

WASTE AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: 12th March 2020

Subject: Waste and Resources Communications and Behavioural Change Action Plan
Progress Update – Part A

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

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update members on the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Behavioural Change Delivery Plan 2019/20.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Committee are recommended to:

- i) Note the progress against the plan;
- ii) Approve the ending of the current contract for the R4GM Bin App and the development of a new App; and
- iii) Approve the change of use for the Hurstwood Court site subject to agreement of lease terms.

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Risk Management – See paragraph 11

Legal Considerations – Considered in the body of the report

Financial Consequences – Revenue – See paragraph 9.1

Financial Consequences – Capital - not applicable

Number of attachments included in the report: 1 Appendix
Communications Activity Dashboard Nov 19 – Feb 20 Appendix A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

TRACKING/PROCESS	
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution (paragraph 14.2) or in the process (paragraph 13.1 AGMA Constitution) agreed by the AGMA Executive Board:	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 AGMA Scrutiny Pool on the grounds of urgency?	N/A

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides an update of progress against the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications & Behavioural Change Delivery Plan 2019/20.

2. COMMUNICATIONS & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE DELIVERY PLAN

2.1 The main focus of the 2019-20 delivery plan is on reducing contamination in household recycling bins using available data such as rejected loads, sampling, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) tracker report and visual bin checks to target resources across Greater Manchester and also on increasing recycling at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). The communications plan is split over 5 aims:

- Reduce contamination and improve the quality of recycling;
- Encourage waste prevention;
- Raise awareness of recycling across Greater Manchester using on and offline channels;
- Develop and promote the education service; and
- Increase recycling at the HWRCs.

3. REDUCE CONTAMINATION

3.1 Contamination campaigns were run in Bury, Rochdale and Stockport. The Trafford campaign will now run after the local elections in May and has been delayed due to collection round changes being introduced in Trafford. All campaigns focussed on the mixed recycling bin and on acceptance of plastic bottles and addressed confusion over pots, tubs and trays and why we do not collect these materials currently for recycling.

3.2. In addition to a bin shaped leaflet and bin sticker which were delivered last year, each campaign also included Councillor and call centre briefings, community engagement, the roll out of e-learning training to crew and council staff, advertising, targeted social media and updated information on the R4GM website.

3.3 The contamination campaigns will end with a Greater Manchester wide outdoor advertising campaign and Hits Radio roadshow running throughout March in all 9 council areas. The campaign 'It's Got to be a Bottle' will feature outdoor advertising on bus shelters, tram stops, newspapers supported by a landing page on the R4GM website, social media using the hashtag #ItsGotToBeaBottle and In-App advertising. The aim is to advise residents that the only plastics that can be recycled in Greater Manchester are bottles.

3.4 The e-learning module is now available for all councils on their learning management system (LMS) so that all council officers can complete it. It is also available on the GMCA LMS system. An officer has also been delivering learning lunches at the council buildings to raise awareness of the e-learning module and events have been held in Salford, Oldham and the GMCA.

- 3.5 In January, the vacant Lead Communications & Behavioural Change officer position was filled. This post will lead on the behavioural change campaigns. Work has now started on developing the contamination campaigns for the following financial year which will focus on paper and card.

4. ENCOURAGE WASTE PREVENTION

- 4.1 The “How do I waste less” page on the R4GM website has been developed and updated with new content. The focus of the new waste prevention campaigns this year will be on food waste and work is underway on developing the key messages and campaign content. The campaign will be based on the national Love Food Hate Waste campaign with local community engagement developed with the districts.

5. RAISE AWARENESS OF RECYCLING ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER USING ON AND OFFLINE CHANNELS

- 5.1 A review has been carried out on the contract for the R4GM Bin App due to several issues with the usability and functions. There have been problems with the way some data is displaying and the App does not work on newer smart phone devices. The webframe that the App is built on is outdated and the coding often breaks meaning that users are unable to find the information they need. Our current contractor is not able to update the software or build a new App. After gaining advice from our digital services team at the GMCA, the best option is to end our current contract and develop a new R4GM Bin App with a new supplier. The GMCA Digital Services team will support us through the procurement process, however it does mean that a new App won't be available for several months.
- 5.2 There are currently 6,000 users of the R4GM Bin App, so in partnership with the local councils, before ending the contract for the App, we will communicate to the users that the App will no longer be available and offer an alternative such as the council's website to look up their bin collection date. A communications plan will be developed to ensure the users are informed well in advance of any changes.
- 5.3 It is recommended that a new R4GM Bin app is developed with a new supplier incorporating new functionality such as the ability to add notifications linked to current campaigns, a reporting function to report fly tipping, notifications when collections are affected due to bad weather and the ability for the user to set reminders for their bin collection day. In addition we wish to explore the options of linking the App to the Reuse shop online sales.

6. EDUCATION

6.1 The table below shows the visitor centre and outreach figures from Sep 2019 to Feb 2020.

	Hurstwood Court TRF	Hurstwood Court HWRC	Longley Lane	Solar Farm	Outreach	Other	Total
No of Visits	15	15	136	6	12	0	184
No of People	331	379	2753	98	474	0	4035
Primary School	7	10	63	0	8	0	88
Secondary School	0	2	9	0	0	0	11
HE/FE	2	1	14	1	0	0	18
Community	5	2	23	1	4	0	35
Professional	1	0	13	1	0	0	15
Public	0	0	5	3	0	0	8
Business	0	0	9	0	0	0	9

6.2 The busiest site is Longley Lane for both school and community group bookings. The Energy Recovery facility located at Hurstwood Court in Bolton has had fewer visitors since the fire damaged the turbine. Although the turbine will be replaced in 2020, the visitor centre is in need of significant modernizing and investment and requires the education displays, which were installed 10 years ago, to be updated and the public areas to be decorated. When not being used for educational visits, the building is empty. Access for coaches and large visitor groups is also limited.

6.3 The SUEZ staff working at the Energy Recovery Facility adjacent to the visitor centre are currently using temporary cabins for their office and mess facilities. These are in need of updating and they have requested to lease the Hurstwood Court building and make use of the empty office space. They have requested to lease the whole building for the term of the Lot 1 contract and have confirmed that the communications team can continue to access the garage to store communications and promotional materials. Discussions are being progressed and Members are recommended to support the change of use and the finalizing of appropriate lease terms.

6.4 The Education team have been working on a strategy to develop the education service for the future and have concluded that visits to the Hurstwood Court visitor centre will continue until the Longley Lane refurbishment has been completed (September 2020) but no future bookings will be taken. Instead the focus will be on continuing to promote Longley Lane as the main education centre and to develop an outreach programme focused on waste

prevention and reuse messages and to deliver this directly in schools and other locations. This ties in with the development of the reuse shops and reuse hub.

- 6.5 Longley Lane education centre will be upgraded and the classroom refitted with up to date interactive displays and games in the Summer school holiday, when the visitor centre is less busy. Our education officers are developing a suite of resources that will be used as part of a greater focus on outreach. Many of the schools and community groups in Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside are not using the free visitor centre at Longley Lane due to the distance and transport cost. In addition to offering sessions on waste prevention and reuse, we will work with the all the local councils to offer a schools and community outreach session to take the MRF visitor experience out to local community groups and schools, focusing on increasing understanding of recycling and reducing contamination.
- 6.6 An additional education officer will be recruited in April 2020. Currently there are 2 full time officers. This will enable us to deliver a full week of education visits at Longley Lane (including evening visits up to 9pm), and run an outreach programme alongside. Key performance indicators will be set including targets for the numbers of outreach session in each of the 9 district.
- 6.7 The education officers will also develop sessions that relate to waste prevention, initially focusing on food waste. Information will also be provided about reuse and repair to move waste up the hierarchy linking messaging with the wider climate emergency and focus on reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.8 The visits to the solar farm in Bolton will continue to be provided when requested. These visits last for approximately 1hour as there is no educational facility at the site.

7. BOLTON UNIVERSITY PROJECT

- 7.1 Working in partnership with Suez, we are supporting students from the University of Bolton with their third year project. The students on the university's civil engineering and construction undergraduate programmes are tasked with designing a state-of-the-art energy recovery centre, supported by guest lectures delivered by Suez, and visits to our facilities across the region.
- 7.2 The 12-week Interdisciplinary Project is part of the students' final year assessment, and will give them experience of responding to a comprehensive client brief as they would find in industry, provided by Suez.

Recommendation: cease education visits at the Hurstwood Court education centre to focus on outreach and developing waste prevention and reuse.

8. INCREASE RECYCLING AT HWRCs

- 8.1 The HWRC access restriction policy was introduced on Monday 10th February. A summary of some of the communications activity can be seen in Appendix 1. Newspaper adverts ran

during mid-February to provide advice on how best to use the sites. This is supported by digital display advertising and social media. Social media toolkits have been provided to the communications officers at each of the districts so they can use assets on their own channels to promote the changes to the HWRCs.

- 8.2 The threats and abuse of Suez staff at the HWRC sites was covered in a radio interview on Monday 3rd February on BBC Radio Manchester. Several of the Suez staff were interviewed about their experiences. A report was also televised on BBC Northwest Tonight on Friday 14th February, focussing on the physical and verbal abuse that the Suez staff are subjected to with GMCA and Suez officers being interviewed to explain the policy and measures being implemented to protect staff. Signage has been installed at the HWRCs displaying the message ‘No Trade Waste’ as another reminder that trade waste is not permitted at the sites. The Contract Update report elsewhere on the agenda provides further details on the implementation of the scheme.

9. BUDGET

- 9.1 The budget breakdown for delivering the Recycle for Greater Manchester Communications Plan for 2019/20 is detailed below. The actual spend is up the end of February 2020.

Budget allocation	Budget £ 2019/20	Actual spend to date £ 2019/20
Salaries	436,806	362,522
Advertising	216,723	200,036
Campaigns	250,000	190,151
Digital	58,000	52,351
Support (graphics/branding)	44,500	5,583
Education	59,000	20,562
Total	1,065,029	831,205

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 10.1 Progress dashboards have been shared on a regular basis throughout the year to provide updates on campaigns. These are shared with the respective council officers and member Councillors. In addition the team track the number of rejected loads, recycling rates and tonnage collected throughout the year.
- 10.2 Additional analytics are monitored for the R4GM website and social media channels, these are used to improve content and develop new assets.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 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 2019/20 given the tightening of the export market for paper and card and the additional processing costs associated with removing contamination update.