

JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD 5 FEBRUARY 2026 (10.00 - 11.56 AM)

Present:

Councillor Mary Temperton, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Liz Terry, Reading Borough Council
Councillor Martin Alder, Wokingham Borough Council
Councillor Katrin Harding, Wokingham Borough Council

1 Apologies for Absence

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 Joint Waste Disposal Board held on 18 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

26 Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

27 re3 Progress Report

Sarah Innes, re3 Monitoring and Performance Officer presented the re3 Progress report.

Members' attention was drawn to the introduction of the expanded DIY waste charges, which had gone live at the recycling centres from 1 December. Communications had focused on reminding residents that their free allowance remained in place, and staff continued to distinguish between householders and suspected traders, noting that frequency of visits was often the main indicator. Work was underway to introduce a vehicle-flagging feature within

the check-in system to help staff record repeat visits and identify likely commercial users. Members also noted the arrangements in place for small businesses to use the sites through the paid scheme, alongside the availability of the neighbouring transfer stations for larger commercial loads.

Members also noted the update on the third-party doorstep reuse scheme, which had performed well since implementation. Tonnages had increased in November, with a seasonal drop over Christmas, and officers continued to monitor performance. Toys collected through the scheme had been redistributed to local charities, with around 600 items provided for children over the festive period. Members further discussed the suggestion of allowing households to consolidate their four-weekly allowance into one visit, recognising potential environmental benefits, and indicated support for progressing this work.

In response to members' questions, the following points were noted:

- Members discussed the challenge for staff in distinguishing householders from traders and supported the development of the flagging feature to improve monitoring.
- Members noted the measures in place to prevent commercial abuse of the free household service, including the paid business scheme and transfer-station access.
- Members were updated on the positive early results of the doorstep reuse scheme and the distribution of donated toys by local charities.
- Members supported further exploration of enabling households to use their monthly allowance in a single visit, subject to cost considerations referenced elsewhere in the report.
- Officers confirmed that tonnages from the doorstep scheme would continue to be monitored as the service matured.

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

- 1 the contents of this report be noted

28 **r3 Communications Report**

Monika Bulmer, re3 Communications and Marketing Officer presented the re3 Communications report.

The behavioural change communication campaign had been focused on increasing food waste capture, with implementation varying across the three councils depending on available resources. Reading had implemented a borough-wide campaign, targeting 55,000 households with individual bins. Interventions included bin stickers, leaflets and liners delivered to homes, supported by an intensive communications campaign using re3 and council channels, social media, digital advertising and on-bus screens. Early performance data showed a 19% increase in food waste captured in December and a further 12% increase in January, with 708 tonnes collected, the highest monthly tonnage since the service began in 2021. Officers planned to continue the campaign and develop the next phase targeting residents in communal bin areas.

Officers also reported an increase in requests for caddies and food bins during the campaign period, suggesting residents were restarting the service or engaging with it for the first time. Members noted that the positive trend was not visible in other partner areas, indicating that improvements in Reading were directly attributable to the campaign.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Members noted the scale and intensity of the food waste campaign and welcomed the early positive results and continued monitoring.
- Members recognised the planned next phase of work to target harder-to-reach areas and households with communal bins.
- Members noted the increase in resident requests for caddies and food bins during the campaign period, indicating renewed engagement.
- Officers would continue to track tonnages in the coming weeks and months to assess the longer-term impact of the campaign.
- Officers confirmed there were no recommendations attached to the report and that campaign activity would continue.

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

- 1 the contents of the report be noted

29 re3 Strategy Report

Monika Bulmer, re3 communications and marketing officer presented the re3 strategy report.

The evaluation of the consultation results was outlined, following the joint six-week public consultation undertaken from early November to mid-December. Members were informed that 3,460 responses had been received across the three boroughs, with particularly high participation in Wokingham, followed by Bracknell and Reading. The strong engagement demonstrated significant public interest in the subject and provided a clear evidence base for the development of the strategy.

Members noted the feedback received through the consultation, including views on service accessibility and comments relating to bag-splitting proposals. It was highlighted that only a small proportion of respondents were willing to support mandatory bag splitting, and members discussed how such an approach might be introduced safely and effectively, including the need to understand how similar schemes operated elsewhere. Officers confirmed that a proposal outlining potential options and associated evidence would be brought to the next meeting.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Members recognised that some residents faced challenges accessing recycling centres without a car, and officers noted the need to promote alternative access options such as travel by foot, bicycle or with support from family members.
- Members discussed concerns about the practicalities and safety of implementing bag-splitting at recycling centres, and the need to understand how staff could be supported in managing interactions with residents.
- Officers confirmed that a proposal for how bag-splitting could be introduced, along with evidence from other areas, would be brought forward for future consideration.
- Members reiterated the importance of effective communication to support behaviour change and promote accessible routes to reuse and recycling services.
- Officers confirmed that the findings from the consultation would inform the development of the next stage of the strategy.

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

- 1 the contents of the report be noted

30 **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED 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 items 10, 11 and 12 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.

31 **re3 Financial Management Report**

Oliver Burt, re3 Finance Officer presented the financial management report.

Having discussed the report, it was **RESOLVED** that

1. **Members note the Forecast financial position for the re3 partnership as detailed in the report.**
2. **That Members note the 2nd draft proposed re3 FY26/27 Budget**
3. **That Members note the updated Climate Change figures to FY24/25**
4. **That Members request a report on the future provision of the glass bottle bank service, to be brought to the next meeting.**

32 **re3 Contract Transition Report**

Oliver Burt presented the re3 Contract Transition report.

Having discussed the matter, members **RESOLVED** that

- 1 the contents of this report be noted

33 **re3 Emissions Trading Scheme Expansion Report**

Oliver Burt presented the re3 Contract Transition report.

Having discussed the matter, members **RESOLVED** that

- 1 the contents of this report be noted
2. Members request further reports on ETS and the moderation of associated financial impacts.

34 **Date of the Next Board Meeting**

Board members agreed the date of the next meeting will be 2 April 2026, 10am.

CHAIR