

More complaints about bin collections

Opposition councillors have called for the city's environment convener to be replaced after issuing a "hollow apology" as more than 2,500 complaints over missed bin collections were received in the space of a week.

In October, the SNP-Labour city council administration rolled out new four-day waste collection rotas alongside its new paid-for garden waste service. But more than 8,000 complaints were tallied up in five weeks – leaving residents with piles of rubbish.

In December, Transport and Environment convener, Cllr Lesley Macinnes, warned there could be further problems over the festive period – but said she expected normal service to resume after the New Year.

But last week, the council was flooded with 2,520 missed bin complaints in the space of seven days – on a par with the peak of the problems when 2,559 collection requests were submitted between October 15 and October 21.

Before the new services were rolled out, the council dealt with an average of 400 complaints a week.

Cllr Macinnes took to Twitter to apologise to residents and pointed out she has demanded officers turn things around quickly.

Apologies to all those currently experiencing waste issues. I'm extremely unhappy w/ current service levels. Problems should have been fixed by now & I'm v. disappointed that it is not the case. I've issued clear instructions to council officers & expect to see fast improvements.

She said: “Apologies to all those currently experiencing waste issues. I’m extremely unhappy with current service levels.

“Problems should have been fixed by now and I’m very disappointed that it is not the case. I’ve issued clear instructions to council officers and expect to see fast improvements.”

Opposition councillors want quick improvements and called for Cllr Macinnes to be replaced in her role if drastic changes are not put in place.

Conservative Transport and Environment spokesperson, Cllr Nick Cook, said: “For months the convener has taken Edinburgh taxpayers for fools, insisting waste collection services were fundamentally fine. This position continued in the face of mounting evidence – and rubbish – to the contrary.

“This hollow apology won’t cut the mustard with my constituents, nor those of other councillors across the city.

“The SNP-Labour administration must make a clear choice – it agrees the need to completely redesign the waste service or it bins it’s transport and environment convener.”

Liberal Democrat Cllr Kevin Lang added: “After thousands of complaints, and bins overflowing with rubbish, people will ask why it has taken her so long. Why hasn’t she got to grips with this before now?

“More importantly, council tax payers deserve to know when they will get the standard of service they pay for. We need to know when the problems plaguing the system since last October will finally end.”

Cllr Macinnes said: “I am well aware of the scale of the waste collection issues we’ve been experiencing over recent months and I’m extremely disappointed that they’ve not yet been

rectified. Residents are, quite rightly, entitled to receive a good quality, reliable service and clearly this isn't being delivered to some households.

"The introduction of a new bin collection rota coupled with pressures arising from the festive period have undoubtedly had an impact and the number of missed bins being reported is unacceptable.

"I've been working very closely with the department for some time to try to improve the service, and despite considerable efforts we need to make a final push. I have issued further clear instructions to council officers and as a result I expect to see real improvements made straight away."