

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Audit, Risk & Scrutiny
<b>DATE</b>	2 February 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Altens East Recycling and Resource Facility – Fire Investigation Report
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	OPE/23/030
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Steve Whyte
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Mark Reilly
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Pam Walker
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	6.4

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information to the committee on the outcome of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) report (see Appendix A) on the fire at Altens East Recycling and Resource Facility on 8th July 2022.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 notes the contents of the attached SFRS fire investigation report.
- 2.2. notes that as an organisation, we can conclude from the SFRS report, that the fire at Altens East did not occur as a result of a failure in our system of internal control.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Altens East Waste and Recycling Facility was severely damaged due to a serious fire commencing on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and being finally extinguished on 13<sup>h</sup> July 2022, after which Scottish Fire and Rescue and Police handed back control of the site.
- 3.2 The facility housed the Council's waste and recycling collection service (including around 180 staff and 57 collection vehicles), as well as the materials recycling facility (MRF) for sorting and processing of recyclable materials from Aberdeen and from other authorities. The site also housed a refuse derived fuel (RDF) facility for processing residual waste which was due to be de-commissioned ahead of the Ness Energy from Waste facility coming onstream.

- 3.3 The facility has been out of commission since the fire in July, since that date, the displaced services have been operating under contingency arrangements.
- 3.4 The Altens East Facility was opened in 2017 and was a relatively new site, it was fitted with the relevant fire safety and fire alarm systems, all of which operated as they should, and beyond, and the fire alarm system activated and alerted the fire service timeously.
- 3.5 Scottish Fire and Rescue produced an investigation report which concluded that the cause of the fire was “accidental”. Deliberate ignition and electrical fault were both discounted and the cause of the fire was “undetermined” as it was not possible to identify exactly what the cause of ignition was.

**NEXT STEPS**

- 3.6 It is widely acknowledged that fire is a serious risk and concern throughout the waste management and recycling industry. A working group has recently been convened to discuss this issue including representatives from SEPA, Scottish Government, Zero Waste Scotland, SESA (Scottish Environmental Services Association), RMAS (Resource Management Association Scotland). Aberdeen City Council’s Waste & Recycling Manager is one of the local authority representatives on this group.
- 3.7 Work is progressing to rebuild and repair the facility. Discussions are ongoing to consider any changes the replacement facility could include to mitigate against this type of event recurring.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations of this report.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations of this report.

**6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications as a result of the recommendations of this report.

**7. RISK**

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
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<b>Strategic Risk</b>	N/A			
<b>Compliance</b>	N/A			
<b>Operational</b>	Risk of recurrence of similar event	Review of fire protection measures for new facility, continued discussion with SFRS  Review of Business Continuity plan for Service	L	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Financial</b>	N/A			
<b>Reputational</b>	N/A			
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	N/A			

**\*Note – if there are inconsistencies between the target risk level and the risk appetite level set, please provide rationale for your proposals.**

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</a></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>  <u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u>	The redevelopment of the Altens facility will allow the continued improvement and expansion of recycling services and householder participation across the city. The need for a sorting facility is particularly important to allow provision of a safe, convenient, and consistent service to all. This also contributes to the net zero goals for the city by providing efficient and effective services.
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</a></u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	None
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Altens East facility also includes an educational facility and site tours aimed at improving knowledge and encouraging more sustainable and responsible behaviours as citizens.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Altens East plays an integral part in achieving Stretch Outcome 13 of the current LOIP (2016-2026) to address climate change by reducing carbon emissions and more widely contribute towards the overall target that Aberdeen will be 'a place where all people can prosper' through providing residents with

	both kerbside and local recycling services, safe and efficient residual waste facilities and the jobs that are provided by operating the facilities.
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	Net Zero Routemap – contributing to the circular economy by preventing valuable materials from entering the waste stream and processing them to a high quality. Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-2025 – enabling the provision of consistent and convenient services to all and contributing to the increased recycling of materials in the city.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	Not required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

## 11. APPENDICES

11.1 **Appendix A:** Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Fire Investigation Report

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Pam Walker
<b>Title</b>	Waste & Recycling Manager
<b>Email Address</b>	PWalker@aberdeencity.gov.uk
<b>Tel</b>	01224 387602