

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 20 June 2024

Street Cleansing Performance Report

Executive/routine
Wards

Routine
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Transport and Environment Committee is asked to note:
 - 1.1.1 Current street cleaning performance levels;
 - 1.1.2 The actions being progressed following Committee in October 2022;
 - 1.1.3 The proposed action for removal of a problematic recycling point and the reasoning
 - 1.1.4 The breakdown of how the additional funding for 2024/25 will be allocated in order to deliver improvements in the performance of the cleansing service.

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Street Cleansing Performance Report

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides the regular six-monthly update on street cleanliness across the city and provides an update on progress in respect of the actions agreed by Committee on 6 October 2022.
- 2.2 The report also provides an update on problems encountered at Silverknowes Golf Course recycling point.

3. Background

LEAMS Data

- 3.1 It is acknowledged that the general cleanliness, evidenced by the Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) surveys, of the City had reduced markedly over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 LEAMS is the sole statutory indicator for the cleansing service. It is a survey that is undertaken three times per year and provides an indicative scoring for the cleanliness of the city. In the case of Edinburgh, all three surveys are undertaken independently by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB).
- 3.3 In regard to the factors that influence the LEAMS scoring, there are a broad range of indicators within the programme (litter presence; hard standing and soft landscaping areas, condition and servicing of litter bins, weed growth, detritus, graffiti, flyposting, vandalism, gum staining). These are presented as overall indicators but also broken down within different land use types, localities and relative deprivation.
- 3.4 Over the course of 2022/23, 710 sites were surveyed in the city, with 86.6% of sites found to have either no presence of litter or a small amount up from 82.2% in the previous survey year. These were awarded Grade A or B+ or B (the latter is deemed to be an acceptable level in respect of LEAMS). The most recent performance is outlined in section 4 of the report.

Council Budget 2024/25

- 3.5 On 22 February 2024, the Council approved its budget for financial year 2024/25. The approved budget included provision of £892k for a “Scrub my Streets” initiative, further information this is included in the main report.

4. Main report

LEAMS Latest Survey Results

- 4.1 The LEAMS 2023/24 surveys have been carried out and the aggregate scores provided with an average of 90.6%. This shows performance improving from 86.3% in the previous survey year. This is positive progress and shows that performance is beginning to return to pre-COVID levels.
- 4.2 In the 2021/22 LEAMS benchmarking report the KSB verification survey scores were published for the first time with our family group scores showing that Edinburgh’s score was better than others in the benchmarking club.
- 4.3 The Env3b KPI results (% transects assessed as acceptably cleansed of litter) will be published in both the National Litter Report by Keep Scotland Beautiful and the Local Government Benchmarking Overview Report by the Improvement Service. The 2023/24 report is expected to be published towards the end of this calendar year although the results will be published online within their dashboard in the next few months.
- 4.4 The national average score across Scotland in the survey’s was 92.4% with the average across our benchmarking club at 89.4%.
- 4.5 The results are partitioned into quintiles, with quintile 1 the 20% most deprived areas by SIMD rank compared to quintile 5, the 20% least deprived areas.
- 4.6 This review of the latest survey results shows that the most deprived areas have the least streets at an acceptable standard. This information has informed on resourcing allocations and frequencies to target the areas of most need, which has seen as significant improvement in these areas.
- 4.7 Targeting the resources based on this information has seen an improvement in quintile 1 and 2 cleanliness KPI% clean, up last year from 42.3% and 56.5% respectively to 69.5% and 80%.
- 4.8 Free bulky uplifts have been available for people in receipt of Council Tax Reduction since March 2024.

Measures of Improvement

- 4.9 In addition to the LEAMS assessment, the Council monitors performance against key performance targets. Performance is analysed and improvement actions taken if required.
- 4.10 However, the table below shows the number of service requests resolved on-time in the 9 months to December 2023 for our top 3 service requests.

Dog Fouling	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	9 Month Total
No. of service requests	148	128	92	81	115	98	113	101	135	1011
average no. of days to respond	2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	1 1/2	1	1 1/2	1	1 1/2
% responded to within 10 days	98%	100%	100%	98%	99%	99%	100%	99%	100%	99%
Dumping and Fly Tipping	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	9 Month Total
No. of service requests	827	943	937	1007	1025	932	930	965	830	8396
average no. of days to respond	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2 1/2	2	1 1/2
% responded to within 5 days	98%	95%	99%	98%	96%	97%	98%	95%	93%	96%
Litter	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	9 Month Total
No. of service requests	403	392	524	461	497	375	272	469	374	3767
average no. of days to respond	1 1/2	2	2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2
% responded to within 10 days	100%	98%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	97%	99%	99%

4.11 As a result of our performance in this area a review is being undertaken to reduce the target timescale for enquiry by type over the course of this year. Below is the table that outlines all requests responded to in line with timescales.

1. Requests resolved within timescale (performance measure):

% of Street Cleansing Service Requests Resolved Within Timescale

Locality	Mar-23	Feb-24	Mar-24	Monthly
	Value	Value	Value	Target
North East Locality	92%	99%	97%	85%
South East Locality	96%	97%	96%	85%
North West Locality	94%	95%	97%	85%
South West Locality	97%	99%	99%	85%
City	95%	97%	97%	85%

Service Improvements

4.12 As reported in October 2022, changes are being implemented within the street cleansing service to improve how the service operates within the existing service budget. Initial changes have prioritised a more proactive model, particularly in residential areas and the LEAMS score would indicate that these changes are already having a positive impact.

4.13 Since October 2022, the following changes have been made to service delivery to improve street cleanliness:

4.13.1 Small mechanical sweepers are being routed and deployed consistently across the city.

4.13.2 Rapid response vehicles have been deployed to allow crews to concentrate on scheduled cleaning.

4.13.3 Additional larger capacity litter bins have been sited at strategic locations where issues have been identified.

Supporting Activities

- 4.14 A recent review of Neighbourhood Environment Services teams has aligned resources to provide broader support for cleansing activities.
- 4.15 This will include public engagement and working collaboratively with other council teams, citizens, and stakeholders to improve the quality of the local environment and will include looking at Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to remove parking in difficult to clean streets to support deep cleaning of areas.
- 4.16 LitterLotto® is a free to enter Prize Draw, with regular spot prizes and jackpots, supported by brands who want a cleaner environment. Through Keep Scotland Beautiful several councils have signed up (Aberdeen City, Glasgow City, North and South Ayrshire, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian and Renfrewshire) and an Edinburgh launch is planned for the Autumn.
- 4.17 The campaign encourages the public to download an app via a QR code, and post pictures of themselves depositing litter into bins in the city. They will then be entered into a free monthly prize draw for Edinburgh (winner receives £100/voucher equivalent) and a National prize draw (winner receives £1,000/voucher equivalent). Each time they submit a new piece of litter it gives them another entry, encouraging continued participation.
- 4.18 Following on from the recent City Centre and Town Centre Refresh projects and the significant impact this has had on the city, the Council applied for Keep Britain Tidy's (KBT) Chewing Gum Task Force (CGTF) grant 2024 and has been advised that the application was successful. A grant of £0.025m will be used to augment current Street Cleansing arrangements with the addition of specialist, low water flow and chemical free cleaning equipment (LEZ compliant), to specifically address chewing gum staining. This also has wider reaching benefits, including the removal of graffiti from sensitive stone and historic structures.
- 4.19 The CGTF project will be focusing on the recently refreshed area at the top of Leith Walk, including Picardy Place, Leith Street and Greenside Place. It was noted that chewing gum staining in the area is significant, considering the area has recently benefited from the addition of the Trams Network, streetscape refurbishment, and was not included in the city refresh projects footprint.
- 4.20 The proposed CGTF project will include Community and Business engagement and Behaviour Change media (on-street and social media). Alongside this there will be regular monitoring to determine the efficacy of the project, requiring feedback reports to KBT. We anticipate that working in partnership with and benefitting from KBT's experience will strongly influence further and similar projects across the city.

Weed Control

- 4.21 Committee received an [update](#) on the measures in place to control weeds across the city on 31 March 2022.
- 4.22 From 2022/23, the Council's normal approach to weed control was supplemented by the citywide ward clean ups which prioritised actions to improve the general

appearance of streets across the city. Additional small mechanical sweeper routing with continue to remove detritus reducing that growth medium for weeds to take hold.

- 4.23 In 2024/25, it is anticipated that there will be further a reduction in the use of glyphosate as it is intended to only apply herbicide using controlled droplet applicators.
- 4.24 Street cleansing teams will continue to deal with weeds as part of their normal duties and officers will continue to engage with local community groups (e.g. Pesticide Free Balerno) on activities in local communities.

Actions from October 2022

- 4.25 Officers have been exploring measures and initiatives to support and advance the zero-waste hierarchy in Edinburgh, including but not limited to share and reuse networks, reuse and repair hubs, upcycling facilities, and refill shops. Reuse organisations operate independently of the Council, although some such as The Remakery and The Bike Station have been funded by the Council. Reuse activities broadly are promoted through the Council's [reuse webpage](#) and online guides for real nappies and home composting.

Improvements following confirmation of additional funding.

- 4.26 A dedicated team to tackle deep cleaning of streets in hard to clean areas within the Controlled Parking Zones and Housing Revenue Account Land working closely with Neighbourhood Environmental Services Officers, Housing Officers and Street Enforcement Officers. Communications to residents when deep cleaning is taking place and promoting TTROs to restrict parking to allow mechanical cleaning of streets that would not be able to be cleaning in that way normally.

Deposit Return Scheme

- 4.27 The introduction of the deposit return scheme (DRS) for drinks containers in Scotland has been delayed until at least October 2027 to coincide with the launch of the UK wide scheme, but is still expected to divert the majority of plastic drinks bottles and drinks cans from both litter and household waste streams (as the customer will have paid a 20p deposit on each container and will therefore return the vast majority of them to the shops to reclaim their deposit). Glass has, however, been removed from the scheme.
- 4.28 The UK Government have also been planning to introduce mandatory retailer takeback facilities for fibre-based cups from 2024 as part of the separate legislation on extended producer responsibility for packaging materials, although it has been reported that they may no longer pursue this objective.
- 4.29 These initiatives would remove the greater part of the recyclable element from the litter waste stream and as such it is suggested that the impact of these initiatives is assessed before committing to further investment which may yield limited return.

Recycling Point – Silverknowes Golf Club

- 4.30 The recycling point at Silverknowes Golf Club requires to be cleared of dumping and fly-tipping daily, taking away valuable resources from the surrounding area that could be used on improving the cleanliness of the local areas in most need.
- 4.31 The Street Enforcement Team visit on a regular basis noting trade and commercial waste on the site without being able to identify the perpetrators.
- 4.32 Edinburgh Leisure who manages the Golf Course have been in touch with the Council's Environmental Health Team to intervene and request the removal of site, which they support.
- 4.33 The Council's Pest Control team are regularly required to bait the site for a rat infestation and, because of high levels of contamination in the packaging bins (residual and food waste), it has not been possible to collect materials for recycling for three years.
- 4.34 Every household in the area surrounding this site has a full suite of kerbside recycling services available to them, therefore there is no requirement for this site (which predates the roll out of kerbside recycling).

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Officers will continue to monitor performance in respect of street cleanliness and will report this to Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 5.2 Continued implementation of the actions agreed in October 2022 will continue and will be reported as part of the regular updates to Committee.
- 5.3 The next update will be presented in December 2024.
- 5.4 This report highlights the removal of the recycling bring site at Silverknowes Golf Club due to issues with dumping and fly-tipping.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 In addition to the Council's revenue budget for street cleansing, in 2024/25 a further £0.892m has been allocated to these activities. Further information on how these additional monies will be spent is provided in paragraph 4.21.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The impact on stakeholders and the community from street cleansing should be positive and significant. This will continue to be monitored through the LEAMS survey.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

Environmental Impacts

- 8.3 There are no negative environmental impacts as a result of this report. The measures outlined would not be expected to have a significant impact on climate change or mitigations to manage climate change effects.
- 8.4 The reported reduction in the use of glyphosate would be expected to result in improvements to the local environment and to nature. Better control of litter would also be likely to be beneficial to wildlife overall.
- 8.5 The removal of the recycling point would not be expected to impact on the Council's recycling performance due to the high levels of contamination being encountered.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The report focuses on measures which will improve the cleanliness of the city which are beneficial to communities and support the Council in discharging its statutory responsibilities.
- 9.2 The proposal to reduce glyphosate use was agreed at Committee in May 2024, as part of the policy assurance procedure. This is part of a new approach to managing weeds which will be evaluated over the course of the year.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 None

11. Appendices

None.