

Cleansing Performance Report To Edinburgh City Council's Transport & Environment Committee 16 November 2023

This report provided the regular six-monthly update on street cleanliness across the city and provides an update on progress in respect of the actions agreed by the City Council's Transport & Environment Committee at its meeting of 6 October 2022 regarding street cleanliness.

The report acknowledged that general street cleanliness as measured by the national Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) had reduced markedly over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report added that cleanliness levels 'have started to return to a normal level.' In particular, the report contends that the most recent survey (September 2023) 'that Edinburgh's performance has improved significantly and remains in line with the other urban Councils in its peer group.' The most recent data from Council monitoring of responses to cleansing requests 'demonstrates that the service continues to deliver a high level of responsiveness.'

The main sources of litter identified in the report were smoking related litter, followed by fast food, drinks packaging and packaging generally. Besides litter, other environmental impacts included graffiti, fly-posting and chewing gum staining. Low levels of vandalism were reported. It was stated that the postponement of the deposit return scheme for drinks containers (DRS) until 2025 at the earliest made it unlikely that there would be any improvement behaviour in relation to littering of these materials before the scheme comes into effect.

The data provided in the report is however difficult to connect to the actual level of street cleanliness because the score underpinning the indicator of street cleanliness is not broken down (e.g. number of sites reporting no litter) but is simply an aggregate number of overall performance, while the information is not disaggregated geographically, most obviously to the City Centre where even a causal assessment would indicate there is a significant problem.

The report also provided an update on initiatives undertaken following the allocation of additional funding for the Cleansing service in the 2023/24 budget. These include:

- Procurement of two new graffiti washing vehicles, a two-thirds increase .
- The conclusion of the recruitment of additional drivers for the Cleansing service, h cleanliness inspectors, and two Operational Managers to cover East and West operations and more specialist services. The recruitment of additional cleansing operatives is underway. No numbers incremental increases was provided.
- The deployment of small mechanical sweepers being routed across the city, and the deployment of four rapid response vehicles have been deployed to strengthen responses to incidents citywide and targeting of areas known from the data to have significant cleanliness issues.

- Targeting of tenement streets that have an ‘endemic problem’ with fly-tipping and removal of dumped items with an enhanced service that will also undertake running repairs to on-street bin hubs.
- It was also noted that there were improvements to the services provided by Household Waste Recycling Centres based on the retained booking system.

Figures were also provided that showed recycling levels at Recycling Centres:

Household Waste Recycling Centres - Recycling Performance					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Tonnage Recycled	19,545.97	19,622.03	13,010.17	16,086.58	13,433.41
Total Landfill CRC	14,160.19	13,030.16	6,227.19	8,339.51	6,889.14
Total Waste Arisings	33,706.16	32,652.19	19,237.36	24,426.09	20,322.55
Recycling Percentage	58.0%	60.1%	67.6%	65.9%	66.1%

Peter Williamson
Convenor Environment Committee (Acting)