

Waste and Recycling Committee

Date: 13 July 2022

Subject: Communications and 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

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Report authors must identify which paragraph relating to the following issues:

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

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 could 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.

Any communication materials produced 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 minimizing 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 2022/23 given the additional processing costs associated with removing contamination update.

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: None

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

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 and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction/Background

This report provides an overview on progress against the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Behavioural Change Delivery Plan 2022/23 and the Joint Suez/R4GM plan for period from 1st April to mid-June. The three main objectives of the Communications and Behavioural Change Delivery Plan are:

- to provide communications, engagement and media expertise to support the delivery of the Waste and Resources contracts:
- to support the 9 local councils with joint communications to educate, promote and encourage residents to minimise their waste and recycle correctly both at home and at the 20 household waste recycling centres (HWRCs); and
- to deliver joint communications with Suez on the social value plan, including the Renew shops and Hub, construction work at waste management treatment facilities and regular stakeholder engagement.

The plan identifies main priority areas of focus, these are: food waste reduction and correct use of the food waste recycling service, reducing paper and card contamination, addressing fly tipping by providing advice on the correct disposal of bulky waste, and supporting and promoting the Suez Social value plan. The Recycle for Greater Manchester team will also continue to work with the Suez Communications Manager to deliver joint communications related to construction works at the waste treatment facilities and operational changes at the HWRCs.

2. R4GM Community Fund

The R4GM Community fund is funded by Suez from the money raised in the Renew Shops. A sum of at least £220,000 is available every year for community groups, voluntary organisations, schools and charities who can apply to fund projects related to recycling, reuse, waste prevention or repair. The fund opened for applications on 1st April and closed on 31st May.

A communications plan was developed to target the relevant groups and included:

- Posters distributed to local supermarkets, the 3 Renew shops, community venues and zero waste shops;
- R4GM, GMCA and GMCVO (Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation) newsletters;

- Social media toolkit and assets provided to the local council's communications teams;
- Press release;
- Three online workshops;
- Email to community groups and charities; and
- Social media advertising on R4GM Facebook which led to total impressions of 229,435, and 1,274 click throughs to the R4GM website.

This year 60 applications were received, the applications are now being shortlisted by representatives from GMCA, Suez and the Lancashire Wildlife Trust who administer the fund. The successful applicants will be confirmed following a meeting of the GM Environment Fund (GMEF) board scheduled for 18 July.

3. Paper and card contamination campaign

Four recycling officers have been recruited and are working on a targeted behavioural change campaign focussing on areas of high contamination in the paper and card recycling bins which have been identified by the rejected load reports and in consultation with the councils. The officers are starting work in Bury and Manchester, collection rounds have been agreed and officers have been familiarising themselves with the local areas and council policies. A tried and tested methodology is being followed where residents will be informed by letter that the recycling officers are visiting the area, bin tags will be attached to contaminated bins and leaflets will be provided to explain which items can and cannot be recycled. Follow up visits will be undertaken to speak to residents about paper and card bins that are consistently contaminated to offer help and advice.

4. Buy, Keep, Eat, Repeat Food Waste Campaign

The focus of the food waste campaign during April and May has been on providing advice on storing food correctly to avoid food waste. Campaign messaging linked food waste to wasting money and focussed on providing tips and advice on how to store some of the most commonly wasted food such as bread. Digital advertising and social media were used to reach a younger audience with the most impressions achieved through twitter with over 10,000 impressions during April and May. Social media toolkits and copy has been provided to the councils to help promote the campaign via council owned channels such as social media, newsletters, intranet etc.

5. Renew Shops Communication

Communications during April and May continues to raise awareness of the 3 Renew Shops to increase footfall and increase sales. A video has been created to promote the shops over social media channels, to date this has achieved 599 new likes. A 5 second edit of the video is being used on You Tube and has resulted in 72,675 impressions and 641 clicks to the Renew page on the R4GM website. Facebook advertising has resulted in total impressions of 67,388.

The team also attended Stockport Flea market to promote the Renew shops giving out promotional leaflets and displaying and selling upcycled products made out of household items donated to the HWRCs.

The result of the continued promotion of the Renew shops means that the shops are on target to achieve sales figures to cover the annual cost of the £220,000 community fund in 2022/23. Suez are also preparing to launch an online sales offer via eBay which will sell larger items of furniture, white goods and electricals which will be available to click and collect from the Hub in Trafford Park.

In May, the Renew Hub won the Circular Economy success award at the Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management. At more than 5000m², the Renew Hub in Trafford Park is the UK's newest and most unique reuse operation in terms of opportunity and scale. Hundreds of tonnes of pre-loved items which would have otherwise gone to waste are brought to the Hub for repair and resale, with all of the money going back to the local community. To date, 217 tonnes of pre-loved items have been sold in the three Renew shops located on recycling centres in Oldham, Altrincham and Eccles, giving these items a new lease of life and providing good-quality items at a low cost for residents. More than 50 tonnes have also been donated direct from the Hub to various charities across Greater Manchester who offer furniture packs at little to no cost to those most in need.

6. Education Update

A breakdown of educational sessions delivered is shown in the table below, the data is from 1 April 2022 to 31 May 2022.

The sessions are a mix of tours at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) visitor centre at Longley Lane, South Manchester, online sessions, outreach, tours of the Renew Hub and visits to the Solar Farm in Bolton. There has been an increase in the number of sessions delivered compared to the same period last year.

District	No of sessions run	Total no of participants
Bolton	3	58
Bury	1	64
Manchester	10	314
Oldham	0	0
Rochdale	2	60
Salford	1	34
Stockport	4	101
Tameside	4	130
Trafford	4	92
Mixed Greater Manchester	13	135
Total	42	988

The education team are running targeted adverts to increase the number of community groups attending the visitor centre tour. Paid for Facebook advertising is also being trialled to increase visitors from some areas of Greater Manchester where visit number are low.

7. Reliance Street HWRC Public Consultation

A public consultation is being run in Newton Heath, Manchester to consult on plans to redevelop and upgrade the HWRC at Reliance St, Manchester. The HWRC was originally built in 1980 and partially modified in in 2008 and is a relatively small facility which requires upgrading to bring it into line with the other HWRCs across Greater Manchester. This will involve providing more recycling containers (introduction of a reuse container, plus separate containers for items such as mattresses and carpets which are currently not segregated for recycling at the site) and an improved layout will allow easier access to the containers. This will benefit residents who use this facility by separating the operational area meaning that container exchanges can take place without the site needing to close or the service being interrupted. The upgrade will also provide an opportunity to install a fourth Renew shop which will sell pre-loved household items at affordable prices.

The development is the third phase of planned improvements across the wider Reliance Street site, as the Mechanical Treatment and Reception building was upgraded during phase 1 and demolition works will form phase 2 ahead of the upgrading of the HWRC. Planning for the HWRC is expected to be submitted in June 2022, with works on site expected in spring 2023.

A communications plan was developed to promote the consultation. This included emails to the current liaison group, leaflets delivered to approximately 1,500 households in the vicinity of the site, leaflets handed out at the HWRC and targeted social media advertising.

A mix of face-to-face events are being held at Newton Heath library and virtual online sessions to gather feedback on the plans.