



Subject:	Resources and Fleet Waste Update
Date:	10 th September, 2024
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Operational Director Resources and Fleet & OSS
Contact Officer:	John McConnell, City Services Manager. Resources and Fleet

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
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1.1	The purpose of this report is to update members on the latest waste statistics published by NIEA, to give members an update on the Council's Waste Framework and to update members on some initial results from the restricted access pilots, firstly with the DFI/PSNI pilot and also with the introduction of smaller vehicles in difficult to access streets. It also provides members with an update on Phase 1 of the expansion of the Kerbside Glass Collection arrangements to 22,000 additional households.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Committee members are requested to note the contents of this report.
3.0	Main Report

	<p>Key Issues</p> <p><u>Waste Performance & Recycling Rates</u></p>
3.1	The most recent waste statistics published by the NIEA are the January to March 2024 quarterly statistics. The report is a snapshot of the final quarter of the 23/24 financial year versus the same period the previous year. As a result, it is less informative than the annual report (due November 2024) but does contain one table (table 18) which provides an overview of performance in relation to the waste Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the course of a rolling twelve months.
3.2	The overall picture for NI as a region is one of an increasing quantity of waste collected (999,913 tonnes collected, up 3%), a slight increase in the municipal reuse and recycling rate (up 0.9% points to 51.1%) combined with a significant decrease in the landfill disposal rate (down 4% points to 18%).
3.3	<p>An examination of the figures for Belfast City Council, indicates the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Waste Arisings - the total tonnage of all types of waste collected by the Council was 160,282 tonnes. This is an increase of approximately 2,500 tonnes (1.5%) on the previous year. • Municipal Waste Recycling Rate – the percentage of all types of waste collected by the Council which was re-used, recycled or composted, increased by 1.3% to 38.3%. • Household Waste Recycling Rate– the percentage of household waste only collected by the Council which was re-used, recycled or composted, increased slightly by 0.3% to 41.1%.

- 3.4
- **Landfill Diversion Rate** – the percentage of all Council waste sent to landfill was 7%, down from 29% in the previous year.

3.5

Based on these provisional figures, in 2023/24 the combined tonnages of recyclables collected from the various kerbside schemes (blue bin, brown bin and kerbside box) and recycling centres remained largely unchanged. The main contributors to the uplift in these figures were the increased tonnage of street sweeps processed in 2023/24 and the onboarding of the new arc21, interim residual waste treatment contract.

3.6

This residual waste treatment contract involves the haulage and treatment of the non-recyclable waste collected at the Council's Waste Transfer Station from across the city. On arrival at the contractor's Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) the material undergoes a pre-treatment exercise where a proportion of the waste is captured for recycling. The remaining waste is then prepared and baled for onward shipment to European Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities. This contract has delivered a step change in the Council's landfill disposal figures resulting in just 7% of residual waste ending up in landfill.

3.7

As noted within this report, and brought to the attention of Members through various consultation responses, there are a number of legislative, strategic and financial drivers which are going to shape future waste management arrangements. The full nature and implications of these policy drivers remain unclear and in the absence of sufficient clarity, radical, systemic change aimed at delivering significant improvements in the recycling rate and environmental outcomes are unlikely.

3.7 **Waste Framework Update**

At the People & Communities Committee meeting of June 2017, Members approved the Waste Framework document. It provides an overview of options on how waste could be managed within the city over the next decade. It was developed to align with the objectives of the Belfast Agenda and Resourceful Belfast (Circular Economy), designing out waste, improving the quantity and quality of recycling and supporting local jobs. These objectives are mirrored in DAERA's recent public consultation exercise; Rethinking Our Resources, Measures for Climate Action and a Circular Economy in NI.

3.8

The Waste Framework focuses on four themes (i) Collection Arrangements, (ii) Infrastructure, (iii) Behaviour Change and (iv) Technology. The following sections provide an insight on the work and initiatives currently being undertaken under the four main workstreams.

(i) Collection Arrangements

Inner City Recycling Scheme Update

On 1 August 2024, Bryson Recycling commenced the new contract for the delivery of the kerbside recycling scheme in the inner city. One of the main changes to the contract is that the delivery of the kerbside boxes to householders is outside the scope of the contract and these orders will be serviced by our normal bin delivery contractor.

Officers are working with Bryson Recycling to ensure that the contract delivers according to the terms, conditions and service delivery plan. Bryson Recycling has recently appointed a Customer Liaison Officer to assist with the delivery of this contract and to address customer issues raised by the Council. They are also in the process of installing in-cab technology to assist with communication and resolution of customer issues.

3.9

Pre-loved Toys

Following successful campaigns over the last two years, feedback from the main partner on the project, East Belfast Missions, noted that the level of resources required to deliver this project in its current guise far outstrips the current resourcing arrangements and that many charities are now naturally running their own schemes with a preference for monetary donations or new items. This presents a challenging environment both in terms of resourcing and teaming up with charities already involved in alternative schemes. The Service is exploring alternative delivery models for 2024 which may be more partnership based rather than a lead-partner model.

3.10

Kerbside Glass

As part of the 2024/25 revenue estimates setting process, Members committed to delivering phase 1 of this scheme which involves an expansion to approximately 22,000 households.

The Council has recently received a Letter of Offer from DAERA regarding financial support for the capital assets of the scheme on a 50/50 basis. Subject to approval at the August 2024 SP&R committee meeting, the project moves to stage 3 committed within the Council's Capital Programme. Following this, the Memorandum of Understanding will be completed and returned to DAERA.

3.11

Planning for expansion of the scheme is ongoing and orders for the boxes and vehicles will be placed following the SP&R decision. Given the lead time associated with the boxes, it is envisaged that the project will be rolled-out in Q4 24/25.

3.12

3.13	<p>One of the key aspects of planning the project is the construction of the collection routes. In mapping out phase 1 of the expansion the Service is considering; existing kerbside glass provision (or otherwise), glass bring bank availability and the views of those residents who transferred to Belfast City Council under Local Government Reform and who then received a different kerbside recycling scheme which no longer included glass collections. Taking these factors into consideration the proposed catchment area for phase 1 is set out in Appendix 1.</p>
3.14	<p>Community Repaint Scheme</p> <p>The Service is exploring the potential for a Community RePaint scheme at HWRCs. Not only would this seek to reduce the amount of paint being treated and disposed of through the sites but it may provide a useful resource to community groups.</p>
3.15	<p>In January 2023, Members agreed to the establishment of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in principle with the Community RePaint scheme. The service has completed phase 1 of this initiative which involved an assessment of the preferred approach and level of demand.</p> <p>The Service is now progressing this scheme with a procurement exercise for a service provider combined with new containers for the paint (funding provided by the Council's Climate team) with a planned go live date of Q3 2024/25.</p> <p>(ii) Infrastructure</p>
3.16	<p>Recycling Centres & Dargan Road WTS</p> <p>Following SP&R approval for capital funding, the Service initiated and completed a procurement exercise for a multi-year, container provision contract. An inception meeting has been held with the successful contractor and a prioritisation plan for the skips and compactors for the first year expenditure agreed. The orders are due to be placed in Q2 24/25 and it is anticipated that skips will start to appear on site in Q3 24/25.</p>
3.17	<p>Recycling Centres and Pedestrian Access</p> <p>The pedestrian access gate at Alexandra Park, Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) has been completed and operational as of August 2022.</p> <p>The service has requested that our colleagues in Property & Projects commission a feasibility study regarding pedestrian access for Palmerston Road and Blackstaff Way HWRC.</p> <p>Connected Circular Economy - Shared Island Project</p>

The Service has worked with colleagues in the Economic Development Unit and Climate Team along with Dublin City Council (DCC) to deliver a feasibility study into a "Connected Circular Economy." This report looks at how the two cities can share knowledge and good practice with the ambition for the development of hubs in Dublin and Belfast to support the growth of the circular economy island-wide.

Colleagues in the Economic Development Unit are liaising with DCC to explore opportunities for funding which would enable the progression of the report's recommendations and take these forward to develop more detailed business cases for the preferred option(s)

3.18

(iii) Behaviour Change

Waste Tourism

The Service has been closely monitoring the waste disposed of at recycling centres and civic amenity sites and in particular the levels of non-recyclable waste. It is noted that all neighbouring councils have various policies and procedures in place such as, proof of residency or an online booking system for site users, to restrict waste at their sites to that of their own rate payers.

3.19

Staff at a number of recycling centres report an increase in site users which are not recognised as local and this also includes "man with a van" type operations. This issue has escalated since the decision by a neighbouring council to implement a booking system for all site users in September 2023.

3.20

The Service is analysing the data from the recycling centres and provisional findings would support this anecdotal evidence. This could obviously have a detrimental impact on both the Council's recycling rate and finances. It is the intention of the Service to present a report to the committee in the near future regarding this issue.

3.21

(iv) Information Technology

In-Cab Technology

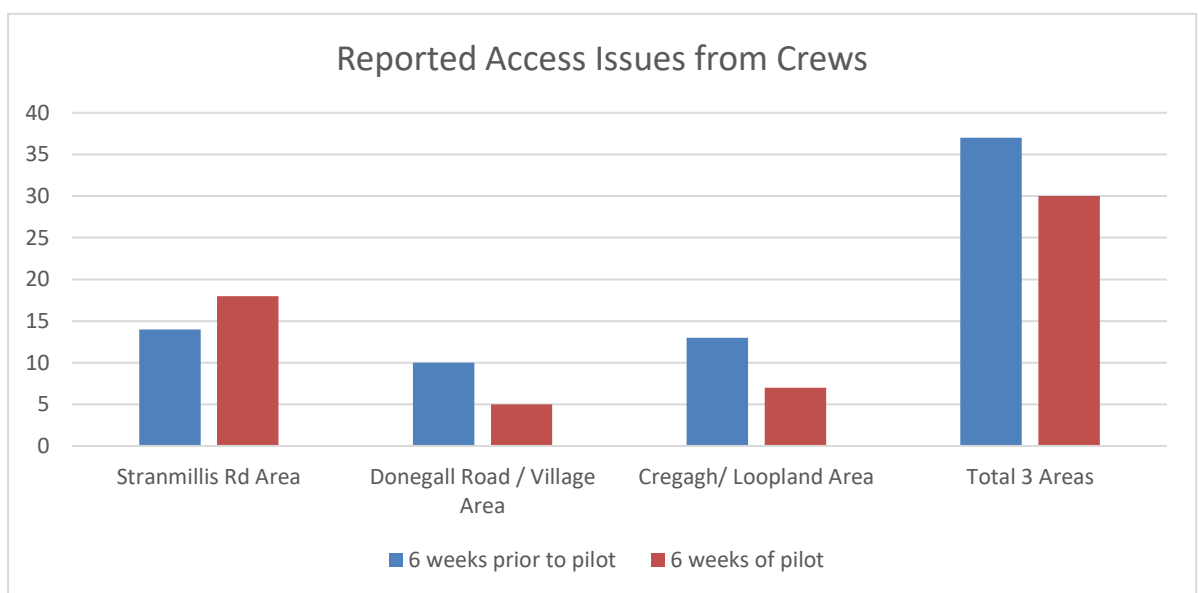
In previous reports to Committee officers outlined the proposal to introduce a modern software system to drive efficiency and deliver the following;

- Hold all safety information on vehicles and routes.
- incorporate live time information flows to and from the operating centre to crews and vice versa.
- capture all the functionality of the Report IT App
- optimise routes as the city grows to ensure operational efficiency.

3.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • link in with Customer Hub software to deliver customer service. • monitor vehicle condition and driver behaviour.
	<p>By way of update, a tender for the procurement for the solution was issued by Central Procurement Services. This tender closed on 28th August, 2024 and an evaluation of the technical and financial aspects of the bid will now be carried out to determine the leading bids. It is then proposed to hold demonstrations of those systems before considering the preferred bidder. Dependant on the preferred bid and the satisfactory contract award, it is still envisaged that the system could begin to be operationalised in Q1 2025/26.</p>
3.23	<p>Operational update - Access Issues</p> <p>i. PSNI/DFI collaboration exercise</p> <p>Since the update given to members at the August P&C Committee meeting, officers have been collating data on the specific streets that have been targeted by the pilot since inception in May.</p> <p>In addition, a regular review meeting was held on 23rd August with representatives from DFI. The purpose of these meetings are to discuss any issues encountered by any party, to learn from progress to date, and also are used by Council Officers to feed in any concerns for the other parties to consider</p>
3.24	<p>Initial findings</p> <p>In terms of the data, two internal sources have been used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information reported back from crews as part of their daily reports via the Report-It App • information received into the customer hub from residents
3.25	<p>Report-It App data</p> <p>The information reported back from crews via the Report-It App was used for each area to compare the six weeks of collections immediately before the pilot with the six weeks of the pilot. This set of data shows a mixed set of results.</p>
3.26	<p>Chart 1 shows that in one area, Stranmillis, the number of access issues increased from 14 to 18 instances of blocked access over a six week period, but there were reductions in both the Donegall Road/Village area, down from 10 instances to 5 and in the Cregagh/Loopland area there was also a reduction, down from 13 to 6. Taking the three areas together there was an overall reduction from 37 instances to 30, a reduction of approximately 19%</p>

It should be emphasised that this data only covers the small period of time since launch of the pilot (3 months out of an 18 month period) , and that results to date should be treated with a degree of caution.

Chart 1



3.27

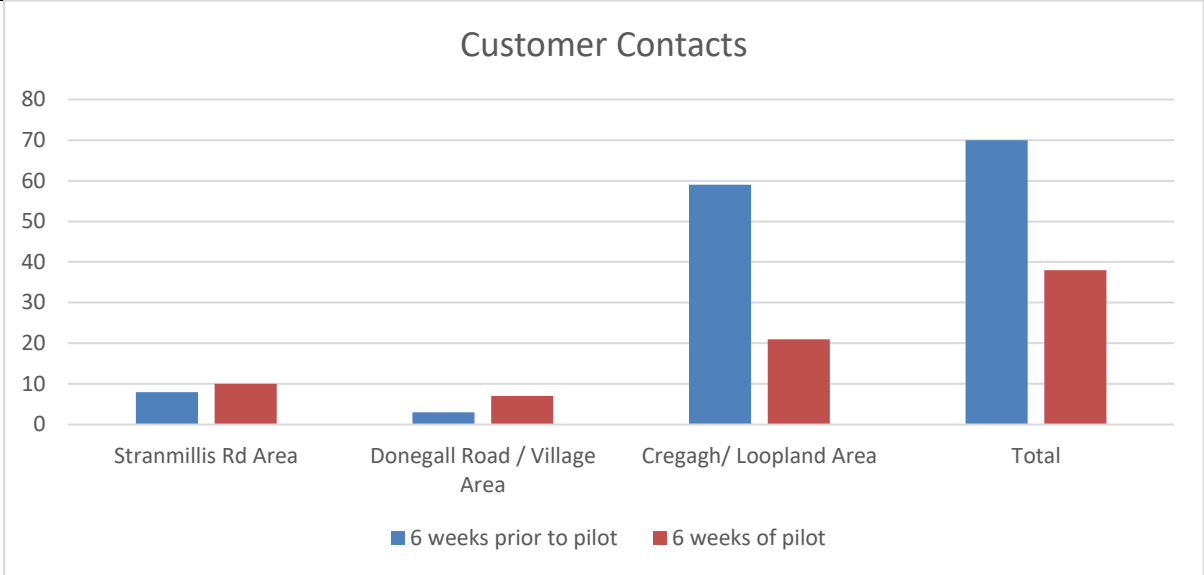
Customer Contact Data

In relation to the number of customer contacts received through the Customer Hub over a similar 6 week period prior to and during the first phase of the pilot, the like for like figures are detailed in Chart 2.

3.28

For the Stranmillis area there was an increase of customer contacts from 8 to 10. There was also an increase in the Donegall Road / Village Area from 3 to 7. There was however a significant reduction in the Loopland / Cregagh Road area from 59 to 21. Overall, there was a reduction in customer contacts from 70 to 38, or approximately 46%. Again, these are early figures and only cover the first cycle in three areas.

Chart 2



3.29

ii. Introduction of Small Vehicles

3.30

As previously reported to Committee Waste Collections started Phase 1 of the introduction on 12th August. At the time of writing of this report the first small vehicle has been deployed on routes for 2 weeks and will have completed just one cycle for those streets chosen.

Initial results are very encouraging, but again these are only based on two weeks of operation. Of the 128 streets serviced by the vehicles on the routes during this period , crews have been able to access these streets on all except for 1 occasion¹, indicating an initial success rate of over 99%.

3.31

That said, the Customer Hub has had contact from residents of 7 streets in the first week of operation in relation to collection services. The Waste Collection Team has analysed the vehicle tracking information for those 7 streets and have confirmed that the vehicle has indeed been able to access the street and empty bins there, ruling out access as a cause for any non-collection.

3.32

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no finance and resource implications in this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are none in this report.

4.0

Appendices - Documents Attached

¹ Reason given by crew was due to road works in the street