

**EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT IMPROVING RECYCLING PERFORMANCE**

**CLEAN STREETS, RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENT  
(COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MICHAEL)**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. To seek approval for a new education campaign relating to recycling performance.
2. To seek approval of the strategy 'Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff' (Appendix1).

**Background**

3. 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.
4. Cardiff is facing a challenge to reach the 2019/20 target of 64 per cent and the 2024/25 target of 70 per cent.
5. The recycling performance in Cardiff has remained constant over the last 3 years, with only a 1% improvement in recycling performance to 59% in 2018/19.
6. Cardiff currently collects 40,000 Tonnes of co-mingled dry recycling presented by residents in green plastic bags.
7. Following processing in the Material Recovery Facility 24%, representing nearly 10,000 Tonnes of material, is rejected due to contamination.
8. 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 very difficult and costly.

9. 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.
10. In Cardiff, the main contaminants in co-mingled dry recycling are:
  - Food
  - Nappies
  - Textiles
11. Contamination also impacts garden waste and in 2018/19 approximately 1,000 Tonnes of these materials were rejected.
12. Guidance and literature is available via the Cardiff Council website and via the provision of education material to residents directly.
13. Digital systems for recycling collection management (BarTec) and enforcement management (StarTraq) are in place.
14. Recycling performance at Household Recycling Centres is at 75% with an objective of achieving recycling performance of over 80%.
15. 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**

### Managing contamination of recycling

16. 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.
17. The process has two drawbacks:
  - No information is provided at the time to the resident as to why bags and bins are not 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.
18. The outcome of the current approach is an increase in demand on C2C and cleansing services in relation to the missed bags and a reduction in confidence in the waste management service. Complaints about this aspect of service are high.

### Proposed Way Forward

19. 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 an education phase to inform residents there is a concern with contamination in their recycling.
20. The education phase will include the placement of a pink sticker (appendix 2) advising residents that there are incorrect items within their recycling. 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.
21. 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.
22. The issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices will be by Environmental Enforcement Officers and they will only issue a Fixed Penalty Notice following the education stage being breached.
23. The education and S46 notices sent to residents as part of the process will be via hybrid printing to minimise costs.
24. The Street Scene Education and Enforcement team will undertake any enforcement in line with the Street Scene and Enforcement Policy.
25. 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.

### Improving performance at Household Recycling Centres

26. To improve 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
27. 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.
28. This change will require a clear implementation strategy and it is anticipated that the change would become effective in Summer 2020.

### **Scrutiny Consideration**

29. The new education campaign and the policy on for Street Scene Education and Enforcement will be considered by the Environmental Scrutiny on 2<sup>1st</sup> January 2020. Any comments received will be circulated at the Cabinet meeting.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

30. To promote behavioural improvement towards recycling and reduce contamination within recyclable materials presented by residents.
31. To agree a policy on the management of education and enforcement in Street Scene.

## **Financial Implications**

32. 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.

## **Legal Implications**

33. 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.
34. 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.
35. 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.

## **HR Implications**

36. There are no additional resources required in order to for the recommendations to be carried out. The trade unions and affected employees have been fully consulted in the revised process. Full training has taken place.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommend to

1. Approve the strategy 'Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff'
2. Approve in principle the requirement for residents to separate their recycling and residual waste when utilising Household Waste Recycling Centres in Cardiff and delegate authority to the Assistant Director Street Scene in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and Environment to approve the detail of the scheme.

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sarah McGill
	17 January 2020

*The following appendices are attached:*

**Appendix 1** - *'Working together to improve recycling for Cardiff'*

**Appendix 2** - *Pink contamination sticker*