

Waste and Recycling Committee Meeting

Date: 21st April 2021

Subject: Communications & Behavioural Change Plan Update

Report of: Michelle Whitfield, Head of Communications & Behavioural Change,
GMCA Waste and Resources Team.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update members on the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Behavioural Change delivery plan and the joint SUEZ communications and engagement plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the progress against the communications and behavioural change plan; and
2. Note the progress on the joint SUEZ and R4GM communications and engagement plan.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Michelle Whitfield
Michelle.whitfield@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Implications:

GMCA along with its partners are working together to have a genuine commitment and practical approach to reducing inequality through communication and engagement. We are working to agree a common set of standards for communications, defining minimum requirements and expectations on accessible information, enabling a consistent approach to translation, easy-read, sign-language, publication and social media. As a minimum, this means evidencing 'due regard' to the needs of all communities of Greater Manchester (as per the Public Sector Equality Duty).

The team are assessing what documents can be translated into other languages taking into account the diverse communities of Greater Manchester. An ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) training package has also been created with Bolton College. The resources which are available on the website introduces words commonly associated with recycling at home.

The Recycle for Greater Manchester and GMCA websites have both been updated to meet accessibility requirements.

The accessibility regulations build on existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 (or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland). These say that all UK service providers must consider 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people. At least 1 in 5 people in the UK have a long term illness, impairment or disability. Many more have a temporary disability. Accessibility means more than putting things online. It means making content and design clear and simple enough so that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those who do need to adapt things.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

1. Any communication materials will be produced on recycled paper or paper that meets the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) standard. The very nature of the communications and engagement aims to promote the waste hierarchy by encouraging residents of Greater Manchester to reduce their own carbon impact by minimising the waste they produce, reusing what they can and recycling the right items in the right bin

Risk Management:

Successful and effective delivery of the communications and behavioural change plan will result in increased capture of recyclable materials and assist in driving down contamination. Contamination and access to recycle markets remains a critical risk in 2020/21 given the additional processing costs associated with removing contamination.

Legal Considerations:

The requirements for SUEZ to support GMCA communications and engagement activities that relate to waste and resources are set out in the Waste and Resources Management Services (WRMS) contract and the Household Waste Recycling Management Services (HWRCMS) contract.

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

The financial consequences of not delivering the communications and behavioural change plan is an increase in waste disposal costs as a result of high contamination rates in the recycling bin.

Financial Consequences – Capital:

There are no implications on the capital budget that arise from the activities set out in this report.

Number of attachments to the report:

R4GM Digital Dashboard January 21 – Appendix A

R4GM Digital Dashboard February 21 – Appendix B.

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee :N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress against the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Behavioural Change Delivery Plan 2020/21 and the Joint SUEZ/R4GM plan. The report focusses on the period from January to March 2021.

2. COMMUNICATIONS & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE PLAN

The communications and behavioural change plan is split into 5 sections:

- Waste prevention;
- Greater Manchester Wide Digital Support;
- Education;
- Reduce contamination and improve the quality of recycling; and
- Increase recycling at the HWRCs.

2.1 Waste Prevention

The national Food Waste Action Week ran from 1-7th March 2021. The campaign organised by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) aimed to raise awareness of the link between food waste and climate change with the message; food waste feeds climate change.

- 2.1.1 In support of the national campaign, regional communications activity included:

- Supported social media on R4GM channel as well as toolkits provided for each council;
- Dedicated webpage on R4GM website;
- Digital display advertising;
- Press release issued; and
- Newsletter articles in R4GM and GMCA newsletters.

- 2.1.2 Campaign Results

WRAP is collating the national results, but the outputs for the R4GM channels are as follows:

- Total social media impressions: 303,430;
- Total social media engagements: 632;
- Webpage views: 1,094;
- Digital advertising impressions: 2,345,645; and
- Digital advertising clicks: 1,610.

- 2.1.3 An impression is the number of times the information appears on a person's screen and the engagement is the number of people that have either liked or commented on a post. There were over 2 million digital advertising impressions with 1,610 people

clicking through the R4GM website. The industry average for an advertising click through rate is 0.1% so this is slightly lower than average but this was expected as the campaign only ran for one week. The R4GM results have been submitted to WRAP so they can produce a summary report. Awareness raising is more effective when done nationally so these results cannot be taken in isolation and the national results will be provided in the next Waste and Recycling Committee report.

2.2 Greater Manchester Digital Support

2.2.1 Over the past 5 weeks, the team have run a home composting competition via the R4GM Facebook group. The competition asks multiple choice questions about home composting where residents can win one of 10 compost bins and 2 bokashi bins.

2.2.2 The campaign results so far are summarised below:

- 211 entries to the competition via Facebook;
- 10 posts on Facebook, overall reach 4,713 and total number of impressions; 4,965;
- 25 posts on twitter with 11,833 impressions and 254 people engaged;
- 3 posts on Instagram, with a reach of 465 and 498 impressions;
- Over 1,370 sessions to news item on our website promoting the competition <https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/lets-compost-now-win-a-free-compost-bin/> - 89% of these were new sessions including 1,222 new users; and
- Since January 1, 2021 there has been 176 page views to the Let's Compost Now page on our website <https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/community-post/lets-compost-now/> - 71% of these were new sessions including 147 new users.

2.3 Education

Since September 2020 when the education team launched live virtual sessions to replace the tour around the materials recovery facility (MRF), they have delivered 87 sessions to 2,043 people. A breakdown is shown in the table below:

District	No of sessions run	Total no of participants
Bury	3	111
Manchester	22	884
Oldham	6	252
Rochdale	3	37
Salford	5	93
Stockport	10	199
Tameside	12	210
Trafford	4	49
Mixed Greater Manchester	23	237
Total	87	2,043

2.3.1 As well as the numbers of participants, the team also record feedback and below is a selection of some of the comments received:

- Thank you, I really enjoyed this session and have lots of ideas to discuss with the staff members at school who are leading the eco initiatives;
- Thank you, both! I'm really re-assured by some of the things you've told us and you've both been really approachable. I hope we can do some local education in Old Trafford;
- That film was really useful. Everyone should watch it because it helps us understand why we have to do certain things to make recycling function effectively!;
- Loved your presentation, I can now start to put all the plastic (that isn't bottles) in the General waste; and
- Thank you for this afternoon, Alison was amazing and really engaged our Year 6. Us teachers learnt a thing or two as well! Thanks again and hopefully we'll be able to visit you in person next year.

2.3.2 When the schools closed at the beginning of January 2021, the education team focused on promoting the virtual education sessions to community groups and promoting the online resources for home schooling. As a result, the team delivered more evening events for guides, scout and brownie groups and new resources have been added to the website including recycling themed maths worksheets and wordsearches.

2.3.3 The team have trialed council specific Facebook live events for residents living in Tameside, Oldham and Salford. The events scheduled on a certain date and time provided residents with an overview of what can be recycled in each of their 4 bins with an opportunity to ask questions. Over these 3 events, 47 residents took part and the number of views during the week totaled 1,004. The residents who took part were supportive and engaged, the events are now being offered to other council areas.

2.3.4 Any groups or individuals who take part in a live session are invited to take part in a quiz on the Recycle for Greater Manchester website with a chance to win a prize. Since January just over 200 entries have been received.

Three winners have been awarded a prize:

- Piper High School in Manchester;
- Brownie and Guides Ramsbottom, Bury; and
- 6th Chorlton cum Hardy Brownies in Manchester.

2.3.5 The team have also introduced a gallery on the website which encourages children to send in photos of an activity or picture that they've created about recycling. A prize is drawn every month. The winner for February was Alice who made a 6-hole crazy golf course out of recycling as part of a project for the 3rd Heaton Chapel Brownies. The game can be viewed on the R4GM website.

2.3.6 A company has been procured to redesign and refurbish the education centre at Longley Lane, Sharston. The company have previously refitted a waste education centre in Derby and also the Bury fire training centre. An initial meeting was held on 25th March to outline the project plan. Another supplier has been procured to deliver new hardware and software. The objective of the refit is to provide visitors to the centre with an engaging experience that informs, encourages, and empowers people to effectively manage their own waste and recycling and have a greater understanding of the recycling process and links to climate change. The design of the refreshed learning space will be attractive to a wide range of audiences, from primary school children to interested adult groups. It is hoped that if COVID restrictions allow, the education centre will be open to visitors in September to coincide with the new school term.

2.4 Reduce Contamination and Improve the Quality of Recycling

2.4.1 The R4GM team have partnered with Keep Britain Tidy on a national nappy campaign which launched at the beginning of March. A press release was sent by Keep Britain Tidy announcing the campaign; <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/news>.

Keep Britain Tidy are calling on all manufacturers of disposable nappies to provide clear labelling on packs that explain that nappies are not recyclable and should be placed in the general waste bin. The campaign has been launched as research shows there is genuine confusion over which bin soiled nappies should go into and this was highlighted in a report produced by Keep Britain Tidy – ‘Inside the Head of a Contaminator.’ From this research, Keep Britain Tidy tested a campaign concept with a simple message of ‘Please don’t put any nappies in your recycling.’

All nine local authorities are supporting the campaign by sharing social media on their own channels and livery has been added to councils’ bin wagons as shown in the photo below.



Figure 1 Vehicle livery showing Ted Says nappy campaign

2.4.2 In February a paper and card contamination campaign was rolled out in Tameside with the aim of reducing the number of paper and card recycling loads that are rejected each month. The campaign messaging focused on the costs associated with the number of loads of paper and card that must be sent to Energy from Waste or landfill due to excessive contamination. The costs were equated to the number of pothole repairs that could have been carried out.

2.4.3 Campaign activity included:

- 100,000 leaflets delivered to all households with a kerbside recycling collection and bins stickered (February 2021);
- Red bin tags applied to bins that were rejected at the kerbside due to contamination being present;
- Social media toolkit shared by Tameside Council with their communications network including local housing association, Jigsaw Housing Group and community champions;
- Dedicated webpage on R4GM website;
- Video produced at transfer loading station with the Head of Waste Management from Tameside Council highlighting the level of contamination present in a paper and card recycling load, which was used to brief member Councilors;
- Call centre brief & FAQ's provided for Tameside Council;
- Facebook education live session;

- Dedicated a page in the Citizen residents' magazine which was delivered to every household at the beginning of March;
- Newsletter through Quest media; and
- Tameside Council staff online monthly magazine.

2.4.4 The initial results are encouraging and show a large decrease in the number of paper and card recycling loads rejected due to a high level of contamination. In February only 3 loads of paper and card recycling were rejected in Tameside. The additional costs of contaminated paper and card recycling are on average £16,038 per month. During February, the costs were £1,483.76. The average tonnage of recycling rejected per month is 181.17 tonnes and in February it was 16.76 tonnes. The team will continue to work closely with Tameside Council to monitor the number of rejected loads and are planning to continue to deliver targeted communications as a reminder of what can be recycled in the paper and card bin.

2.4.5 A similar campaign has been delivered on specific rounds in Winton and Little Hulton with Salford Council. Approximately 5,100 properties were selected to improve residents understanding of what can be recycled in the paper and card bin. The campaign activity was delivered between December 2020 and March 2021 and is summarised below:

- Leaflet and bin sticker developed for target areas;
- Social media toolkit provided to Salford Council;
- Paper and card vehicle livery for 2 x vehicles;
- Facebook Live Education session delivered on 3rd March;
- Salford City Radio advert on paper and card;
- An article in Salford Life online magazine; and
- Dedicated webpage on R4GM website.

2.4.6 The results are being analysed and will be presented in the next Waste and Recycling Committee report.

2.4.7 In partnership with Oldham Council, the R4GM team developed a food waste campaign called Buy, Eat, Keep, Repeat which provides advice on how to avoid food waste and how to recycle any food waste that cannot be avoided. An online survey has been promoted on social media, digital display advertising and the R4GM newsletter which aims to understand residents behaviour relating to food waste. There were 451 respondents to the survey. These results will form part of the campaign insight together with research already carried out by WRAP and further work being carried out by Oldham Council and will be used to develop the next steps in the campaign.

2.5 Increase Recycling at Household Waste Recycling Centres

Communication around the household waste recycling centres has mainly focused on encouraging residents to wear a face covering and follow social distancing restrictions on site. If the government recovery roadmap goes ahead as planned, then from 29th March the government messaging will change to a stay local message

rather than stay at home. The team will then focus on encouraging and promoting recycling with reminders about the different types of materials that can be recycled such as mattresses.

Currently the team are focused on communicating possible queues and traffic issues over the Easter holidays which are usually a busy time of year. Adverts have been placed in local newspapers which is supported by social media advertising, toolkits have been produced for the councils to use on their own social media channels.

The messaging focusses on encouraging residents to plan a mid-week visit and also a reminder that when the clocks go forward on 28th March, the opening hours change to 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week (except Salford Road, Sundays and Bank Holidays opening hours are 10am to 4pm).

3. JOINT SUEZ AND R4GM COMMUNICATIONS ENGAGEMENT PLAN

- 3.1 The reuse shop at Woodhouse Lane, Trafford has been delivered to site and is expected to open as soon as COVID restrictions allow shortly after 12th April. SUEZ are working on merchandising the internal shop so that it can be stocked with donations and have installed the EPOS system. Two staff members have been employed to work in the shop. A soft launch is planned initially so that any issues can be dealt with and then following the elections, and once all 3 shops are open, a publicity launch will be planned to promote the reuse shops and how revenue generated supports the new community fund and the donation each year to the Mayor's charity.
- 3.2 The community fund is being promoted throughout March and groups are encouraged to apply from 1st April. A total of £220,000 is available for charities, voluntary, community and faith groups, schools, colleges and universities to apply for. The fund can be used for a project that prevents, reuses, repairs or recycles household waste. The fund is being administered by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Communications during March has focused on using existing networks to promote the fund to all relevant groups. Targeted Facebook advertising is also being used to promote the fund to community groups.

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 4.1 Monthly social media dashboards are produced to monitor key performance indicators on the social media channels and website. This helps the team to understand what type of content produces good levels of engagement so that the content can be reviewed and improved. It also gives information on which pages on the Recycle for Greater Manchester website are most visited, how visitors to the website access the site, (e.g. via a search engine like Google or from a local authority website) and the type of information that people are searching for. This data is used to drive the content strategy and improve the usability and features of the website.

- 4.2 Dashboards for January and February 2021 are attached to the report. The number of visitors to the R4GM website dropped in February to 48,571 users compared to the January level of 81,205 users. This is due to a peak in visitors to the website over the busy Christmas period during December and January. Website visitor levels in February are comparable with February last year. In relation to the social media data, the senior digital officer post is currently vacant and recruitment has been carried out during February and March. Whilst the team have been continuing to cover all the channels to maintain a good level of engagement, the number of posts and tweets sent out in February is significantly lower than the previous month resulting in lower levels of engagement. The new senior digital officer starts in April and they will increase levels of engagement across all channels.
- 4.3 The education team keep a record of how many educational sessions are delivered, how many attended and which district they are from. This is used to target areas where attendance is lower and to develop the promotional strategy.
- 4.4 The contamination campaigns are monitored through tracking monthly tonnage figures and numbers of rejected loads during the campaign. The team also test any new communications materials and gather feedback at key points during a campaign using focus groups, surveys and door knocking. The results are used as part of a plan, do, check, act (PDCA) approach of continuous improvement.

5. BUDGET

The budget breakdown for delivering the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications for 2020/21 is detailed below. The actual spend is up the end of March 2021.

Budget allocation	Budget £ 2020/21	Actual spend to date £ 2020/21
Salaries	482,812	471,353
Advertising	221,490	89,895
Campaigns	255,500	96,174
Digital	59,276	81,752
Support (graphics/branding)	45,479	37,807
Education	60,298	62,088
Total	1,124,855	839,069

A forecast underspend of £270,000 will be carried over to 2021/22 to run campaigns that have been put on hold due to COVID.