

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Zero Waste Management Sub Committee
DATE	12 May 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Communal Food Waste Project Update</b>
REPORT NUMBER	ZWM/16/7648
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the progress of the Communal Food Waste Project.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Zero Waste Management Sub-Committee notes the proposed report.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No new financial implications arise from this report.

**4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**Legal.** The Council has a legal duty to provide food waste collections for all households in Aberdeen under the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

**Personnel.** Additional food waste collection crews have been put in place for these new collections.

**Sustainability and environmental.** The implementation of communal food waste collections will help increase the city's recycling rate and help the Council meet its obligation to ensure that no bio-degradable waste is sent to landfill by 2021.

## 5. BACKGROUND/ MAIN ISSUES

### 5.1 Project roll out update

5.1.1 The total number of households in Aberdeen City is around 115,000. Around 70,000 of these households have access to the brown bin service for garden and food waste and these bins are collected fortnightly. The remaining households do not generally have gardens and are made up of tenements, flats and multi storey properties. The communal food waste service is therefore aimed at providing a food waste collection to these properties bringing the level of service to all properties in Aberdeen onto an equal footing.

5.1.2 The communal food waste service has now been rolled out to over almost all communal properties in Aberdeen city since the start of the implementation in 2013. The remaining properties will receive their new communal food waste collections at the same time as the communal mixed recycling service which is also being implemented during 2016. By the end of 2016 it is anticipated that all households will have access to a food waste collection service.

### 5.2 Communications and campaigns

#### 5.2.1 Love your caddy campaign

The “Love Your Caddy” campaign ran from 1-20 February 2016. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of the food recycling service and to encourage residents to use their caddies. This was originally mainly aimed at students although did not exclude others and attracted participants of all ages. The campaign included a competition in which residents were asked to post “selfies” using their food recycling caddies onto the **Recycle For Aberdeen** Facebook page.

The campaign was a huge success, with participants using creative ideas that ranged from dressing their caddies up as leftover-munching monsters to incorporating the caddy into theatrical photos and the Facebook likes increased significantly making sharing service updates and information much easier.

To mark the end of the campaign, a screening of the film “Just Eat It - A Food Waste Story” was held at the Belmont Filmhouse with an attendance of around 200 people. Prize winners were presented with their prizes at the event.

## 5.2.2 Door knocking campaign

During February 2016 Nicki Souter Associates were contracted to carry out public engagement and survey work at those properties that are served by the latest phase of the communal food waste recycling service. The exercise included a number of privately-operated student accommodation buildings.

A total of 3,541 doors were knocked during this exercise, of these 1,001 were in and answered and this resulted in 606 surveys being completed.

Main points from the final report were:

- Overall, 69% of householders surveyed said they were using the food waste service
- 91% of food waste recyclers said they had no problems using the service
- Participation in the service has a direct correlation to length of time the occupier has lived there
- The main reasons given for not using the service were - lack of a caddy, lack of awareness of the service and not enough food waste (in that order)
- Half of all students surveyed said they were using the service
- 83% of those who did not use the service said they were willing to try or retry

As a result of this survey, consideration will be given to an action plan aimed at increasing participation and awareness of the service.

## 5.2.3 Radio Advertising

To supplement the above activity and further increase awareness, a series of food waste recycling radio advertisements were also run on Northsound radio concurrently with the Love Your Caddy campaign and the public engagement exercise.

## 5.3 Conclusion

- 5.3.1 The Council's approach to fulfilling its obligation to provide food waste collections has gone significantly beyond a 'tick box' exercise, doing the bare minimum to avoid enforcement action by the regulator. Aberdeen City Council has fully embraced its objective of providing equality of service to all householders by installing a high density network of communal food waste

containers based on the premise that householders should not need to walk past a general waste bin in order to recycle or dispose of their organic waste.

5.3.2 The purchase and secure installation of attractive and high quality housings for the communal food bins, supported with capital funding from Zero Waste Scotland has enabled the Council to demonstrate that we consider food waste to be a resource and something that can value can be gained from its proper management. This approach encourages householders to use the service and ensures that the impact on the streetscape and visual amenity from additional waste containers is minimised.

5.3.3 The outcome is what we consider to be the most intensive and high quality food waste collection service in any city in Scotland and, to our knowledge, the UK.

## **6. IMPACT**

### **Improving Customer Experience –**

A key customer benefit of the food waste project is that all households will have access to food waste collections close to their property either via their own individual brown bin or communal food waste collections.

### **Improving Staff Experience –**

Dedicated food waste collection rounds have been created to collect the new communal food waste and new vehicles have been purchased to service these rounds.

### **Improving our use of Resources –**

Increasing the amount of food waste collections and recycling the food waste into compost allows us to make better use of our resources in general. It is also cheaper for the Council to send our food waste for compost recycling than to send it to landfill.

### **Corporate -**

This project is a key outcome from the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy. The project enables the Council to comply with its statutory obligations to collect food waste from all households.

### **Public –**

AN EHRIA has been completed during the formulation of the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy. The recycling service that will be enabled by the Altens East facility will ensure that all households across the city get equal access to recycling services including food waste, addressing the current inequitable level of service delivery.

**7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

No new risks have emerged in relation to this update report

**8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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