

**JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD**  
**7 MARCH 2024**  
**(10.00 - 11.36 am)**

Present: Bracknell Forest Council  
Councillor Mary Temperton  
Councillor Helen Purnell

Reading Borough Council  
Councillor Karen Rowland (Chair)  
Councillor Liz Terry

Wokingham Borough Council  
Councillor Lindsay Ferris (virtual)  
Councillor Ian Shenton

Officers Oliver Burt, re3 Strategic Waste Manager  
Monika Bulmer, re3 Marketing & Communications Officer  
Sarah Innes, re3 Performance Officer  
Damian James, Bracknell Forest Council  
Claire Pike, Bracknell Forest Council  
Steve Brown, Wokingham Borough Council  
Richard Bisset, Wokingham Borough Council  
Emma Gee, Reading Borough Council  
Chris Wheeler, Reading Borough Council

Apologies for absence were received from:  
Kevin Gibbs, Bracknell Forest Council

**24. Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**25. Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024 were approved as a correct record.

**26. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no Urgent Items of Business.

**27. Progress Report**

Sarah Innes, re3 Monitoring and Performance Officer presented the Progress Report. Recycling rates continued to be higher across the three authorities than this time last year, owed to increased garden waste.

As a result of the amendments to the Controlled Waste Regulations at the end of December 2023, some DIY waste was now required to be accepted at recycling centres for free. It was anticipated that some residents could be waiting for this change to bring their DIY waste. The income from this type of waste had therefore decreased significantly. An update on DIY waste would be brought to the next meeting.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- In response to question about the health and safety implications of handling asbestos as DIY waste, it was acknowledged that residents could be bringing in waste which had been produced by a trader at their property. Residents get a free allowance for all types of DIY waste, and staff at the sites were experienced in identifying and handling asbestos waste. If a resident attended the site with unwrapped asbestos, they would be sent away to get it sufficiently wrapped before disposal.
- It was suggested that further communications would be beneficial for residents to identify asbestos in their DIY waste.

The RECOUP analysis had been received since the last Board meeting, and the FlexCollect interim report had been published with some interesting findings from other authorities. Reading Borough Council were undertaking a survey to get some feedback on the pilot in Reading, with 111 responses received so far.

Bracknell Forest Council's trial was commencing on 18 March, and Reading Borough Council were progressing with the remaining trial cohort.

There remained some uncertainty around the funding for the programme and whether a trial would be at the Council's cost. However, the benefits around being seen to work proactively to protect the environment were significant.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- In response to a question about the anticipated level of recycling which this programme would generate, it was noted that the trial aimed to explore this. There was not expected to be a significant impact on the recycling rate.
- It was noted that some residents had been putting flexible plastics in their recycling bin incorrectly already, and that this was correctable through this programme.
- FlexCollect had advised that top up payments to Councils would be in place from the end of March 2025 to the end of September 2025.

Officers had undertaken the re3 contractor support appraisal and had collated feedback from a number of waste officers from the partner Councils on contractor performance. A survey had also been undertaken with users at the recycling centres, and further details from this survey would be brought to a future Board meeting. Feedback would be covered in detail with the contractor, and any specific actions arising from this meeting would be brought back to the Board.

The usual review of glass banks over the Christmas period had been undertaken, in preparation for next Christmas. There had been 17 overflowing glass banks across the Christmas period and as a result, additional checks would be arranged for Christmas 2024 between Christmas and New Year. It was noted that it would be useful for residents to report overflowing bins so that they could be quickly rectified.

Officers were working with the contractor on the reuse of large electrical appliances project.

Members noted the changes to vehicle access at recycling centres since the original policy was written and were asked to request proposed changes to be brought to the Board meeting in September for a decision.

Having discussed the matter, it was **RESOLVED:**

- 1 That Members note the contents of this report.

- 2 That Members request a report on vehicle access policies at the Recycling Centres be presented at the September meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board.

## 28. **Communications Report**

Monika Bulmer, Marketing and Communications Officer at re3 presented the Communications report and drew members' attention to the following areas of note.

The new Scrapp recycling app was progressing towards launch. The app had been personalised and had been through IT checks. Legal documents were being finalised before an expected launch in the next few weeks. Residents were encouraged to download the app once it was available. The usage of the app would be closely evaluated, and the current recyclopeda app would have splash screen to point current users to the new app once available. Visual materials had been developed to promote the new app.

A foil recycling campaign had been developed, including a competition for schools. Lots of resources and slide decks for the campaign had been produced in the run up to Easter, and social media and paid advertising campaigns would run to promote the campaign.

The communications work around flexible plastic collection was ongoing to disseminate new leaflets and bags to all eligible households. Communications had been taking place over Facebook and the Nextdoor app to minimise confusion to the general audience.

reGrow compost was successfully being sold at the sites, and officers anticipated lots of interest in this in the Spring.

A number of upcoming ReUse pop up shop events had been planned, with the hope to have regular repeating events.

General communications around recycling awareness also continued.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Foil could be easily recycled alongside other materials, and residents were encouraged to scrunch foil into a ball when putting it in recycling bins. This campaign was aimed to remind residents of foil recycling, particularly in the run up to Easter and foil wrapped eggs. An advert to promote the campaign had been placed in school newsletters, the re3 newsletter and through local Communications teams.
- Residents did not need to book to use the ReUse pop up shops, and it was expected that residents would visit the pop up shops in combination with an existing visit to the recycling centres. Officers would ensure the events were managed properly and safety.
- Members asked that the communication around the Scrapp app be clear that there was no charge to use the app.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**

- 1 That Members note the contents of this report.

- 2 That Members approve a recommended launch date of the new recycling app as described in the paragraph 5.3.

## 29. **Reuse and Repair Strategy Report**

Sarah Innes, Monitoring and Performance Officer at re3 presented the Reuse and Repaid strategy.

It was clear that reuse was the best option for many items, and so officers had drafted a Reuse and Repaid strategy to develop the re3 approach. The strategy identified six key areas which could be improved.

The final version of the strategy would be presented to the Board meeting in June.

Members were happy to support the strategy and for it to progress to the next stages.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**

- 1 That Members note the contents of this report.
- 2 That Members approve the recommendation at 5.10 (a), for re3 to work with charity partners on reuse initiatives, where possible.
- 3 That Members approve the recommendation at 5.10 (b), for re3 to undertake reuse activities both at the re3 facilities and within the local communities.
- 4 That Members agree the list of principles set out at 5.11.

## 30. **Legislation Report**

Oliver Burt, re3 Strategic Waste Manager and Project Director presented the Legislation report.

At the last meeting of the Board, members had discussed a draft response to the consultation on the collection of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). The responses were due today.

The government proposed to introduce greater Producer Responsibility through a range of proposals, including proposals to include online retailers in the plans.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- Trading Standards colleagues had raised concerns around vapes being in a separate category for WEEE collection, and that there was an anticipated knock-on effect to Trading Standards officers for the regulation and enforcement of vapes as separate to other WEEE. This would place a further burden on Local Authorities as a whole, and members agreed that this element should be strengthened in the response to the consultation.
- The re3 partnership would not have a role to play in dismantling components or treating rare metals. The aim of the producer responsibility was to burden producers into the responsible disposal of their products, with the aim that products would be designed in such a way that components could be more easily captured and recycled.

- Members stressed that kerbside WEEE collection should be undertaken using existing vehicles wherever possible.
- Officers stressed that the proposals would likely translate into costly commercial challenges as it was not always possible or easy to collect small WEEE as part of existing waste collection rounds than was suggested in the document.

Oliver also updated on the position of Simpler Recycling, albeit there remained little update from government. Members attention was drawn to the proposals around comingled dry recycling, and it was noted that it would be practical to wait until the outcome of the two consultations were clear.

Officers were working on the assumption that co-mingled dry recyclable waste including glass would be the standard for councils to work to. Bottle banks would be maintained over the period of transition.

It was noted that there had been a lack of clarity from DEFRA on a monthly call with officers, and that very little detail on Simpler Recycling was forthcoming to officers. It remained difficult to advise members on proposals without source material.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**

- 1 That Members note the contents of this report.
- 2 That Members' changes to the proposed consultation response be made and the final wording be agreed.

### 31. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

That pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 10 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

### 32. **Financial Management Report**

Members received the Financial Management Report.

Members discussed the proposal to recruit a 0.5 FTE post to supplement the re3 Principal Finance Officer.

Members also considered proposals to facilitate Recycling Centre access to non-re3 residents but agreed that further thought needed to be given to the business case and logistical arrangements before an order was placed for the parallel booking system.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**

- 1 That Members approve, for adoption by the respective councils, the recommendations for the annual budget setting process, as described at paragraphs 5.14 to 5.20.

- 2 That Members approve, subject to funding being agreed, the recruitment of 0.5 FTE to supplement the re3 Principal Finance Officer, as proposed at paragraphs 5.21 to 5.31.
- 3 That Members note the actions, agreed by the respective council waste teams and the re3 Project Team, as per Appendix 3.
- 4 That Members instruct Officers to develop a business case for opening the Recycling Centre access to non-re3 residents, as described at 5.48, for discussion at a future meeting.

33. **Date of the Next Board Meeting**

13 June 2024 (Annual General Meeting)

19 September 2024

**CHAIRMAN**