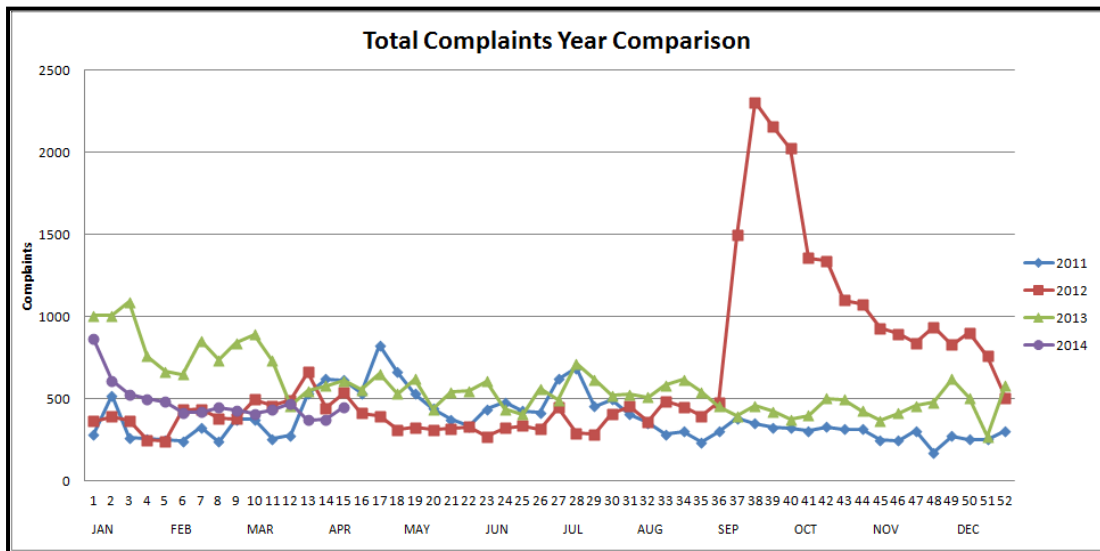


Chart 5: Total complaints per week 2011 – 2014

- 3.17 The Confirm On Demand Environmental system went live in Waste Services and the Contact Centre as scheduled on 16 December 2013. All enquiries, service requests and information requests are now being logged and progressed through the system, with assets now being maintained using Confirm. Phase II of Confirm (Confirm connect mobile) has now commenced and is being rolled out in a phased programme. This will see all crews using mobile devices to carry out routine and adhoc work and provide real time information on collection route completion. The rollout is ongoing, and it is anticipated that all refuse collection crews will be undertaking their routine and ad hoc work using Confirm Connect by early May 2014. A support package has been developed for crews and supervisors going live, to ensure that any issues are addressed and resolved quickly. Early feedback from crews and supervisors remains positive and any teething problems have been minor.
- 3.18 Training for Neighbourhood office teams has been scheduled and the Customer Service teams will be able to log waste enquiries through Confirm On Demand from early May 2014.
- 3.19 The introduction of Confirm On Demand, with the associated increase in customer information and accuracy, is allowing polices and performance measures to be revised to provide a more customer focused service. For example, with accurate complaint information now available at a householder level, we are now able to identify householders who have made multiple complaints. We are therefore now better able to address the root cause of their complaints.
- 3.20 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.



## Measures of success

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

## Financial impact

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- 5.1 Although the landfill tonnage exceeds budget target, it is still a reduction of 3.4% compared to 2012/13 performance. Overspends on landfill costs have been mitigated by under spends in recycling.

## Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

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- 6.1 The information contained in this report is a historic review of landfill and recycling performance for the financial year 2013/14. This report does not impact on any existing policies and no risks have been identified pertaining to health and safety, governance or compliance. Further, there are no regulatory implications that require to be taken into account.

## Equalities impact

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- 7.1 The Council is meeting its public sector duty to advance equal opportunity for residents to recycle by using a range of communications methods. Written information is available through leaflets and electronic media. Road shows and door knocking visits provide face to face contact with residents and visits from recycling advisers are available on request. All material can be translated on request. Consultation was carried out via demographically representative focus groups and via on line and written questionnaires to ensure that a full and representative range of views were obtained. Assistance with the presentation of recycling and waste containers is available for those who require it to ensure everyone has access to these services. The above has ensured that information is available for all within the equality and rights framework.

## Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 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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- 9.1 A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote recycling. This includes our compost giveaway events across the city to promote home composting of garden waste and a city wide campaign for food waste. The food waste campaign has recently included a direct mailing on how to use the service to all 210,000 householders who receive the service, and a range of events at local supermarkets engaging with 1,192 residents. There was also a continuous programme of door knocking to more than 70,000 households across the city. Sales of compostable liners in our libraries have doubled in quarter four of 2013/14, compared to quarter three 2013/14.
- 9.2 The engagement activity was supported by radio, press and bus advertisements, and in April a series of lamp post signs went up at high footfall locations in every neighbourhood.
- 9.3 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. A further questionnaire specifically on attitudes to food waste recycling and communications was carried out in November which helped to shape the recent recycling campaign and will inform future work.

## Background reading/external references

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N/A

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## Links

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|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Coalition pledges</b> | <b>P44</b> – Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive<br><b>P49</b> – Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill<br><b>P50</b> – Meet greenhouse gas targets, including national target of 42% by 2020 |
|--------------------------|---|

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Council outcomes</b>         | <p><b>CO17</b> – Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are free of litter and graffiti</p> <p><b>CO18</b> – Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production</p> <p><b>CO19</b> – 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> | <b>SO4</b> – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric   |
| <b>Appendices</b>               | N/A   |