

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Environment Committee****7 September 2016****Household Waste and Recycling Public Satisfaction Surveys****Report by Director (Environment)**

This report summarises the results of the 2015 Household Waste and Recycling Satisfaction Survey, and sets out recommendations for improvements in service based on participant response.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 In January 2016, 4000 surveys were sent out to a representative sample of Perth and Kinross residents. This is the third consecutive year the Council has participated in the Household Waste and Recycling Survey. The 8 page survey asked questions relating to kerbside waste and recycling collections, recycling points, bulky uplifts, and recycling centres. The purpose was to establish the following:
- Identify householders' attitudes, behaviour and current barriers to kerbside recycling.
 - Identify what would encourage and engage householders' participation in kerbside recycling.
 - Explore attitudes, acceptability and satisfaction with the existing kerbside recycling services.
 - Explore attitudes, acceptability and satisfaction with Recycling Centres and Recycling Points.
- 1.2 A total of 1067 responses were received, representing a 26.7% response rate.
- 1.3 The standardised survey was also carried out in two other UK local authorities; Blackpool Borough Council and Hull City Council. For the first time, two Waste Partnerships also took part. These Partnerships represent a total of twenty local authorities who are currently sharing services and infrastructure. A full summary of the waste services offered by each authority can be found in Appendix 3: Participating Authorities.
- 1.4 The results from each Council were used for benchmarking purposes, as well as setting a standard for future surveying. Two sets of data are reported on – Weighted and Unweighted (a full explanation of the Weighing Matrix can be found in Appendix 4: HWR - Weighting Methodology):

- **Weighted data** is used for benchmarking (establishing ranking) against other local authorities. A Weighting Matrix from the Office of National Statistics is used to balance the demography of respondents to ensure they are comparable for all participating authorities. For example, only 45 respondents from Hull City Council lived in detached homes compared to 569 in Perth & Kinross.
- **Unweighted data** is the true response from respondents within Perth & Kinross Council before the matrix is applied. This has been used when looking at rates of satisfaction and behaviours without comparison to other participating authorities.

- 1.5 The survey contained 15 Key Satisfaction Indicators (KSI's) which fall under four categories: Kerbside Collections; Recycling Centres; Communication; and Enquiries/Complaints.

Questionnaire results – 2015 Survey Highlights

- (a) 1st place overall for satisfaction of Kerbside Service with a score of 83.3%.
- (b) 2nd overall for satisfaction of Recycling Centres with a score of 85.6%.
- (c) Only 1% of respondents said they were not interested in recycling more.
- (d) 88% of respondents fairly/very satisfied with the requirement of separation of recycling materials and 83% fairly/very satisfied with preparation of materials for recycling.
- (e) 80% of respondents will still continue to recycle by collecting materials as overflow, or using Recycling Centres or Points, when their container is full.
- (f) 1st overall for satisfaction of Collection/Recycling Information with a score of 71%. This includes rates of satisfaction of 92% for collection dates, 83% for what can/can't be waste and 81% for what can/can't be recycled.
- (g) 90% of respondents will use leaflets and direct mailings to find information on services, with 35% using the Council website, 22% calling the Service Centre and 9% asking collection crews.

Future Learning

- 1.6 (a) 3rd overall for satisfaction with complaint handling of enquiries regarding both kerbside collections and Recycling Centres.
 (b) 40% of respondents said they would recycle more if there were a wider range of materials collected at the kerbside.
 (c) 22% of respondents would recycle more if they had a better idea of what happens to the materials they recycle.
- 1.7 Perth and Kinross Council has maintained a high level of satisfaction with our service amongst respondents. Figures 1 and 2 highlight points 1.5(a) and (b)

Figure 1: Overall satisfaction for kerbside collections

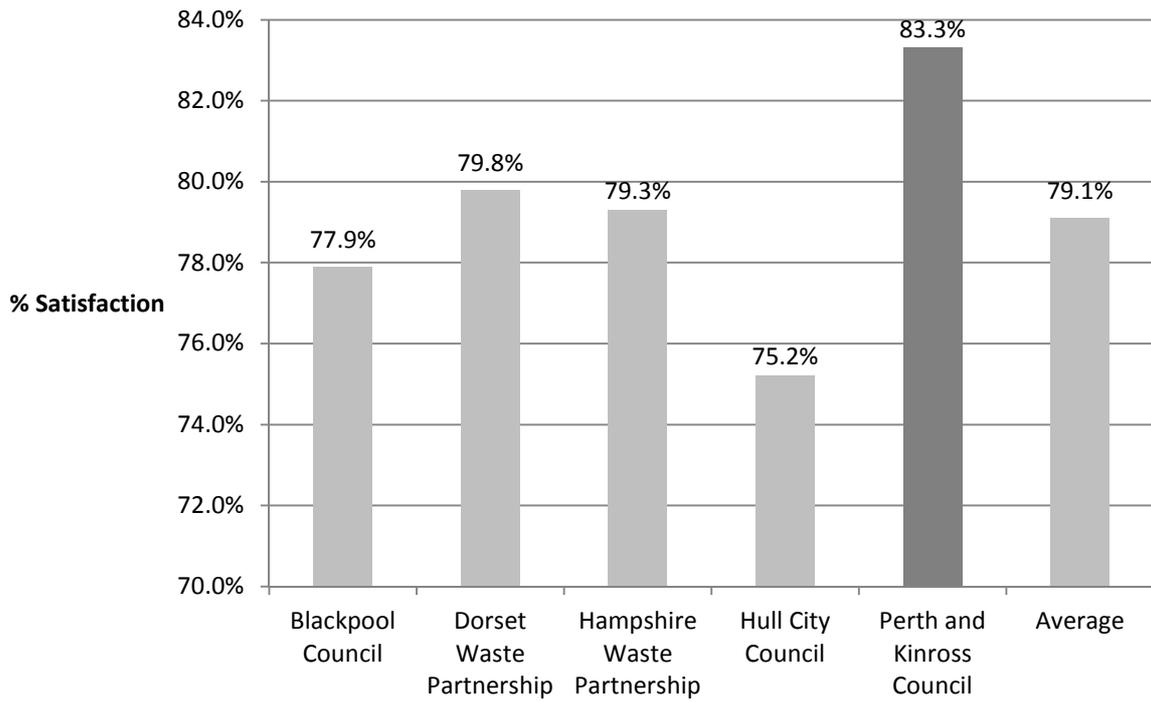
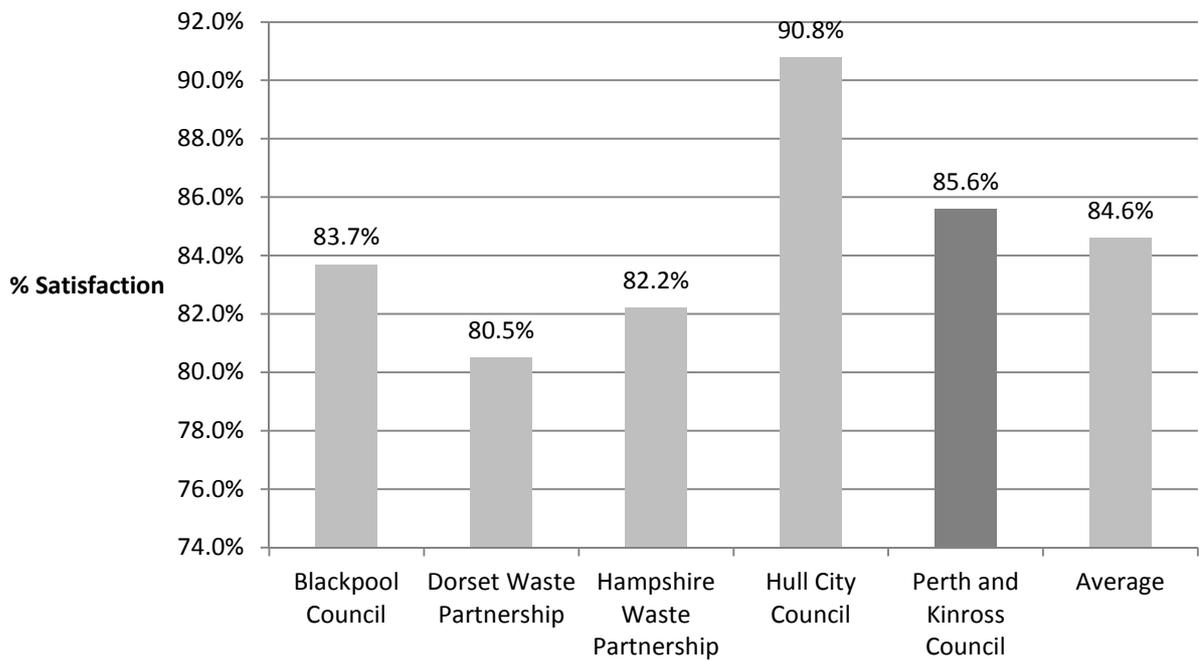


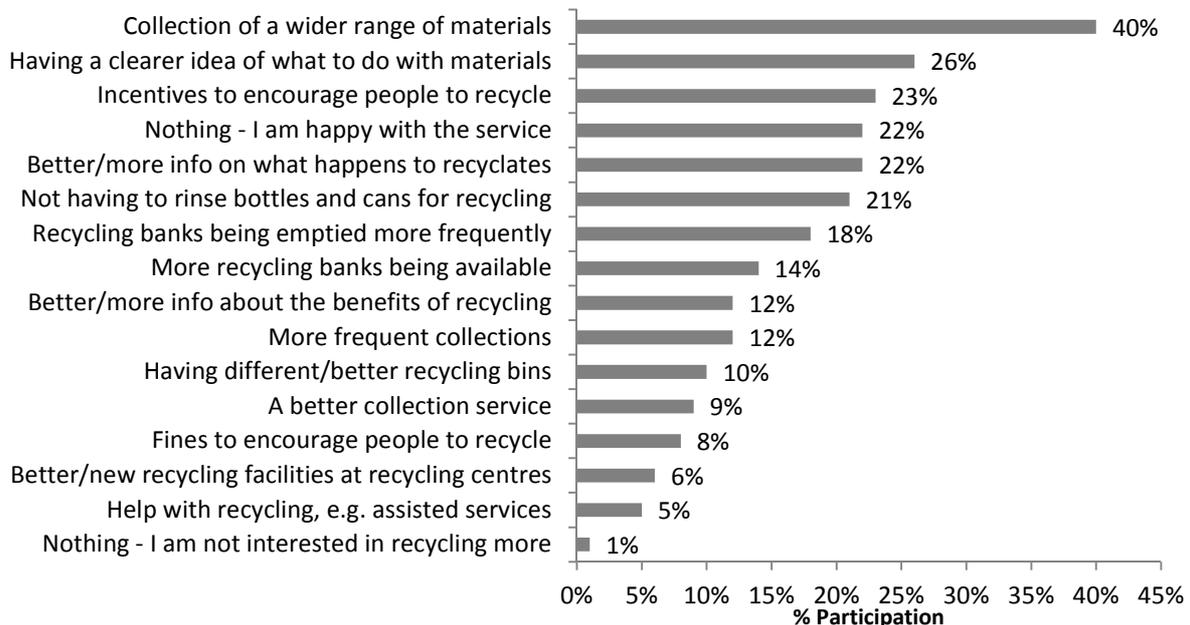
Figure 2: Overall satisfaction for Recycling Centres



- 1.8 One area which has seen a drop in the comparative level of satisfaction is the enquiry and complaint handling of collections and Recycling Centre enquiries. As per 1.6(a), Perth & Kinross Council placed third overall with a score of 75.2% and 79.6% respectively. In 2015, there were 10,644 requests for service made via the Customer Service Centre relating to kerbside collections and Recycling Centres. Of these, 56 were escalated to Stage 1 FLR, and 2 Stage 2 complaints. Householders were most dissatisfied with the outcome of their enquiry/complaint for both collections and Recycling Centre enquiries, and with the ease of getting through to the right people for Recycling Centre enquiries/complaints. By reviewing the scripting used by the Customer Service Centre, and providing further training to frontline staff, it is anticipated that levels of satisfaction will improve in this area.
- 1.9 One level of satisfaction that has remained consistent in each year is the range of materials that can be recycled at the kerbside. However, the ranking appears to vary depending on the other participating authorities, and the services they offer. As per 1.6(b) 40% of respondents have said a wider range of accepted materials would encourage them to recycle more.
- 1.10 One of the key services the Council does not provide at the kerbside is a glass collection. This is the main difference between Perth & Kinross Council and the other participating authorities. A break down of the kerbside services provided by each authority can be found in Appendix 3: Participating Authorities.
- 1.11 The highest performing council in this category provides householders with an uplift of textiles and glass at the kerbside. These additional materials may go some way to explaining the Council's position compared to other authorities. Waste Services recently undertook a bespoke procurement exercise for a new Dry Mixed Recycling contract, which included the current core mix of material collected within blue-lidded bins at the kerbside (paper, card, beverage cartons, rigid plastic packaging, tins and cans) and also opened up the option for bidders to add possible non-core materials, which included glass and textiles. From this exercise, Waste Services has confirmed that there is limited to no market acceptability for adding glass and textiles to the current comingled materials mix.
- 1.12 Compulsory site visits undertaken by the evaluation panel for this tender exercise confirmed the limitations of the available technologies at Materials Recycling Facilities run by the public sector to deal with glass fragments and soiled textiles. Private sector reprocessors also confirm a largely unanimous position, taken in conjunction with Zero Waste Scotland, against the inclusion of glass within the materials mix due to the loss of paper quality which impacts end market options and reduces its saleable value.

- 1.13 Earlier this year, the Council agreed to become a signatory of the Household Waste and Recycling Charter and associated Code of Practice, which sets out future directions for Scottish Local Authorities in the design of their waste and recycling collection services. The Charter and Code of Practice adopt a national position seeking further source-segregation of materials for presentation at the kerbside to drive up quality. At present, Perth and Kinross residents currently recycle approximately 55% of their glass bottles and jars by bringing them to Recycling Centres and Points. These are collected as colour segregated materials which drives up the quality and ensures they are recycled within a circular economy model. The glass bottles and jars tonnage along with the textiles collected at these facilities, generates an income for the Council, whereas collecting these within the comingled recycling bin would attract a considerable gate fee and become a significant expenditure pressure. It is expected that the on-going roll out of the New Household Waste & Recycling Service, approved by the Environment Committee in June 2015, (report reference 15/243), which includes the addition of cartons to the accepted recycling materials, will improve the Council's satisfaction rating for this indicator.
- 1.14 As per 1.5(c), only 1% of those surveyed stated they are not interested in recycling. This again proves there is a receptive audience who are willing to use the services provided. Figure 3 shows what would motivate householders to recycle more.

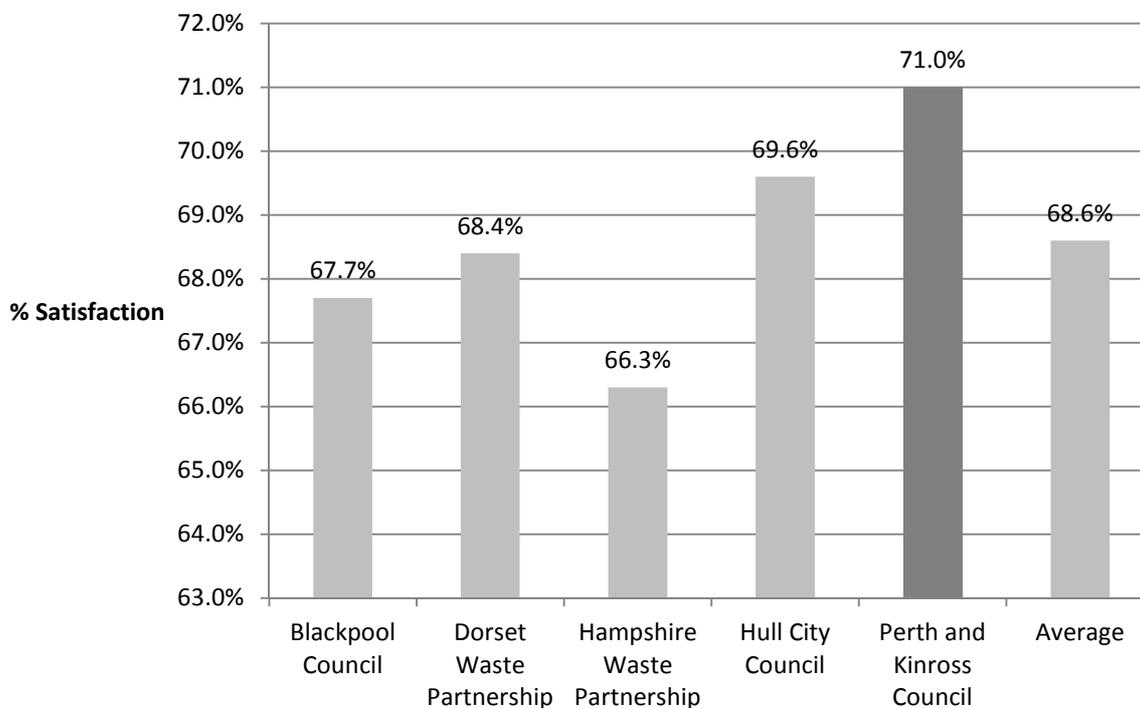
Figure 3: Improving kerbside recycling participation



- 1.15 Householders, on the whole, are content with the minimal separation and preparation (see 1.5(d)) required to use the kerbside recycling service. As per 1.5(e), 80% of householders said they continue to recycle (through use of recycling centres and points) when their bin was full. Just under half of those surveyed stated they visit Recycling Centres and Points on at least a monthly basis.

1.16 A key satisfaction indicator which has seen improvement is that of the collection service information issued to the public. Figure 4 shows overall satisfaction with information on kerbside collections.

Figure 4: Overall satisfaction for information on kerbside collections



Improved communications include: refreshed Household Waste & Recycling Service leaflet which is being mailed directly to households during the roll out of the new service; refreshed webpages optimised for mobile devices; utilising the Council's social media pages; new materials created for events; and presentations given to schools and community groups. Although each method of communication is important, the key change driving this improvement is most likely to be leaflets (the most preferred medium of communication for 90% of respondents). Bringing other recycling support materials in line with the New Household Waste & Recycling leaflet improvements should continue to result in positive feedback.

Summary of Results

- 1.17 The results from the survey show the vast majority of householders are content with the existing waste and recycling services, and are participating in recycling schemes.
- 1.18 A full analysis of the survey results for 2015 can be found in Appendix 1. The survey has not only provided an insight into satisfaction rates of the current waste and recycling services offered, but combined with previous year's data, has also created a baseline to be used for future benchmarking. The ongoing use of the survey provides valuable information that can be taken into consideration when considering new initiatives and the re-design of services.

2. PROPOSALS

2.1. The surveys have identified areas for improvement and the following improvement actions are proposed:

- Expanding the range of materials accepted through the new dry mixed recycling contract in 2016
- Encouraging further use of kerbside recycling bins
- Providing additional information on recycling by bringing education and awareness materials in-line with the New Household Waste & Recycling Service leaflet
- Providing regular updates to frontline staff, and encouraging internal information sharing
- Encouraging other local authorities to take part in the survey

2.2 A new tender, which includes scope for increasing the range of accepted materials, has been issued. However, the existing set of accepted materials for recycling can only be extended to include a wider range of materials if market conditions allow.

2.3 One of the recurring themes through the surveys conducted over the three year period is that householders in Perth and Kinross are highly engaged in using their recycling containers either full-time or part-time, with a return of only 2% on respondents each year stating they “never” use their recycling containers. As per previous years, a wider range of materials has continued to be the most popular response when asked what would encourage more recycling.

2.4 The roll out of the new kerbside waste and recycling collections approved by the Environment Committee in June 2015 (Report number 15/243 refers) should go some way toward achieving these proposals. Firstly, a smaller residual (non-recyclable) waste container will encourage many households to become more effective recyclers. In addition, on-going education and awareness activities will help pass on the positive message of recycling, and refresh householder knowledge.

2.5 Householders stated that knowing what happens to their recycling would also encourage them to recycle more. From this feedback, it can be identified there is scope to improve the existing suite of supporting materials. Using a best practice approach created by Zero Waste Scotland, in the form of their new branding templates, Perth & Kinross Council will create new supporting materials including:

- Information on what happens to our recycling:
- Website updates including material “journeys”
- Tool box talks (a brief summary) for frontline staff, to allow them to communicate the message to the public
- Social media updates and utilisation of new media

- 2.6 The survey has identified a requirement to improve complaint/enquiry handling. A review of Customer Service Centre scripts, combined with on-going toolbox talks for frontline staff will be carried out to improve satisfaction.
- 2.7 In 2015, Perth & Kinross Council was the only Scottish local authority who took part in the HWR Survey. The results from this survey will be summarised and reported through the CoSLA Waste Managers Network. It was noted that this survey, in particular, was robust in its nature, producing both quantitative and qualitative benchmarking data.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The surveys have shown that Perth & Kinross Council has performed well in comparison to the other participating local authorities. The results show that the vast majority of respondents are content with the existing waste and recycling services, and are actively participating in recycling schemes.
- 3.2 The survey has confirmed that expanding on the range of materials accepted in the kerbside bins would encourage more people to recycle.
- 3.3 The surveys have also identified areas for improvement, which could be implemented whilst moving forward with service changes.
- 3.4 It is recommended that the Environment Committee:
- I. agrees that Perth & Kinross Council undertakes the survey again in 2016; and
 - II. approves the improvement actions, and requests the Director (Environment) to feedback the outcomes from this in 12 months time.

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Barbara Renton	Director (Environment)	19 July 2016

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	No
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (CPP) brings together organisations to plan and deliver services for the people of Perth and Kinross. Together the CPP has developed the Perth and Kinross Community Plan which outlines the key things we think are important for Perth and Kinross.
- i) Giving every child the best start in life
 - ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
 - iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
 - iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
 - v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations
- 1.2 It is considered that the actions contained within this report contribute to all of the above objectives.

Corporate Plan

- 1.3 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 outlines the same five objectives as those detailed above in the Community Plan. These objectives provide a clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resource allocation. It is considered that the actions contained in the report contribute to the objectives as outlined in paragraph 1.2 above.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There will be costs of £6,800 involved in participating in the survey materials, mailing and advertising. These costs will be funded from the Waste Services Revenue budget.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from the report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There is no land, property, or IT implications arising from the report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties. The Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to this report can be viewed clicking [here](#).
- 3.2 The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the proposals assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA. An existing assisted lift service is provided for people unable to present their waste at the kerbside, and that service will be unchanged.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.4 The proposals have been considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:
- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
 - in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
 - in a way that it considers most sustainable.
- 3.6 The proposals have been assessed in terms of the requirements to manage waste and recycling in a co-ordinated manner which will contribute and influence changes to create resource efficient communities.

Legal and Governance

- 3.7 The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted on the proposals contained within the report.

Risk

- 3.8 There are no risks arising from the report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance and the Head of Democratic Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 4000 surveys were sent out to a representative sample of Perth and Kinross residents in January 2016

5. Communication

- 5.1 We will continue to communicate with residents through Education and Awareness campaigns and seek their views through the Household Waste and Recycling Survey.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 None.

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix 1: Household Waste and Recycling Satisfaction Survey Summary 2015
- 3.2 Appendix 2: 2014 Improvement Actions
- 3.3 Appendix 3: Participating Authorities
- 3.4 Appendix 4: Year on Year Comparison