

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MARCH 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	WASTE MINIMISATION STRATEGY FOR READING - CONSULTATION RESULTS		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LIZ TERRY	PORTFOLIO:	NEIGHBOURHOODS
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the results of the Waste Minimisation Strategy consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That Members note the results of the Waste Minimisation Strategy consultation and the comments received.
- 2.2 That Members adopt the Waste Minimisation Strategy as proposed and agree that an annual progress report is brought to the Committee in order to update members on progress.
- 2.3 That Members delegate authority to the Head of Service - Transport & Streetcare in consultation with the lead member to make amendments to the action plan as required.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 One of the service priorities contained in the Council's Corporate Plan 2015 -2018 is 'Keeping the town, clean safe green and active', to ensure we retain and attract residents and businesses and remain an attractive place to live, work and visit'. One of the objectives to deliver this priority is to reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill and improve recycling rates through implementation of the Waste Minimisation Strategy.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Council is committed to reducing the growth of waste by promoting waste minimisation through reuse, recycling and composting and to minimise disposal.
- 4.2 Council services are now being delivered on a Neighbourhood basis, and Officers are developing consultation and engagement within Neighbourhoods, promoting waste minimisation on the doorstep and within communities.
- 4.3 Doorstep collections are carried out by the Council for general waste, recycling and green waste. Additional recycling is available at bring-banks for recycling of glass, textiles, tetra-packs, foil, batteries, books and shoes. These waste streams are then recycled or disposed of at the re3 Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) at Island Road, Reading.
- 4.4 There are obvious environmental benefits of reuse and recycling, however, it is essential that the Council continues to promote reuse and recycling with a corresponding reduction in general waste which will be disposed of at a landfill site. A combination of housing growth, increasing landfill costs and increased levels of waste being disposed of (as the economy recovers) means that the cost to the Council will increase unless we are able to convert general waste to recycling.
- 4.5 The draft Waste Minimisation Strategy, which has been developed with officers from all relevant departments and seeks to address these challenges, and sets out how the Council is going to achieve this for the period 2015 - 2020. The draft strategy has 4 key objectives:
- Objective 1. Increase recycling and re-use rates.
 - Objective 2. Minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill
 - Objective 3. Increase understanding and engagement in waste & recycling for the local community and key stakeholders.
 - Objective 4. Effective, efficient value for money service delivery.

4.6 In order to gauge the views of residents and businesses the draft strategy was subject to a 4 week web based consultation. We received responses from 33 separate respondents, the results of which are summarised below. A breakdown of detailed comments are shown in Appendix A.

Waste Minimisation Strategy - Results Summary			
			Number of comments
Q1	Do you agree or disagree that the 4 aims of the Strategy are appropriate?	Agree - 88% Disagree - 12%	4
Q 2	Do you agree or disagree that the Council should review its current waste minimisation practices in order to increase efficiency and value for money?	Agree - 94% Disagree - 6%	2
Q3	Do you agree or disagree that the Council should find better ways to communicate information about Waste Minimisation to residents and businesses?	Agree - 97% Disagree - 3%	1
Q4	Do you agree or disagree that the introduction of an incentive scheme would encourage you to re-use and recycle more of your household waste?	Agree - 58% Disagree - 42%	14
Q5	Do you agree or disagree that you are given enough information about how to manage your household waste and how to recycle?	Agree - 39% Disagree-61%	20
Q6	Do you agree or disagree that it is easy to find the information you need about re-use, recycling and composting on the Reading Borough Council website?	Agree - 58% Disagree - 42%	12

4.7 **Questions 1-3.** The responses endorse the general approach of the Strategy and the service reviews which are proposed in the Action Plan. The reviews will be the first phase of work and they will directly inform any service delivery changes.

Question 4. The results suggest that the plan to design and introduce an incentive scheme will give meaningful rewards to residents if they increase the amount of waste that they recycle. There are a number of incentive scheme models being used around the country which link successful recycling activities to personal rewards with varying degrees of success and these will be reviewed and the most suitable scheme identified for Reading.

Question 5. Clearly there is a lot of work needed to improve the quality, clarity and frequency of information given to residents and businesses about

what can be recycled and re-used, where and how often. The Strategy Communication Plan outlines how this is going to be achieved and when.

Question 6. Recent changes to the RBC website have incorporated more information about how to avoid producing waste, to recycle, re-use and compost and the information is up to date. However, the responses clearly show that there is more work to do and this will be a priority action as part of the review and improvement of the Communications Plan. The majority of the comments received relate to the RBC website and these will be fed back to the web team.

4.8 A detailed, wide ranging and constructive response to the consultation was submitted by Reading Friends of the Earth. They encouraged the Council to reduce the amount of waste generated locally, to reduce the environmental impact of the management of waste and to help move towards a 'circular economy'. They consider the following aspects of waste minimisation as priorities:

1. Campaigning should consider how to decrease deprivation-related variations in recycling.

This will be considered as a part of the Waste Minimisation Strategy and in the light of available resources.

2. EU best practice should be considered in planning waste minimisation strategy.

This will be considered as a part of the Waste Minimisation Strategy and in the light of available resources.

3. Anaerobic Digestion should be considered along with segregated food waste collection in order to divert organics from landfill/incineration.

A business case for kerbside food waste collection and disposal will be prepared in the first year of the strategy to examine the viability of this proposal. Any changes to service delivery will be considered in the relation to available resources and budgets.

4. Food waste recycling review should have been completed and considered before purchase of a new fleet of refuse trucks- actions should be considered to review the decision and assess potential for order modification.

It is not possible to change the specification of the new waste collection fleet which was ordered last year and will come into service in the next 2 months. Configuration changes to the fleet would have to be considered as part of the business case for kerbside food waste collection. The existing refuse fleet was replaced because it had reached the end of its economic life and maintenance costs were unsustainable. The new vehicles are more economical and comply with

the Euro 6 emissions requirements. The environmental impact of introducing additional kerbside collections would be considered as part of the business case.

Officers have already sought to engage with Reading Friends of The Earth to discuss their suggestions in detail with a view to further development of the Waste Minimisation Strategy.

4.9 Kerbside Glass Collection

In response to the request to review kerbside food collection and in order to give some context and an indication of the costs involved in this type of service extension, a review of kerbside glass collection was carried out in 2012 as an alternative to the current bring bank system. The cost of a Boroughwide kerbside glass collection was estimated at £550,000 taking into account savings from the removal of some bottle banks, the capital costs for vehicles and operating costs and this was considered beyond the available budget at the time.

The review estimated that 60% capture of glass would be a likely outcome of any collection. In 2013 Reading collected 59.34% of glass for recycling using the current bring bank system demonstrating that RBC is already operating at, or close to, the expected level of performance of a new glass collection service and that any additional kerbside collection service would have to be carefully considered in view of the current financial constraints upon councils.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The Waste Minimisation Strategy will contribute to the council's Corporate Plan 2015 -2018 objective of 'Keeping the Town Clean, Safe, Green and Active'.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The Waste Minimisation Strategy was subject to a public consultation via the website and any further significant changes to the waste service will be subject to further web based consultation

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has duties under various UK and EU legislation to deliver waste collection and disposal services, principally the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the revised EU waste framework directive 2008.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 An equality impact assessment is not required at this stage. However, as individual elements of the action plan are developed individual equality impact assessments will be undertaken.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The development of the Waste Minimisation Strategy will be funded from existing budgets.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 RBC Corporate Plan.

10.2 HNL Committee November 2014.