

Transport and Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 27 October 2015

Update on the Street Scene Project

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

In October 2014, Transport and Environment Committee approved a new policy for trade waste, whereby trade waste receptacles could no longer be stored on public land. Businesses that want their waste to be collected from public land can only present containers for one hour within set times; 9.30am – 12pm, 2pm – 4pm, 6.30pm – 11pm.

This report outlines how this policy is being implemented across Edinburgh, and provides an update on Phase One of the project. Phase one started in April 2015, and focussed on the city centre (Ward 11). At the end of Phase One, the number of bins stored permanently on public land has been reduced by 73%.

Enforcement is essential to embed the new timed windows collection of trade waste. This report highlights the powers afforded to the Council to introduce the new policy, and details the processes the Council have put in place to enforce the changes.

Links

Coalition pledges	P44 , P49
Council outcomes	CO7 , CO19 , CO25 , CO26 , CO27
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

Update on the Street Scene Project

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee notes the content of this report.

Background

- 2.1 The heritage and beauty of Edinburgh's streets are compromised by the volume of trade waste presented throughout the day and the vast number of trade waste bins permanently left on the streets throughout the city. The presence of waste attracts gulls and other animals, it creates public safety issues by providing objects that may be tripped over or potentially used to inflict injury, and it causes potentially hazardous situations which need to be cleaned up at a cost to the Council in excess of £500,000 per year.
- 2.2 On 29 October 2013, the Transport and Environment Committee considered a report on Trade Waste Policy Options which gave an overview of potential solutions that could be implemented to improve the management of trade waste on Edinburgh's streets. Committee approved a pilot study to trial timed window collections in three areas: Rose Street (and its lanes), Leith Walk, and the High Street. A timed collection approach specifies windows of time in which businesses may place their waste onto the street for collection. Outside these times no waste is permitted on public land.
- 2.3 On the 28 October 2014, the Transport and Environment Committee considered a report on the findings of the pilot and approved a new city-wide policy to minimise trade waste stored or presented for collection on public space by introducing a timed window collection approach. The report highlighted an 80% reduction in the number of trade waste bins on public land within the pilot area.
- 2.4 The new policy states:
- Trade waste containers are not permitted to be stored on public space;
 - Trade waste is to be presented for collection on public space during the following times only: 9.30am – 12pm, 2pm – 4pm, 6.30pm – 11pm;
 - Within presentation times, waste is only permitted to be presented for up to one hour;
 - Waste placed on street for collection must display the business name and collection time;

- Waste may only be placed on-street when the business is staffed and never overnight; and
 - Waste containers must be placed as near to the edge of a business's property as is possible, whilst retaining clear pedestrian access.
- 2.5 It was agreed that the new policy would be rolled out across the city over an eighteen month period, by the Open Space Strategy Team within Waste and Fleet Services. Two members of staff who worked on the trade waste pilot were seconded to the team to plan and deliver the implementation of the new policy.
- 2.6 A series of meetings were held internally with Local Environment Teams and Environmental Warden Teams, and externally with waste carrier operators and businesses, to plan the best approach to deliver the project within the given timescales.

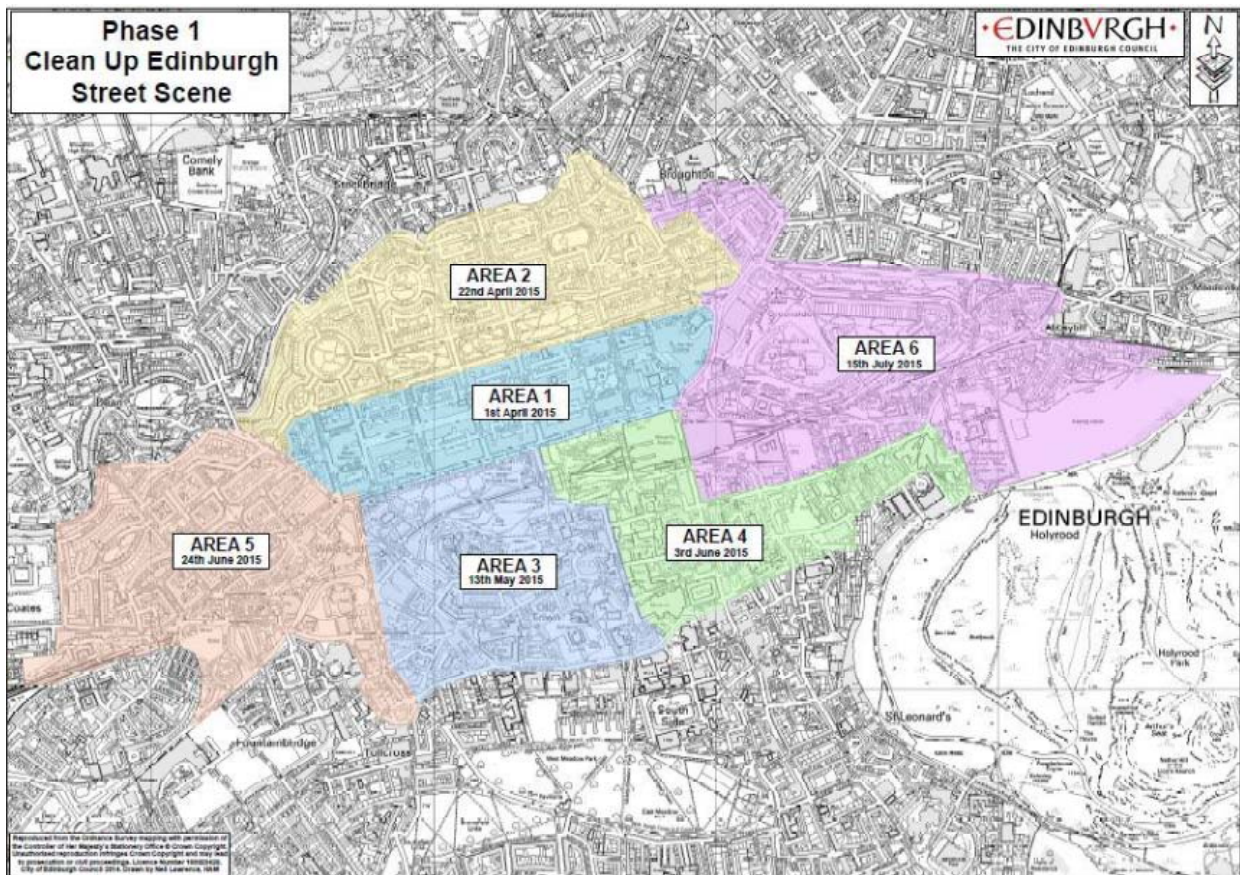
Enforcement

- 2.7 Existing legislation gives the Council the authority to control or remove obstructions on public land (Roads (Scotland) Act, 1984, sections 59 and 87) and to determine the size, number, and type of containers placed on public space (Environmental Protection Act, 1990, s.47).
- 2.8 An amendment to the Environmental Protection Act, brought into force on 30 June 2014, gives additional powers through service of a statutory notice to control the placing and removal of containers on the road. Specifically it gives the local authority powers to require the removal of receptacles placed for the purpose of facilitating the emptying of them. It also gives the local authority the power to make provision for the time when the receptacles must be placed for that purpose and removed.

Main report

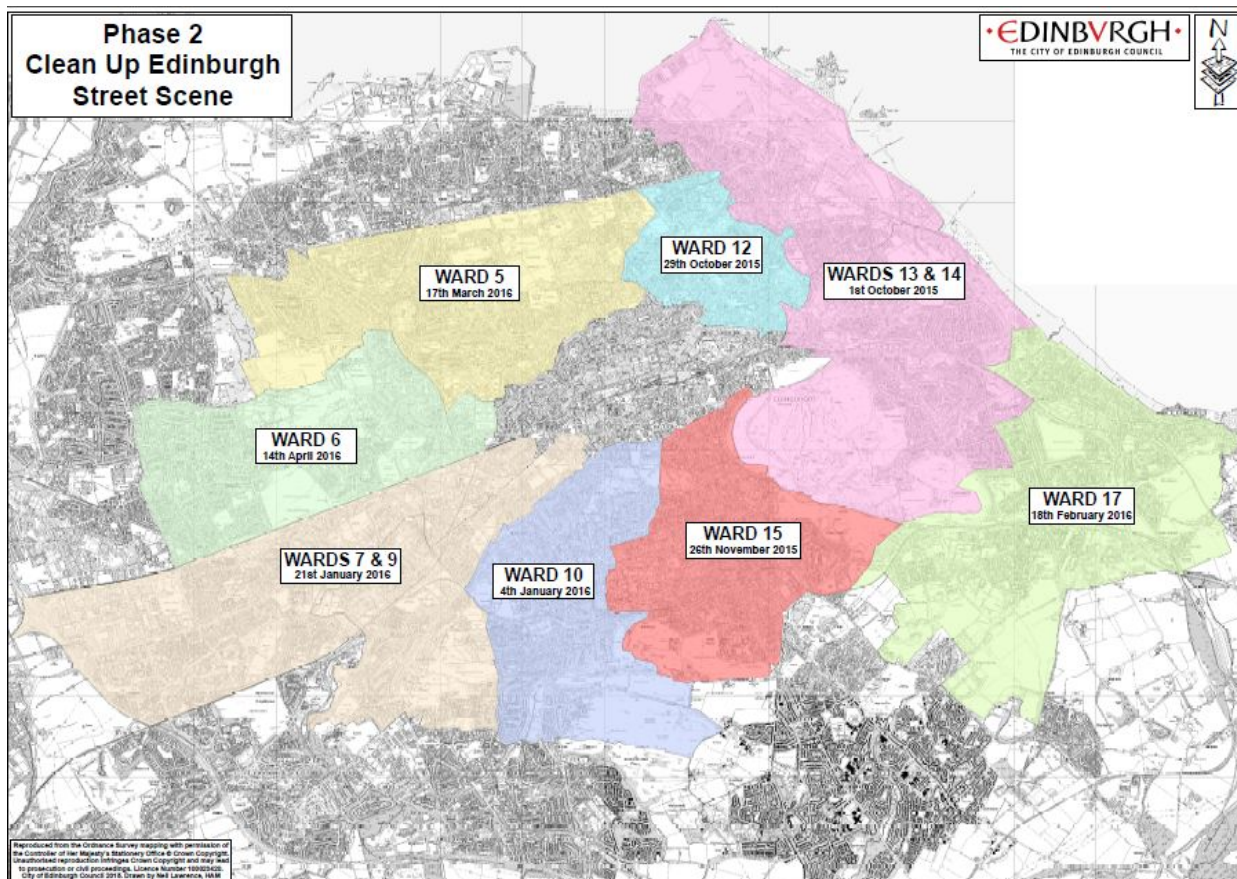
Implementation

- 3.1 The project is being delivered in three phases over an eighteen month period. Phase One solely concentrated on the City Centre (Ward 11), where there is the highest concentration of businesses, and therefore the greatest number of trade waste bins stored on public land. Due to the high density of businesses within the area it was divided into six sections (Map 1). A period of nine months was allocated to this phase of the project.



Map 1: Phase 1 of roll-out

- 3.2 Phase Two covers a further ten Wards across the city (Map 2). In these ten wards there are approximately 10,000 businesses. It is planned that this phase will be completed by July 2016. Before the commencement of Phase Two, individual meetings will be held with waste carriers to discuss the implementation of Phase One and any lessons learnt to support the rollout of Phase Two.
- 3.3 The remaining six wards have approximately 2,600 businesses between them and will form Phase Three of the project; the final phase. The local environment and enforcement teams will be given a toolkit to carry out the same process to introduce timed window collections and tackle localised problems and trade waste hotspots.



Map 2: Phase 2 of roll-out

- 3.4 Work commenced in the first area of Phase One on 1 April 2015 as scheduled, and proceeded on a three week rolling basis throughout the rest of the areas. In each area a bin audit was undertaken, in which the number of bins on each street was recorded as well as bin size, waste company and business name if known. This information, along with photographs, was passed to the private trade waste contractors to allow them to start preparations for contacting businesses and route re-scheduling, to fall in line with the collection windows for customers who wish to have their waste collected from public land.
- 3.5 Letters and leaflets were delivered to all businesses within each area and unauthorised bins identified with removal stickers. Businesses and their waste carriers were given a minimum of four weeks' notice to remove their trade waste bin from public land. During this period, staff visited businesses providing advice on how to comply with the new policy and issue temporary exemptions for food and glass when required.
- 3.6 After the four week period, any unauthorised bins remaining on public land were removed. The respective trade waste contractors were invoiced for the uplift and storage costs of bins that were removed.

Communication

- 3.7 The requirements of the new policy mean a significant change in waste management for businesses in Edinburgh, therefore getting a clear message across to them has been vitally important. The implementation team ensured all businesses were sent detailed information to help them comply with the new requirements, highlighting roles and responsibilities, and illustrating good practice. With this information, most businesses were able to become compliant with only the help of their trade waste company, who were already aware of the requirements and who are experts in waste management.
- 3.8 A media campaign was carried out prior to the start of the roll-out and every business received a teaser flyer highlighting that changes were imminent. Two weeks later each business received a detailed information pack and was given access to a support website.
- 3.9 Specific training was given to all environmental call handlers in the Council's customer hub to allow them to answer any question on the new changes and to record and forward on requests from businesses for food and glass exemption stickers.
- 3.10 Businesses, which after contacting their trade waste carrier, were experiencing difficulties achieving compliance were visited by a member of staff. The vast majority of these difficulties arose where businesses produced food and/or glass waste and lacked suitable and safe storage space. In these instances an officer visited the premises to offer advice and guidance, and carry out an inspection of the storage facilities. If appropriate, the officer issued the business with a green exemption sticker for food and glass bins only, conditions were attached to the exemption stickers to ensure public safety by restricting the size, security and placement of each food/glass bin.

Enforcement

- 3.11 A working group comprising a Community Safety Manager, two Environmental Warden Team Leaders and three Policy Officers was set up to review the enforcement procedure for the new policy. The working group decided to replace the current fixed penalty notice procedure with a three strike system. Businesses will be issued with two written notices highlighting their failure to comply before being issued with a legal notice under Section 47 of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA). If this notice is breached the Council will seek to prosecute the business.
- 3.12 Template letters were drafted along with a new electronic version of the Section 47 Notice. These were added into the current IT system to ensure a consistent approach by Environmental Wardens across the city. The IT system was also used to record all enforcement actions undertaken in relation to this new policy.

3.13 Since enforcement began on 11 May 2015, seven enforcement actions have been carried out in relation to the rollout of the new timed window collections. The Environmental Wardens have also offered support to businesses on how to become compliant.

Results

3.14 At the start of the project there were 1,705 trade waste containers which were being stored on public land in the city centre (Ward 11) on a permanent basis. These bins had a combined capacity of 1,077,600 litres. At the end of Phase One, the number of bins had reduced by 1,252, a reduction of 73%.

3.15 The 453 bins which remain (all smaller food and glass wheelie bins) have a combined capacity of just 111,891 litres. This equates to a reduction in volume of on street waste containers of 90%.

3.16 In Phase One, 5,159 businesses were contacted and received the teaser leaflet and information pack. The Council engaged with 325 businesses and issued 189 businesses with exemption stickers for food and/or glass.



Photos 1 and 2: Before and after Register Place



Photos 3 and 4: Before and after Thistle Street Lane

Measures of success

- 4.1 Success will be measured by:
- a) A reduction in trade waste containers stored on public land;
 - b) A reduction in complaints about the storage of waste and associated issues;
 - c) A reduction in trade waste derived street litter;
 - d) Businesses managing their waste better and recycling more;
 - e) Waste on street being clearly identified with the responsible business name and collection time; and
 - f) Food and glass receptacles locked, and clearly identified with the responsible business name.

Financial impact

- 5.1 A dedicated resource of two staff have been allocated support to the roll out and implementation of the new policy. This has been met from existing budgets.
- 5.2 A budget has also been identified from existing resources to cover the Communication Plan.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The amendment to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 gives the Council the ability to implement controls on the periods when receptacles can be placed and when they must be removed from public land for either storage or emptying purposes.
- 6.2 There is no adverse risk, policy, compliance or governance impact from this report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Mobility - through improving access to public spaces by removal of trade waste and trade waste receptacles from public land, the city will have safer routes free from potential obstructions and trip hazards for all pedestrians, particularly for carers and residents with wheelchairs and those with visual impairments.
- 7.2 Health - through better controlling waste, there will be a decrease in burst bags, nuisance animals and smells. This will have a positive effect on the environmental health of the city.
- 7.3 Public safety - minimising threats. The storage of waste receptacles on public land has led to the creation of bin 'ghettos' in some locations in Edinburgh, blocking sightlines and fire escapes, and impacting on health and physical security. Through the reduction of large items of street clutter, an open space is revealed and items which could be used to inflict harm or hide behind are

removed. Drivers will have more visibility of pedestrians. With a reduction of bins comes a reduction in bin fires, nuisance animals, bins blowing over in high winds and increased access to a cleaner, safer environment is achieved. The removal will have a positive impact on access within these areas and those groups who may be more vulnerable to crime, or the fear of crime.

- 7.4 Standard of Living - cleaner streets give the impression an area is safer and more 'looked-after'. This can have a positive impact on the mental health of local residents, increasing their perception of safety, community, peace of mind and pride in their neighbourhood.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Encouraging businesses to reduce, re-use and recycle their waste will reduce carbon emissions. A robust approach to the management of trade waste will encourage businesses to take more responsibility for their waste, improving the appearance and cleanliness of the local environment and putting sustainability at the core of business operations.
- 8.2 Improving the environment and de-cluttering the streetscape will also help promote the local economy and personal wellbeing.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Throughout the planning and delivery of the project, meetings were held with the trade waste contractors, both as a group and individually. Regular updates have been provided to all the waste carriers who operate in Edinburgh providing information on the new policy, describing how it will be rolled across the city and discussing the implications for the waste carriers.
- 9.2 Internal consultation has been held with Neighbourhood Roads, Local Environment and Environmental Warden staff.

Background reading/external references

[Trade Waste Policy Options](#)

[Trade Waste Pilot – Update](#)

[Trade Waste – Pilot Evaluation and Policy Recommendations](#)

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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.
Council outcomes	CO7 - Edinburgh draws new investment in development and regeneration. CO17 - Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are free from litter and graffiti. 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. CO25 - The Council has efficient and effective services that deliver on objectives. CO26 - The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives. CO27 - The Council supports, invests and develops our people.
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4 - Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
Appendices	