

# The Highland Council

Agenda Item	12
Report No	CP/22/24

**Committee:** Communities and Place Committee

**Date:** 5 September 2024

**Report Title:** Waste Management Service Update

**Report By:** Assistant Chief Executive - Place

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides Members with updated information on the phased implementation of the Recycling Improvement Funded Waste and Recycling service change project.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. **NOTE** the progress that have been made on the phased introduction of Recycling Improvement Funded (RIF) collection service changes.
- ii. **NOTE** the progress being made on the essential infrastructure projects that will support service change in Caithness, Skye and Lochaber.

## 3 Implications

### 3.1 Resource

- i. The Highland Council secured significant capital investment finance from the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund (RIF). The £6.55m award is supporting a range of improvements to the Council's waste and recycling service.
- ii. The expansion of food waste collections will have a revenue implication; however the service changes are essential to achieving a sustainable collection service model. An overall forecasted positive position will be achieved through a reduction in costs associated with residual waste treatment and through improving the quality and quantity of recycling that we collect.

3.2 **Legal** - The Council's relevant legal obligations for waste collections are from the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Furthermore, the ongoing service change project regarding waste and recycling collections supports climate change legislation and the recently passed Circular Economy Bill by reducing residual waste and improving the quality and quantity of recycling.

- 3.3 **Risk** - Within the service change project there are a number of ongoing risks that require to be carefully managed for the successful delivery of the service transformation. Of particular importance are:
- i. The participation level achieved for food waste collections.
  - ii. An uninterrupted supply of procured wheeled bins and food caddies.
  - iii. Delivering infrastructure projects that are essential to support service change, these are:
    - Fort William Waste Transfer Station
    - Portree Waste Transfer Station
    - Improvement work to Seater Waste Transfer Station.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - The safety of staff undertaking waste management duties is a statutory obligation for local authorities. The effective management of waste is essential to the health and safety of all householders and other service users.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

#### **4. Impacts**

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring and report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

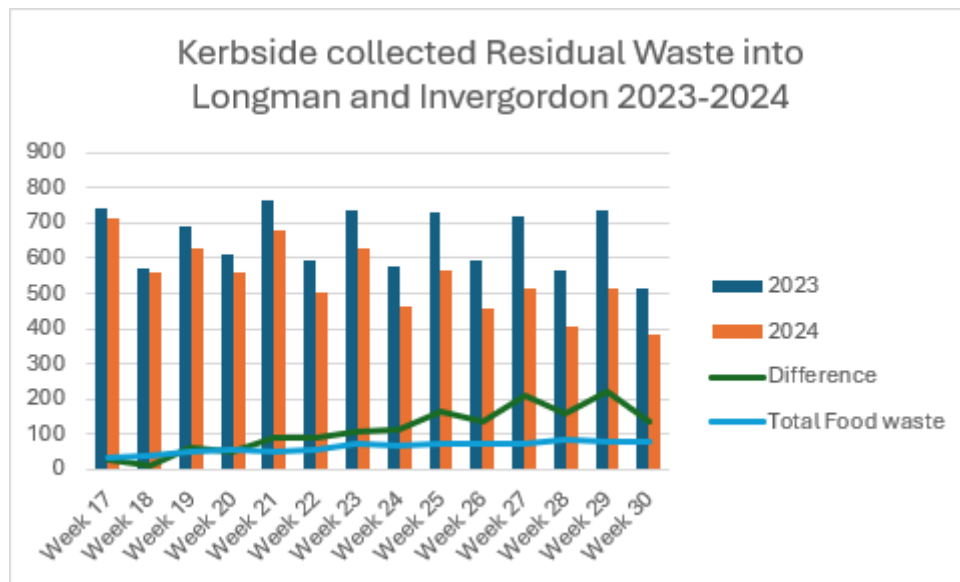
#### **5. Waste and Recycling Service Change Project**

- 5.1 Members will recall £6.55m has been awarded to the Council from the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund to deliver more sustainable waste and recycling collections by reducing the amount of non-recyclable waste sent for disposal and improving the quality and the amount of the recycling we collect.
- 5.2 Since the commencement in April 2024, over 75,000 household bins have been delivered, the new service has been successful introduced into the areas of Ross and Cromarty, Nairn and Inverness. Additionally, HC Business Waste Customers in these areas have received new recycling bins.
- 5.3 The overall response from householders and businesses has been positive, demonstrating the communication and engagement with the public has been well received and understood.
- 5.4 The delivery of service change commenced on 12 August in Badenoch and Strathspey. Like other areas, residents in Badenoch and Strathspey were provided a letter that explained how and when residents existing blue and green bins will be changed. All households in the area will also be delivered a new 180 litre grey non-recyclable waste bin.

5.5 Early data from the first areas shows an encouraging reduction in non-recycling waste being sent for disposal. Since the service change, we have seen a reduction of around 30% on the amount of kerbside residual waste collected in Easter Ross and Nairn compared to last year. This amounts to over 1000t less waste collected in the smaller grey bins.

This graph shows the comparison of kerbside residual waste collected into Longman and Invergordon Transfer Stations for the period from end of April to end of July for 2023 and 2024. Although the reduction in non-recycling waste is encouraging, the early data should not be considered as a settled position.

5.6



5.7 The expansion of the food waste collection service has been very well received; a high level of household participation is being achieved. In addition, the participation level in the existing food waste areas has also increased. Currently there are around 60,000 households that now have access to a food waste collection, this is compared to around 34,000 households before the service change.

5.8 During the Autumn period the Waste Management team will carry out monitoring to better understand the level of householder participation in the service.

5.9 The future phased area service change introduction has been amended for the reasons of operational bin distribution and to better align Caithness to Seater Waste Transfer Station's construction work. The Sutherland phase will now commence in September and the Caithness phase will commence on 4 November 2024.

## 6. Seater Waste Stransfer Station

6.1 Funded through the Recycling Improvement Fund award, as agreed between Zero Waste Scotland and The Highland Council in June 2023, the construction contract for modifying Seater Waste Transfer Station (Caithness) was issued on 26 June 2024. The contractor is Norbloc Construction Limited, a local company based in Halkirk.

6.2 The project involves incorporating a new front end with two vehicle access roller doors into the existing three-sided building. This will enable recyclable materials collected via the new twin-streamed process to be better protected, improving their quality and value.

- 5.3 On-site mobilisation is planned to occur during week commencing 12 August. The construction programme is expected to occur over eight weeks, weather dependent. The contractor's programme identifies 4 October 2024 as the completion date.

## **7 Portree Waste Transfer Station**

- 7.1 A new transfer station is to be built within the site hosting the current waste transfer station facilities. The new building, which will serve Skye and Lochalsh, will receive and aggregate the recyclable materials delivered to the station from the new kerbside collection services being implemented through The Recycling Improvement Fund.
- 7.2 Tender documentation was issued on 12 July and the submissions deadline is 30 August 2024. An award of contract is likely to occur mid to late September.
- 7.3 The successful contractor's target completion date will subsequently be notified through their construction programme. The indicative, pre-tender programme targets practical completion of the construction phase by mid-February 2025.

## **8.. Fort William Waste Transfer Station**

- 8.1 Highland Council is seeking to construct the Fort William waste transfer station on ground adjacent to the existing Household Waste Recycling Centre at Ben Nevis Industrial Estate.
- 8.2 Planning permission for the development was approved by the South Planning Applications Committee on 12 December 2023. Agreed Heads of Terms, a precursor for a long-term ground lease of the development site, were signed during the last week of February 2024. Draft lease documentation was determined to be in agreed form on 28 June 2024. The lease documentation will be finalised following 15 August notification of Scottish Ministers consent for a lease to be entered into.
- 8.3 Funding has been made available for the intended Fort William waste transfer station through the Council's capital programme, having predated the advent of the Recycling Improvement Fund. The delivery of the Fort William waste transfer station is critical for the effective rollout of new kerbside collection services throughout Lochaber, currently scheduled for April/May 2025. As a result of this dependency and operational alignment, internal governance of the project has been transferred to the Recycling Improvement Project Board.
- 8.4 Tender documentation for the construction of the new transfer station was issued on 24 June with the tender's deadline set for 19 August 2024. An award of contract is expected to be issued by mid-September, conditional upon the lease having been finalised.
- 8.5 The successful contractor's target completion date will subsequently be notified through their construction programme. The indicative, pre-tender programme targets practical completion of the construction phase during the first half of May 2025.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 15 August 2024

Author: Alan McKinnie, Strategic Lead (Waste Strategy & Operations)  
Stephen Graham, Project Manager