Item 5

24th November 2026

Glasgow City Council

Environment and Liveable Neighbourhoods City Policy Committee

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Contact: David McCulloch

Waste & Recycling Festive Delivery Plan 2026/27

Purpose of Report:

To outline the household waste collection service during the festive period,

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of the report.

Ward No(s):	Citywide: ✓
Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐	consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

1.1. The holiday festive period over late December and early January is traditionally a challenging period for household waste collection and recycling due to public holidays, inclement weather, and a significant increase in household waste generated over the period. To ensure waste and recycling services are delivered effectively and reduce any impact to residents, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) delivers a Festive delivery plan to support front line operations through this challenging period.

2. Background

2.1. As part of daily Business as usual (BAU) 56 domestic waste collection routes are completed. Unlike the rest of the year there are no domestic collections completed over the 4 bank holidays during the festive period resulting in 224 uncompleted routes which equates to an estimated 250,000 uplifts.

2.2. Details of the approach delivered for the 2025/26 Festive delivery plan are summarised below.

- Business as usual service for all properties with targeted advancements to flatted & High-risk properties.
- Kerbside properties impacted by the public holidays, received a collection on their next scheduled collection date.
- Side waste was removed on the 1st collection for impacted properties to remove any accumulation of waste.
- Flatted properties received early collection to increase capacity over the holiday period.
- Encouragement of effective home recycling and the HWRC (Household Waste Recycling Centre) opening hours were extended.

3. Lesson Learned & findings of 2025/26 plan

3.1. The 2025/26 Festive delivery plan received positive feedback from residents, city housing partners and frontline staff. A return to scheduled collections were resumed by the 19th January.

3.2. The service approach detailed in section 2.2, has continued to deliver sustained improvements for our residents. Formal complaints during 2025/26 remained at the reduced levels achieved in the previous year, representing a 65% decrease from pre-implementation levels, while missed bin reports fell by a further 6% year-on-year.

3.3. Elected member briefing sessions and reports were arranged and provided members an opportunity to be fully briefed on the plan and the potential impact within their wards. In addition, we continue to engage with our frontline staff and Trade Union colleagues to ensure they fully aware of the

Festive delivery plan and the importance that staff play in ensuring adequate resources present during the festive period.

3.4. During the review of the 2025/26 Festive Delivery Plan it was identified that some kerbside households experienced collection intervals of up to 42 days for residual waste where scheduled collections fell on public holidays. Although scheduled recycling collections continued to operate effectively, the extended interval for residual waste contributed to resident dissatisfaction. The 2026/27 Festive Delivery Plan has therefore been revised to include alternative collection arrangements for impacted residual waste collections, ensuring these are completed within three days of the scheduled collection date

3.5. To support residents during a period of increased household waste generation, the side waste policy was temporarily suspended for the first collection following the festive public holidays. This provided additional uplift capacity for households while supporting use of the expanded recycling service. Contamination levels within side waste presented for collection remained low, indicating effective use of the available waste and recycling capacity

3.6. Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) operated throughout the festive period and experienced a 35% increase in usage compared with normal operating levels. Extended opening hours provided residents with additional opportunities to recycle and dispose of excess festive waste, reducing pressure on kerbside services whilst maintaining normal HWRC operations

3.7. Strong operational management and workforce flexibility enabled scheduled collections to be maintained across the majority of the city whilst deploying additional resources to recover collections impacted by public holidays. This approach minimised service disruption for residents, maintained operational stability for frontline staff and supported a return to normal collection schedules by mid-January.,

3.8. A lower-than-expected level of agency staff and commitment of overtime was experienced impacting the advancement plan.

4. Festive plan 2026/27

4.1. In developing our 2026/27 Festive delivery plan we have taken on board residents feedback and enhanced our plan for this festive period.

4.2. An outline of this year's Festive plan for all household properties is as follows

4.3. Kerbside collections

- In response to feedback received following the 2025/26 festive period, alternative collection arrangements have been introduced for residual

waste collections that fall on public holidays. These changes will reduce the maximum collection interval experienced by residents and ensure residual waste is removed within three days of the original scheduled collection date

- Residual waste (Green Bins) will be collected within 3 days of scheduled collection date

Current date	New date
25th December	22nd December
26th December	23rd December
1st January	4th January
2nd January	5th January

- Impacted Glass collections will be rescheduled to the following dates :

Current date	New date
25th December	28th December
1st January	30th December

- Any property with a current assisted collection or containing medical waste will be prioritised and resourced accordingly.

- Single bin and side waste policy shall be suspended for the next collection of those missed on the public holiday for one collection cycle.

4.4. Flatted collections

- Collections for all waste streams out with the public holidays will be collected on scheduled collection dates.

- From the 8th of December there will target collections of recycling streams for the properties impacted by the public holidays.

- General waste collections impacted, will be prioritised from the 27th December and 3rd January respectively.

- Priority collections maintained for high rise flats, bin hubs and any public facing bins.

4.5. Resources

- Additional external resources (agency staff & vehicles) will be sourced to manage the advancement of impacted flatted properties to ensure that exiting collection schedules are maintained.

- Where appropriate, all available NRS frontline resources will be used to support the delivery of the plan in conjunction with managed overtime.

- Festive period annual leave will be controlled and limited for operational employees.

5. Impacts and Benefits

5.1. Kerbside properties that are scheduled for collection of recycling bins on both the Christmas and New year public holidays will not receive an uplift until their next scheduled collection date for that waste stream.

5.2. All kerbside properties have received the new twin-stream recycling service, increasing overall household recycling capacity and providing residents with greater opportunity to separate materials correctly. The additional capacity available through the recycling service is expected to help households manage increased volumes of festive packaging and recyclable materials, reducing pressure on residual waste bins during the holiday period.

5.3. Kerbside residual waste collections will be completed within three days of the scheduled collection date, significantly reducing the duration that residual waste remains at properties during periods of increased waste generation and minimising potential impacts on residents.

5.4. Households will continue to receive scheduled collections on non-public holidays ensuring continuity of service.

5.5. Household Waste Recycling Centres will operate to an enhanced festive opening schedule, including extended opening hours on identified peak demand days (27th, 28th, 3rd and 4th). Opening arrangements will be communicated in advance through the Council website, social media channels and other stakeholder communications to maximise awareness and encourage use of the facilities.

5.6. NRS will be working closely with Registered Social Landlords & Housing associations to ensure existing back court and environmental services are not impacted.

6. Communication plans

6.1. As per previous years, a detailed communication plan has been developed and will be delivered to ensure all stakeholders are fully aware of the Festive waste arrangements. Table 1 summarises the communication plan.

Table 1

Stakeholder	Message	Method
Elected members	**Details of festive plan.**	**Elected member's briefs**
All Residents	**Recycling messages, HWRC opening hours, Updates**	**Social media, Website, HA/RSL's news letters**
Impacted Household	**Revised collection dates, recycling messages, HWRC**	**Bin Tags, Social media, GCC Website**
Staff	**Festive plan update**	**Depot briefings**
TUs	**Seeking support of plan encouraging members to support overtime**	**Meetings**
Call centre	**Festive plan, Recycling messages, services**	**Meetings, FAQs**

7. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Plan is aligned to Festive budget

Legal: No implications

Personnel: Additional external staff (agency) will be employed during this period in addition to re allocation of internal resources.

Procurement: No Implications

Council Strategic Plan: Supports Grand Challenge 3, Mission 2, Supports Grand challenge 4, Mission 1,

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes Yes .

2025-29? Please specify.	Embrace the diverse skills, abilities and experience our employees bring and value their contribution.
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	no significant impact
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	No impact

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:	The report seeks to increase the quantity and quality of materials collected for recycling and reduce the impact of climate change.
What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?	The report is seeking to reduce the impacts waste has on the environment.
Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?	Yes. Reducing waste, maximising the longevity of resources, and increasing recycling will contribute towards Glasgow meeting a net zero carbon target.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report

No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

8 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of the report.