

**CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

**CARDIFF COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**21 JANUARY 2020**

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**EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT IMPROVING RECYCLING PERFORMANCE**

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**Reason for the Report**

1. To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the report titled 'Education Campaign to Support Improving Recycling Performance' that will be received at the Cabinet meeting on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The main purpose of this item is to review:
  - Outline proposals for a new education campaign that will focus upon recycling performance;
  - The draft strategy titled 'Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff' **(Appendix1)**.

**Background**

2. Welsh Government set the first statutory recycling targets in the UK back in 2010, with Cardiff achieving the 58% target for 2016/17, up from 39% in 2010. Cardiff is facing a challenge to reach the 2019/20 target of 64 per cent and the 2024/25 target of 70 per cent.
3. Recycling performance in Cardiff has remained constant over the last three years, with only a 1% improvement in recycling performance to 59% in 2018/19.
4. The Council currently collects 40,000 tonnes of co-mingled dry recycling per annum, which is presented by residents in green plastic bags. Following processing in the Material Recovery Facility 24% is rejected due to contamination – this represents nearly 10,000 tonnes of material per annum.

5. Contamination presents both practical and operational issues, such as creating additional tonnages that take up space in collection vehicles, increasing the number of collection vehicles required and making the task of sorting the material both challenging and costly.
6. The majority of householders aim to recycle materials effectively, but in some cases just one householder including the wrong materials may mean that a whole collection needs to be rejected and not recycled.
7. In Cardiff, the main contaminants in co-mingled dry recycling are:
  - Food;
  - Nappies;
  - Textiles.
8. Contamination also impacts garden waste and in 2018/19 approximately 1,000 tonnes of these materials were rejected.
9. Guidance and literature is available on the Council website and via the direct provision of education material to residents.
10. Digital systems for recycling collection management (BarTec) and enforcement management (StarTraq) are currently in place.
11. Recycling performance at Household Recycling Centres is at 75% with an objective of achieving recycling performance of over 80%.
12. The majority of residents who attend Household Recycling Centres already segregate their recycling prior to arriving at the centres. However, there are still residents who only bring black bags to the recycling centres and do not segregate their recycling.

### **Issues**

13. **Managing Contamination of Recycling** - The current process of dealing with contaminated recycling is to leave recycling in-situ and for the Street Scene Education and Enforcement Team to deliver intervention by education, followed by enforcement. The process has two drawbacks:

- No information is provided at the time to the resident as to why bags and bins have not been collected, therefore, residents understandably report the uncollected bag as a missed collection.
  - The opportunity for residents to address the contamination issue themselves and avoid future issues is missed.
14. The outcome of the current approach is an increase in demand on C2C and cleansing services in relation to the missed bags. This in turn creates a reduction in confidence in the waste management service. Complaints about this aspect of service are high.
15. **Proposed Way Forward** - To manage contamination of recycling more effectively, it is proposed that in future collection crews will capture property details where contamination of recycling is evident. The initial phase will be education to inform residents there is a concern with contamination in their recycling.
16. The education phase will include the placement of a 'Pink Sticker' advising residents that there are incorrect items within their recycling; a copy of this sticker is attached to this report as **Appendix 2**. The sticker informs the resident to remove the recycling bag from the street and take out any contaminated items. The sticker provides further information to residents via a QR code.
17. Should a second breach be noted at the property, then an education letter will be issued to the householder informing them of the problem and re-enforcing the correct materials to be placed in the recycling bags.
18. The issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices will be by Environmental Enforcement Officers, and they will only issue a Fixed Penalty Notice after the education stage has been breached.
19. The education and Section 46 notices sent to residents as part of the process will be via hybrid printing to minimise costs. The Street Scene Education & Enforcement Team will undertake any enforcement in line with the Street Scene & Enforcement Policy.

20. It is anticipated that recycling performance will improve with the implementation of this new approach as contamination has an impact on the quality and quantity of recyclable material.
21. **Draft Strategy – ‘Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff’** – The draft strategy titled – ‘Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff’ is attached to this report as **Appendix 1**. The draft strategy is split into eight sections, these emphasise the importance of recycling, provide context on the Cardiff position and identify what can be done to improve Cardiff’s recycling performance. The eight sections are summarised as:
- **Foreword** – An introduction and message from the Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment;
  - **Why is recycling important?** – A summary of reasons explaining why it is important to improve recycling rates in Cardiff;
  - **How good is Cardiff at recycling?** – Information on Cardiff’s recycling achievements and challenges;
  - **How can we work together to improve recycling?** – Advice to the public on improving the presentation of recycled materials;
  - **Managing contamination of recycling** – Information on the new ‘Pink Sticker’, education and enforcement scheme that the Council is looking to introduce to reduce recycling contamination levels;
  - **Separating recycling materials for Household Waste Recycling Centres** – A message on the importance of the public using Household Waste Recycling Centres to recycle and not just to dispose of waste;
  - **Improving awareness and behaviour change** – An explanation of the commitments made by the Council to improve recycling performance;
  - **Did you know?** – A series of facts and figures on food recycling, garden waste, wider recycling and energy from waste.
22. **Improving Performance at Household Waste Recycling Centres** - Improving recycling at Household Waste Recycling Centres to over 80% will require residents to separate recycling from residual waste. This is the approach that has been taken by most other local authorities in Wales.

23. It is proposed that residents are asked to separate their recycling from any residual waste when they use either of Cardiff's Household Waste Recycling Centres. Education officers will be available to assist residents to complete this process. This change will require a clear implementation strategy and it is anticipated that the change would become effective in Summer 2020.

### **Cabinet Report - Financial Implications**

24. The Cabinet report titled 'Education Campaign to Support Improving Recycling Performance' includes a section of financial implications. These have been provided by Finance staff in the Resources Directorate, and include the following comments:
- *The Street Scene Education and Enforcement Policy report sets out a series of initiatives including a new education campaign. This policy can be supported by financial resources already allocated to the service in respect to both personnel and expenditure on items such as postage. In the event of any initiative requiring resources outside of the current budget allocation then a reprioritisation of activities is undertaken or alternative funding mechanisms to be identified.*

### **Cabinet Report - Legal Implications**

25. The Cabinet report titled 'Education Campaign to Support Improving Recycling Performance' includes a section of legal implications. These have been provided by Legal staff in the Governance & Legal Services Directorate, and include the following comments:
- *All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. standing orders and financial regulations; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.*

- *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how the proposals will contribute towards meeting its well being objectives (set out in the Corporate Plan). Members must also be satisfied that the proposals comply with the sustainable development principle, which requires that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*
- *The report identifies that the Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment is to ensure that the Council has understood the potential impacts of the proposal in terms of equality so that it can ensure that it is making proportionate and rational decisions having due regard to its public sector equality duty pursuant to s.149 Equality Act 2010.*

26. **Cabinet Report Recommendations** – The Cabinet report titled ‘Education Campaign to Support Improving Recycling Performance’ recommends that the Cabinet:

- *Approve the strategy ‘Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff’.*
- *Approve in principle the requirement for residents to separate their recycling and residual waste when utilising Household Waste Recycling Centres in Cardiff and delegation is sought for the Assistant Director Street Scene and the Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment to approve the detail of the scheme.*

### **Way Forward**

27. The Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment has been invited to attend the meeting. He will be supported by officers from the People & Communities Directorate.

### **Legal Implications**

28. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or

without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

### **Financial Implications**

29. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

30. The Committee is recommended to:
- (i) Consider the information in this report and the information presented at the meeting;
  - (ii) Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet on this matter; and,
  - (iii) Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director of Governance & Legal Services**

**15 January 2020**