Glasgow City Council Internal Audit Section
Committee Summary
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability – Domestic Waste Strategy

Item 2 (c)

30th November 2022

1 Introduction

1.1 As part of the Internal Audit plan we have carried out a review of the processes in place within Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) in relation to the domestic waste strategy.

1.2 The Council has a statutory duty to arrange for the collection of household waste in its area, and this is addressed by the Resource and Recycling Strategy for 2020-2030. The aims and objectives of the Strategy are aligned to those set by the Scottish Government, and include reducing waste overall, increasing recycling and minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill. An action plan has been developed and specific targets are also detailed in Government policies and plans.

1.3 The purpose of the audit was to consider the aims and objectives of the current waste strategy and determine whether adequate arrangements are in place to progress these in terms of the collection of household waste. The scope of the audit included a review of:

- Current processes and procedures.
- Planned changes to service delivery, including the implementation of new technology.
- Communication with residents and stakeholders on their responsibilities in relation to household waste collection.
- The systems and recording of data and statistics for domestic waste collection.
- The monitoring of progress in achieving the aims and objectives of the strategy and wider Government policies and ambitions, and
- Reporting performance to stakeholders.

Other elements of the domestic waste process, namely Complaints Handling and Business Continuity arrangements were reviewed under separate audit work and not included as part of this review.

2 Audit Opinion

2.1 Based on the audit work carried out, a reasonable level of assurance can be placed upon the control environment. The audit has identified some scope for improvement in the existing arrangements with two recommendations for management to address.

3 Main Findings

3.1 Key controls are in place and generally operating effectively. There are a full range of polices and strategies that the Council must adhere to in respect of domestic waste arrangements. Where appropriate these have been approved by the City Administration Committee (CAC) and are accessible to relevant officers and other stakeholders.

3.2 We observed that there are adequate arrangements in place to ensure that proposed changes to domestic waste collections are identified, considered and subsequently approved at an appropriate level. Lessons Learned exercises have been conducted for previous changes, and there is ongoing work being undertaken to look at ways to improve the service and ensure that it continues to align with the current Strategy objectives.

3.3 There is a wide array of methods in place for members of the public and householders to access details of their bin collections and the frequency of these. In addition, the frequency of collections and the routes undertaken by waste collection officers has been appropriately set, approved (where applicable) and recorded. We also observed, notwithstanding the issue raised below, that there are adequate arrangements in place to ensure data is collated on a regular basis to monitor and report on performance.

3.4 Through sample testing of 15 service requests, we observed that although these were being logged onto the Remedy system and distributed to relevant officers for action, there was a lack of information recorded to confirm that the service request had been actioned in a timely manner. We were advised that the recording and management of service requests should be improved by the role out of the new Alloy system. However, we have been informed that this role out has currently been paused.

3.5 Although there are various documented procedures in respect of the collection of domestic waste, we identified that some had not been regularly reviewed and did not reflect current working arrangements. We also observed that there was no procedure or work instruction in place outlining the process that should be followed for Service Requests (e.g. to address missed collections).

3.6 An action plan is provided at section four outlining our observations, risks and recommendations. We have made two recommendations. The priority of each recommendation is:

Priority	Definition	Total
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	0
Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	2
Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	0
Service Improvement	Opportunities for business improvement and/or efficiencies have been identified.	0

3.7 The audit has been undertaken in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

3.8 We would like to thank officers involved in this audit for their cooperation and assistance.

3.9 It is recommended that the Head of Audit and Inspection submits a further report to Committee on the implementation of the actions contained in the attached Action Plan.

4 Action Plan

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: Current policies, processes and procedures for domestic waste collection are documented and approved by senior management.				
1	Although there are various documented procedures in respect of the collection of domestic waste, we identified that some had not been regularly reviewed and did not reflect current working arrangements. We also observed that there was no procedure or Work Instruction in place outlining the process that should be followed for Service Requests. Failure to have up-to-date procedures which relate to all current working arrangements, increases the risk of inconsistent practices and errors being made.	NRS management should conduct a review of all operational procedures held in relation to domestic waste arrangements and ensure that these are up to date, reflect all current working practices and include all key processes. Thereafter, these should be appropriately approved and communicated to all relevant Council officers through the appropriate channels.	**Medium**	**Response:** Accepted. **Officer Responsible for Implementation:** Head of Recycling and Waste Management **Timescales for Implementation:** 31st March 2023

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: A reliable system is in place for receiving, recording and dealing with service requests.				
2	Through sample testing of 15 service requests, we observed that although these were being logged on to the Remedy system and distributed to relevant officers for action, there was a lack of information recorded to confirm that the service request had been actioned in a timely manner. We were advised that the recording and management should be improved by the roll out of the new Alloy system, which will allow officers to be made aware of missed collections so that they can be addressed quickly. However, we have been informed that this roll out has currently been paused due to operational and technical issues which NRS management are working with partners to resolve. The current arrangements for dealing with service requests increase the risk of requests not being monitored or addressed quickly, therefore impacting the service provided to customers.	Management should undertake a review of the operation of the Alloy system to determine the impact it is having in improving the way service requests are dealt with. This should be undertaken six months after the system is fully rolled out.	**Medium**	**Response:** Accepted. **Officer Responsible for Implementation:** Director Community Safety, Regulatory Services and Governance. **Timescales for Implementation:** It is anticipated that the Alloy system will implemented by June 2023 – a review of the impact will be undertaken following the implementation of the system and will be completed November 2023.