

# Transport & Environment Committee

10am, Tuesday, 29 October 2013

## Landfill and Recycling Update

Item number	8.6
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

## 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 4,998 tonnes or 8% when compared against the same period last year. Based on tonnage data for the period ending August 2013 and taking into account seasonal factors it is forecast that 132,708 tonnes will be sent to landfill this year, 4,538 tonnes or 3.3% less than the previous year.

The proportion of all waste (including street sweepings) recycled this year to date is 41% compared to 40% 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 targeted at students arriving in Edinburgh for the new term.

This report also includes an update on complaint numbers. There have been on average, in 2013/14, 554 complaints per week. This is 24% 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 0.2%. However no amount of complaints is acceptable and Waste Services continue to work hard to reduce the level further.

### 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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Although the projection for landfill to the year end exceeds budget target, it is still a reduction of 3.3% compared to 2012/13 performance.

As at the end of June, an overspend on landfill costs is being offset by an under-spend on recycling payments during the same period.

## **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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## Landfill 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. 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.
- 1.6 On average the service receives 554 complaints per week but is committed to reducing this number. However this means that less than 0.19% of collections result in a complaint.

### 2. Main report

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#### Landfill

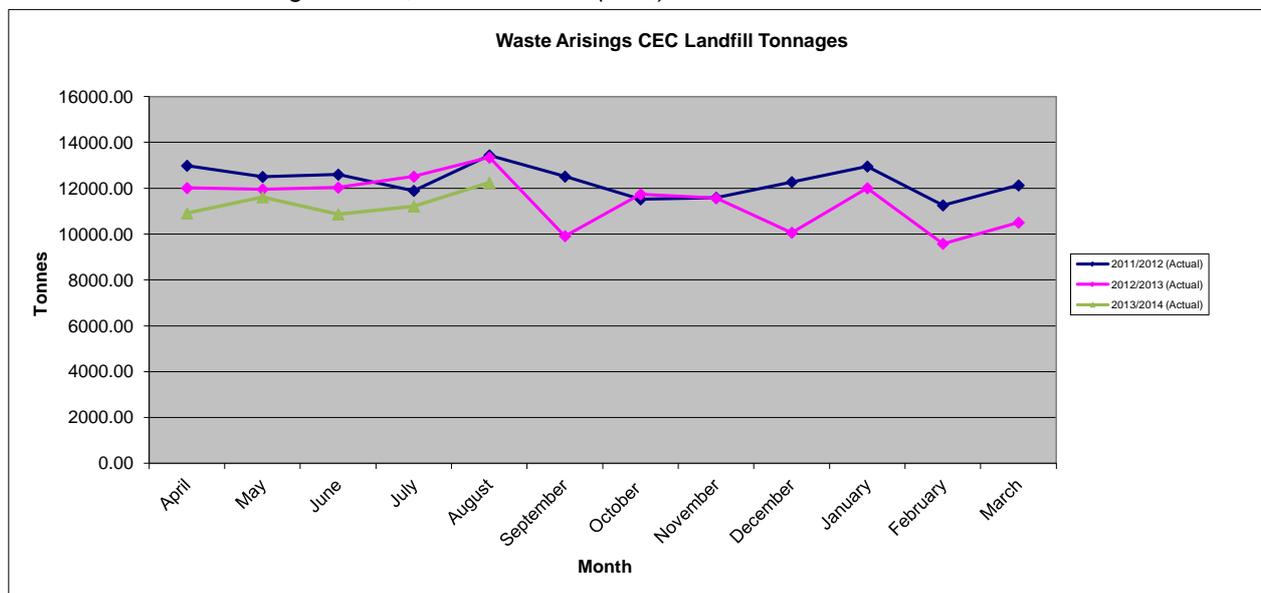
- 2.1 Landfill tonnage (see Table 1 below) for 2013/14 totals 56,859 tonnes for the year to August 2013; this is a reduction of 4,998 tonnes or 8% on the same period in 2012/13.

2.2 The projection for landfill to the year end, taking into account seasonal fluctuations, is currently 132,708 tonnes. This would be a reduction of 3.3% or 4,538 tonnes on the year 2012/13. This full year projection recognises that based on previous years trends recycling tonnages reduce during the second half of the year. In 2012/13 recycling tonnages in the period October to March were 27% less than in the previous 6 months. By comparison landfill tonnages in the second half of the year were 9% less than in the first 6 months. With landfill costs of £99.82 per tonne this reduction represents a saving of just under £453,000.

**Table 1: Landfill Tonnages 13/14 & 12/13 YTD August 2013**

	YTD August 2013	YTD August 2012	Difference		13/14 Target	13/14 Year End Forecast	12/13	Difference	
			Tonnes	%				Tonnes	%
Landfill	56,859	61,857	4,998	8%	118,000	132,708	137,246	4,538	3.3%

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

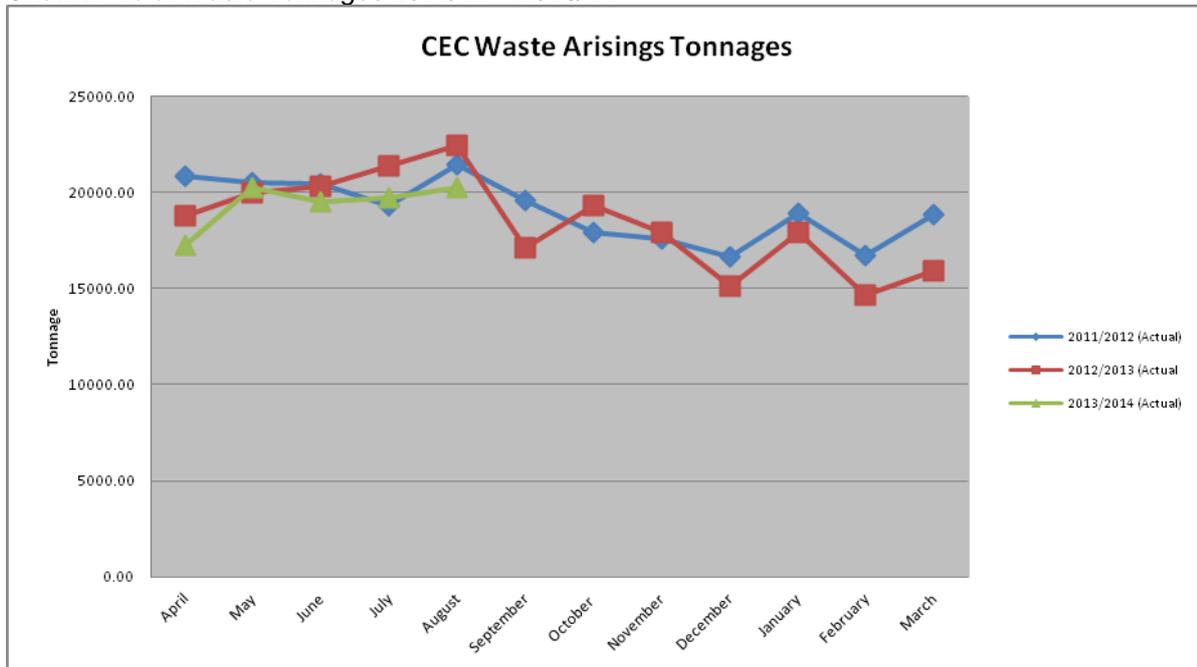


2.3 The landfill tonnage for August 2013 is 12,243 tonnes. This is a reduction of 8% compared to August 2012.

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 5.8% 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**



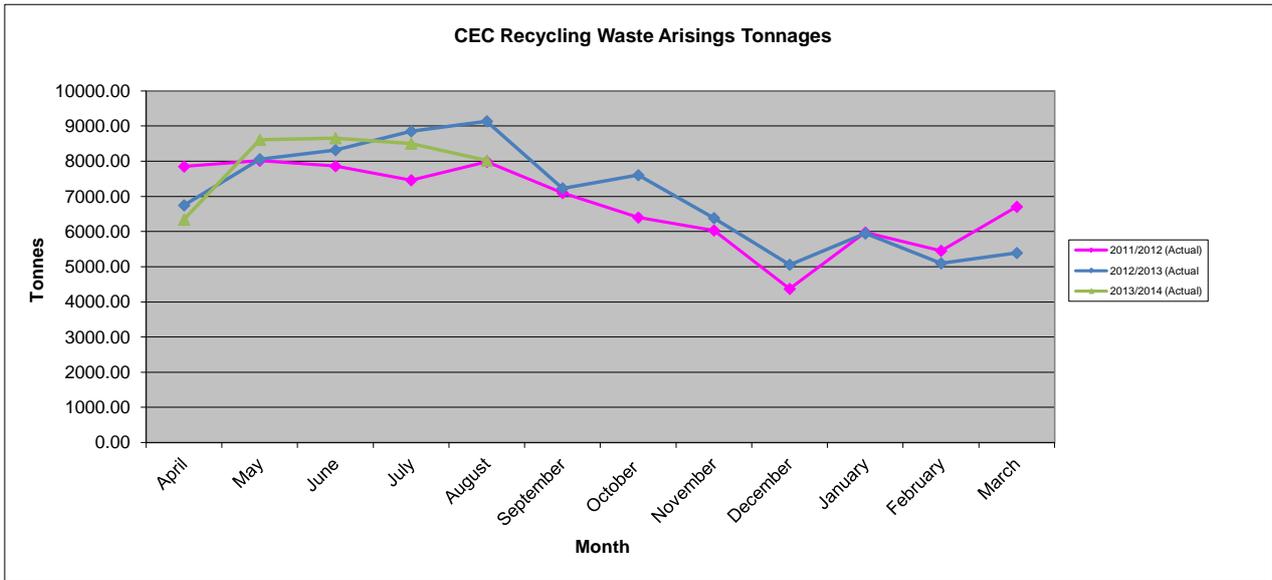
## Recycling

2.5 The percentage of waste recycled (see table 2 below) including street sweepings between April 2013 and August 2013 is 41% compared to 40% for the same period in 2012/13. Although tonnages are slightly lower than the same period last year the decrease in the total amount of waste collected means that the percentage recycled has increased by 1.5 % year to date.

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

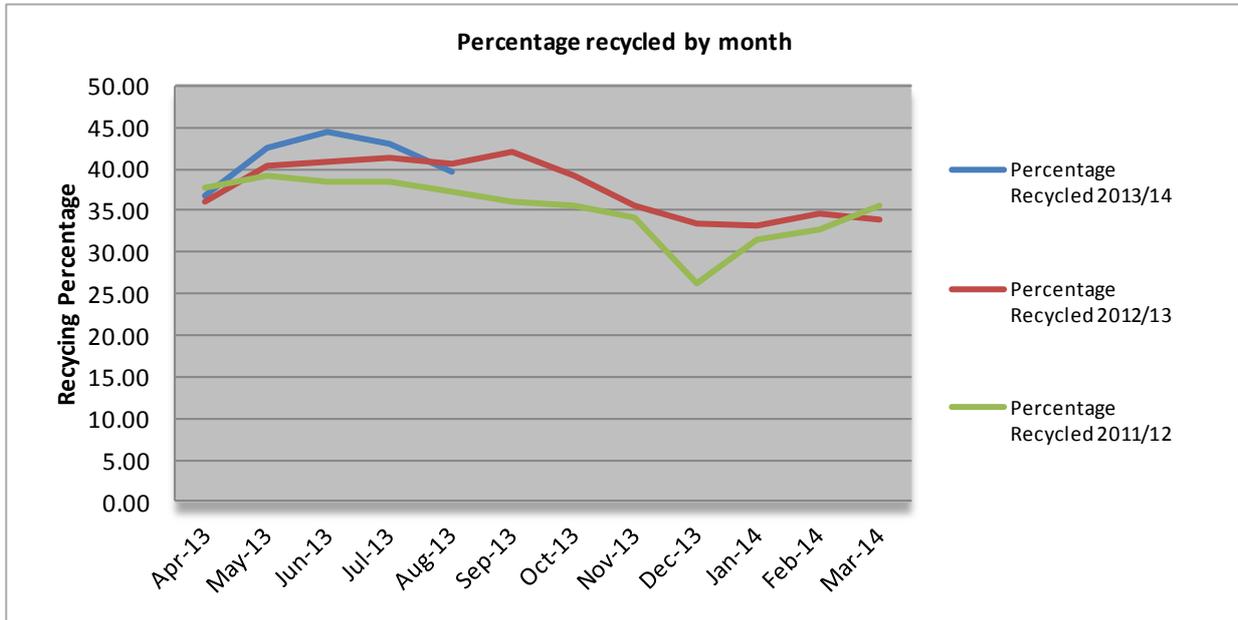
	YTD August 2013		YTD August 2012		Difference	
	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate	Tonnes	% Rate
Recycling	40,142	41.4%	41,121	39.93%	-979	-2.4%

**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 for most of 2013/14 to date.

**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 2,080 tonnes; this is an increase of 445 tonnes (27 %) on 2012/13.

- 2.8 The tonnage of kerbside box recycling for April to June 2013 combined is 6,031 tonnes, this is an increase of 404 tonnes (7.2%) on the corresponding period in 2012 (5,627 tonnes).
- 2.9 The tonnage collected through packaging banks and CRC sites has also increased (see Table 3 below).

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

Recycling 2013/14	2013/14	2012/13	Difference
Kerbside Blue/Red Boxes	6031	5627	404
Garden Waste	12131	13089	-958
Food Waste	2081	1634	447
Recycling Banks	2972	3421	-449
Packaging Banks	1350	1137	213
Trade	1913	2103	-190
CRC	9089	8882	207
Special Uplifts	1452	1525	-73
Other	1145	1155	-10
Street Sweepings	1978	2545	-567

- 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%	80,729	39.2%	-3,106	-3.7%

- 2.11 Following approval of the outline business case by this Committee at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> 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. That 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 is under taken 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.

## Communication

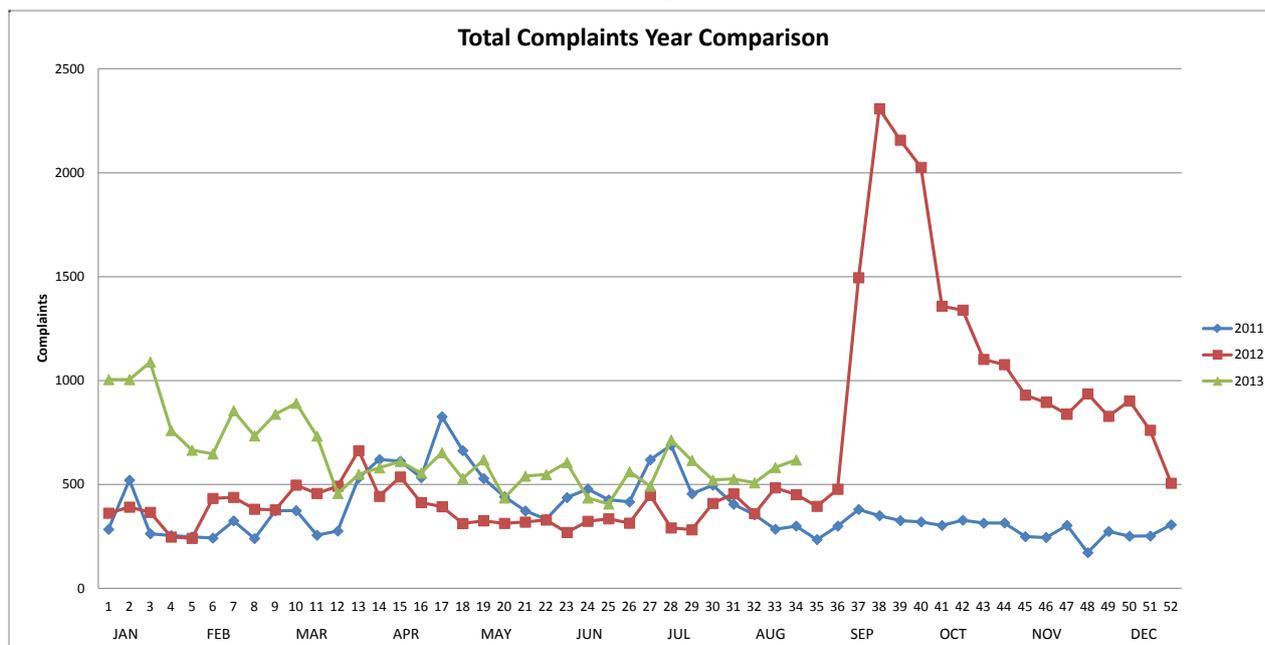
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- 2.13 A range of public engagement work is ongoing to promote changes in public behaviour which will increase recycling and landfill diversion. This includes door knocking, improving and reviewing information provided on recycling services, engagement activity and promotional campaigns. The main campaign in September targeted students returning for the new term. More details are contained in appendix 1.
- 2.14 Staff engaged in door knocking have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting areas with excess waste and those in the demographic categories which research shows are most likely to change their behaviour.
- 2.15 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.

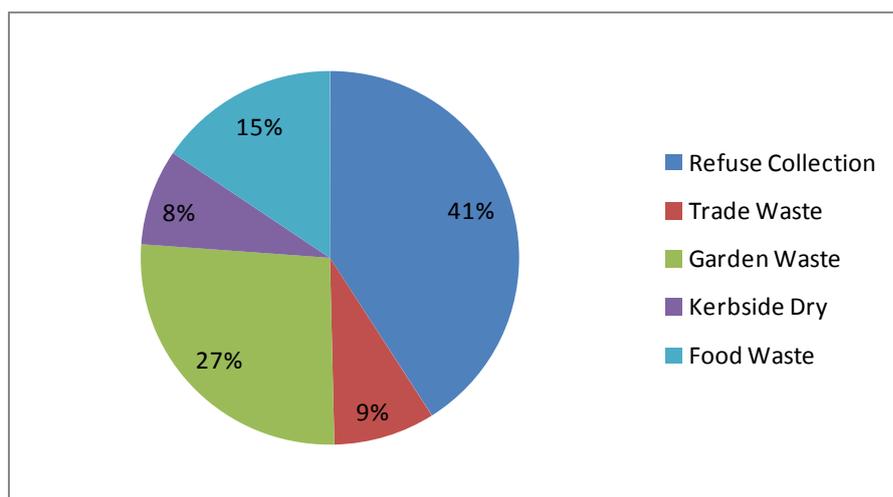
## **Complaints**

- 2.16 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 routes in refuse collection. Overall there has been a downward trend in complaint numbers since then.
- 2.17 The weekly average in 2013/14 has been 554 complaints per week. This is 24% less than the average number of complaints per week in 2012/13 (738 complaints per week). 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.
- 2.18 The majority of complaints are about residual refuse collections (41%). Chart 5 below shows the full breakdown by service area. Missed collections are the subject of 86% of all complaints.
- 2.19 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.

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



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



2.20 Implementation of a new asset management software system between October and December will improve the way in which complaints are handled and the information available to customer service staff. It will enable all data relating to waste collections to be stored and recorded in one place including bin and collection types, detailed location and access information and customer contact including complaints. The new system will be used by both Waste Services and the Contact Centre thereby enabling better and quicker handling of customer complaints. In-cab devices will also be provided for crews that will show route information and allow crews to record route completion and problems with collections in real time. Staff handling complaints will be able to view this information together with schedules and a history of any address which will improve the detail and accuracy of information given to callers. It will be possible to immediately allocate work to crews via their in cab devices leading to much quicker resolution of complaints.

- 2.21 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 To 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: Clean – Edinburgh’s streets and open spaces are clean and free of litter and graffiti. CO18: Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production. 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.
<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 –**

- Staff have switched from targeting low participation areas to targeting areas with excess waste and those in the demographic categories which research shows are most likely to change their behaviour.
- 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 will be carried out in areas with higher and lower food waste tonnage to get a better understanding of current behaviour.
- 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 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. roadshows in supermarkets, leisure centres, cinemas, student campuses, Princes Street.
- Staff continue to work with neighbourhoods e.g. working in North neighbourhood on Crewe Road North where additional banks have been sited and properties highlighted by neighbourhood team visited.

### **Campaigns –**

- Further additional food waste campaigns are being planned. 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 began on 2 September. It will focus on a Facebook competition that encourages students to find out about services in their areas and offers the chance to win a tablet. This includes 5 fresher's events with more to follow throughout September. Posters were distributed to student unions, halls of residences and other sites and adverts ran in both the Student and Journal both student papers
- Social media activity throughout September and into October, including promotional videos