

Report of: Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Executive	18.10.2018		All

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SUBJECT: Waste Minimisation and Recycling Action Plan 2018/19

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 Recycling and reducing waste is vitally important to Islington. It's better for the environment, and because recycling costs a lot less than throwing rubbish away, it saves money that can be spent on other services for residents. The Council strongly supports recycling and we regularly review the ways we recycle.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on how the Council has improved recycling services over the last year and sets out proposals for improving service quality and performance for the coming year.
- 1.3 The report highlights the comprehensive range of recycling services available to residents and the work being undertaken to improve the quality of recyclables being collected and to make the service more efficient and better for residents.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Service 'Aims and Objectives' for 2018/19 as set out in section 4.
- 2.2 To note the programme of service updates and proposals to improve recycling as set out in section 5.

3. Background

- 3.1 A Waste Minimisation and Recycling Action Plan report is presented to the Executive each year. The report recommends aims and objectives for the recycling and waste minimisation service for the year, with certain specific recommendations. The report also sets out progress against the aims, objectives and recommendations from the previous year's report.

- 3.2 During the last year, the Council's Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee has undertaken a review of our recycling service and made a number of formal recommendations which the Executive is considering.
- 3.3 The Council published 'Building a Fairer Islington, Our Commitment 2018-22' in July 2018. The document sets out the Council's corporate priorities. This report supports these priorities, specifically 'Making Islington a welcoming and attractive borough and creating a healthier environment for all' and the commitment to provide weekly bin and recycling collections.
- 3.4 On 31 May 2018, the Mayor of London published his London Environment Strategy (LES), which sets out policies across a range of environmental areas, including municipal waste and recycling. Waste authority waste strategies are required to be in general conformity with the municipal waste provisions of the LES.

The strategy includes important new requirements for waste authorities. These are:

- An overall municipal waste (all household and business waste, whether or not it is collected by the waste authority) recycling rate of 65% by 2030; a collective Borough recycling rate for local authority controlled waste (all household and business waste collected by the waste authority) by 2025 and aspirational household waste recycling rates of 45% by 2025 and 50% by 2030. The LES acknowledges that some Boroughs can recycle more than others due to local circumstances, such as a high proportion of purpose-built flats.
- To achieve these targets, local authorities should provide minimum levels of service, including for properties with a door to door recycling service a separate food waste collection, and all properties to receive a collection of, at a minimum, the six main dry recycling materials, i.e. glass, cans, paper, card, plastic bottles and mixed rigid plastics (tubs, pots and trays). Islington provides both these services.

Local Authorities are also expected to develop waste plans and strategies, setting out how they will ensure a greater focus on reduction, reuse and recycling, provide local economic, social and environmental benefits from improved waste management and make a meaningful contribution to meeting the Mayor's targets.

The requirements of the municipal waste element of the LES will need to be further reviewed to consider how Islington Council, in partnership with the North London Waste Authority, can support the objectives of the LES.

3.5 **Review of progress against agreed aims and objectives for 2017/18**

This section provides an update on progress against last year's agreed aims, objectives and actions.

3.6 **To build awareness for the need to recycle/re-use through effective communication**

The Council successfully applied for funding from London Resource to support food waste recycling services on estates. The £15k of funding supported communication activities on a range of estates over a six-week period in the summer of 2018.

The Council continues to work with London Resource and Peabody Housing Association on a major project to trial ways of improving recycling on estates. The project is scheduled to conclude in 2019.

The recycling pages on the Council's website receive more than 5,000 page views per day. These pages are under continual review, with feedback from users used to drive improvements. Information on local recycling points for textile and electrical/electronic equipment (WEEE) has been improved and an extensive 'Materials A-Z' section developed giving better advice on which materials can and cannot be recycled.

A recycling quiz was launched on the Recycling Islington Facebook page and has been answered by over 150 people, giving a useful insight into how much residents understand about what can and can't be recycled, with the results helping to inform our communications and further improvements to the recycling section of our recycling website.

Articles have also been placed in the Council's resident magazine 'Islington Life', both in the printed and online editions, as well as in newsletters of 'Partners for Improvement – Islington' (Partners) and other social landlords.

The Recycling Team attended the Cally Festival and the Angel Canal festival to promote recycling in Islington. Extensive outreach work is also delivered by the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). During 2017-18 they delivered:

- 26 separate food waste prevention events
- 6 food waste prevention presentations
- 12 recycling promotional events
- 3 recycling presentations
- 5 food waste prevention displays in Islington libraries
- 1 Waste Less Lunch Free event
- A number of 'give and take' and 'swish and style' events

The Recycling Team has also supported or delivered Real Nappy Clothes Swap events, Composting Workshops, a Jumble Trail, a Cookery Session and a Sewing workshop. We carried out a 'Recycling Sorted' event at St. Luke's Estate, where the contents of recycling bins were sorted to identify and highlight which materials in the bins could and could not be recycled. A video was produced which was published on the Recycling Islington Facebook page with positive responses.

New recycling and waste collection fleet vehicles delivered during 2017-18 feature new branding and designs which all help to promote the recycling message.

3.7 To target specific recycling and waste minimisation attention on purpose built flats and apartments in the private rented sector, housing associations and other social rented housing sectors

The Recycling Team has been working closely with a range of partners to provide better recycling services for our residents in flats and the private rented sector.

1. Resident Social Landlords

We are working with a number of major Resident Social Landlords to improve recycling services on the ground and provide better communications to residents. This includes

- regular liaison with all Resident Social Landlords in Islington through the Islington Housing Group;
- a major partnership with Peabody Housing Association and Resource London to trial different ways of increasing recycling on estates;
- work with Barnsbury Housing Association to improve recycling services on a local estate;
- work with Islington Southern Housing Association to plan the transformation of a publically accessible recycling and rubbish bin area adjacent to one of their estates;
- improved signage at recycling points at Newlon Housing Trust properties;
- working with Partners to improve internal signage at their properties and better communications with residents.

We are also working with Islington's own Lettings Service to review tenancy agreements, communications and services for residents.

2. HMO landlords

The Council currently has two HMO licencing agreements covering around 550 properties / landlords and is committed to extending these to the Finsbury Park and Seven sisters area. The licencing scheme places certain obligations on landlords to manage their properties properly and this should include ensuring that their residents have the right recycling facilities and information, and that their residents use these

effectively. We are therefore reviewing the licencing agreement with landlords to include appropriate clauses to ensure this happens.

3. Lettings Agencies

We have contacted lettings agencies in Islington to invite them to work with us to improve 'Assured Lettings Agreement' clauses to encourage recycling, provide the right information to residents and again to ensure landlords fulfil their obligations. We are actively working with one agency to develop a package of communications tools for use by them and other lettings agents.

4. New properties

The Recycling Team works closely with the Council's New Builds Team to ensure that high quality recycling facilities are built into new developments and information provided to new tenants.

3.8 **To identify opportunities to implement better quality and more cost-effective methods of recycling**

1. Audit of recycling services

We are committed to providing every single resident with a good recycling service. To ensure this happens, an audit of recycling services is underway. Where properties have been identified with no recycling service, one has been put in place.

2. Better recycling sites

The Better Recycling Sites programme is a three-year programme of investment into Islington's communal recycling sites. The programme includes the installation of new enclosures for existing recycling sites to make them look better and to reduce misuse and fly tipping. 22 recycling sites (70 recycling containers) have had new enclosures installed to date, with some 40 other sites currently being planned. In addition, we have installed 130 new metal housing units for communal food waste recycling sites, installed over 130 new recycling site signs and carried out other improvements at sites as required.

3. Mini sack trial

Clear recycling sacks are provided to residents in flats above shops and some street properties with no storage area for a recycling box. They are also available to any resident via our libraries. Feedback from residents indicate that these are less suitable for residents on estates where residents use communal recycling bins. We have therefore been trialling the use of smaller 'shopping bag' size plastic recycling sacks on estates and the results are being reviewed.

4. Smart recycling sites

We are continuing to use sensors in recycling and rubbish containers to improve efficiency and quality across the service.

3.9 **To seek to achieve a 2018/19 recycling rate for waste from households of 35.6% in support of the agreed NLWA recycling target of 50% by 2020**

Islington's recycling rate for 2017-18 is 29.5%.

The market for good quality recylate has come under significant pressure in recent years. At all parts of the recycling chain, from the point of collection to the recycling factory, there is an increased need to deliver material to higher quality standards. This has resulted in more material that is collected from homes being deemed 'non-recyclable' and removed for disposal. This in turn has had a negative effect on the Council's recycling rate.

Recycling rates across NLWA and London have remained level over recent years. Islington's recycling performance nevertheless remains strong, with our focus remaining on providing good quality services to residents.

3.10 To achieve a household waste (not recycled) rate of no more than 407kg during 2018/19

Islington's household waste (not recycled) rate for 2017-18 is 375 kg per household, our lowest ever rate.

3.11 To support the NLWA partnership and the implementation of its waste strategy

Islington supports the NLWA partnership in a number of technical and strategic areas, including:

- Supporting communications activities and waste minimisation programmes across the NLWA area and particularly in Islington;
- Technical support for proposals for new waste treatment facilities, recycling facilities and composting facilities to ensure better, more efficient, more reliable and more sustainable waste management options are developed;
- Support in drafting NLWA responses to government consultations on waste matters, and;
- Joint working to reduce problems with contamination where non-recyclable materials are placed in recycling containers.

4. Aims and Objectives for 2018/19

Proposed aims, objectives and service priorities for 2018/19 are set out below. They reflect previous aims and objectives with updated targets and actions.

Aim

- To provide quality recycling services that meet the needs of residents and to reduce the amounts of municipal waste sent for disposal via landfill or incineration.

Objectives

- To build awareness for the need to recycle/re-use through effective communication
- To target specific recycling and waste minimisation attention on purpose built flats and apartments in the private rented sector, housing associations and other social rented housing sectors
- To identify opportunities to implement better quality and more cost effective methods of recycling
- To seek to achieve a 2018/19 recycling rate for waste from households of 36.09% in support of the agreed NLWA recycling target of 50% by 2020
- To achieve a household waste (not recycled) rate of no more than 401 kg per household during 2018/19
- To support the NLWA partnership and the implementation of its waste strategy

More details on specific proposals are provided below.

5. Service updates and proposals

5.1 Recycling for flats and the rented sector

The Council is committed to providing convenient, good quality recycling services to residents on estates and in the rented sector. To achieve this, we will continue to build effective partnerships with landlords and housing managers. This will include:

- Joint working with the Council's own Housing and Adult Social Services department (HASS), leading by example and showing how a responsible landlord provides good quality recycling facilities, services these facilities well and provides correct information and guidance to residents on how to recycle.
- Partnerships with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), jointly reviewing and improving facilities on estates managed by RSLs and encouraging RSLs to provide the right information and guidance to their residents.
- Working with private landlords through the HMO licencing schemes and through lettings agencies.

The 'Better Recycling Sites' three-year capital investment programme concludes this year. Investment in estate and public recycling facilities will have been made across Islington, making a real, visible improvement to residents' recycling facilities. We will continue to explore further ways to invest in improvements to recycling infrastructure through, for example, funding from landlords and other partners.

The trial of offering smaller single-use recycling sacks for residents on estates has shown that for some residents, they are a convenient method of storing recycling in their property and depositing recycling into the communal recycling bin, generally being more convenient than larger clear recycling bags. We will extend the offer of these bags to other estates and continue to monitor their uptake, their impact on recycling rates and also their costs.

Recycling chutes: In 2016, a new recycling scheme was introduced on a housing estate in Islington which involved re-allocating the chutes previously used for residual waste for recycling instead. Bins for rubbish were placed outside, replacing the recycling bins which were placed under the chute. This made recycling the easiest options for residents and the scheme appears to be working well. A full evaluation of this scheme is to be carried out to see what lessons can be learnt and whether similar schemes could work on other estates across Islington.

Our partnership with Resource London and Peabody Housing Trust, and the ongoing estates recycling project moves to the next phase in Spring 2019. A range of different interventions will be trialled on estates in five different Boroughs in London (including Islington) to identify effective ways to increase recycling rates.

We want to ensure that all residents are able to use our recycling services. We will trial a new design of recycling bin that enables better access for residents in wheel chairs or who find placing recycling into recycling bins difficult.

5.2 Improving the quality of recycling

To reduce the risk of non-recyclable material being placed into recycling bins, the council will trial new recycling bins that have a 'reverse bin lid'. These new bins, designed with Islington Council, ensure easy access to recycling bins but prevent dumping of larger items of large refuse sacks.

5.3 Reducing plastic waste

The Council is committed to taking action to reduce waste from single use plastic. We are working closely with 'City to Sea' (a national organisation promoting use of refillable water bottles and public water fountains) and the Mayor of London, to introduce new water fountains in Islington and encourage use of the 'Refill App' by residents and businesses. This App promotes local businesses that provide free drinking water on request and tell users of the App where those local businesses are located.

The Council is also reviewing its own practices, eliminating single use plastic where practical and we continue to provide residents with secure recycling services for a wide range of household plastic items.

The Council offers a comprehensive recycling service to businesses, which includes a range of plastic packaging items. We will also consider ways to encourage businesses to reduce their use and distribution of items such as plastic straws and disposable coffee cups.

As part of NLWA's waste prevention work, a range of activities have been carried out to reduce plastic waste. Further activities are planned for this year, including supporting the refill app and encouraging use of refillable water bottles.

5.4 **Communicating with residents**

The recycling pages of the Council's website receive some 3,000 hits per day and provide a valuable source of information and access to services for residents, and are reviewed on an ongoing basis. However, the current pages are focussed more around the practical details of our recycling services, and will be reviewed to also provide greater encouragement and information to residents wishing to understand more about recycling and why it is important.

The 'TRiFOCAL food waste campaign' is a three year European Union Life funded campaign in partnership with London Resource. The campaign has been progressed over three phases and the Council will be involved in the third phase taking place during 2019.

The Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) are a key partner in communicating with residents. They lead on national communications campaigns such as National Recycling Week and 'Love Food Hate Waste' and provide support and guidance to Local Authorities. The Recycle for London campaign is a London focused communications campaign in partnership with WRAP. The Council actively works with both campaigns to use iconographic materials in our leaflets and signs, campaign slogans and designs, and we support national campaigns at a local level. Examples include the National Recycling Week 2018 campaign which we are supporting through Islington Life and social media, and new 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign materials being used in a new national campaign later this year.

It is important that the Council communicates in a range of ways to reach out to all its residents, and for example, we will ensure that recycling leaflets are available in all of our libraries. We will also produce some simple and effective in-house videos for use via social media and our website, to give clear guidance on what can and cannot be recycled.

The NLWA carries out its own communications activities on behalf of the seven constituent NLWA Boroughs. Their website, www.wiseuptowaste.org.uk is a dedicated campaign website providing advice and information on recycling, reuse and waste minimisation.

The NLWA are also running a three-year behavioural change campaign - '**Save our Stuff**' – targeted particularly at young north Londoners.

We will continue to work in partnership with the NLWA to support regional campaigns and to maximise their impact within Islington.

5.5 **Recycling Champions**

Many of our residents are passionate about recycling and have indicated that they would be willing to support and spread the word to encourage others to recycle more. We will set up a Recycling Champions scheme to provide volunteer residents with opportunities to find out more about recycling and to encourage neighbours and other residents do more.

A Recycling Champions scheme will help us to reach out to and take account of all parts of our community.

5.6 **Service efficiencies**

A detailed review of the servicing of communal rubbish and recycling bins is underway with the aim of delivering a more efficient and reliable service. The review will include communal rubbish, recycling and food waste recycling points and may lead to additional capacity of new food waste collection points on estates. The use of bin sensors in communal collection points will also provide valuable information for improving service quality and efficiency.

A new back office system, due for installation in 2019 will also lead to more efficient and reliable service delivery.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial implications:

There are no significant financial implications as the recommendations are substantially for noting.

6.2 Legal Implications:

The Council has a duty to collect household waste. No charge may be made for its collection except in prescribed cases (section 45 Environment Protection Act 1990). In addition, the Council is under a separate duty to collect at least two types of recyclable or compostable household waste either co-mingled or individually separated from the rest of the household waste. Government guidance states that the following materials count as a type of recyclable waste: batteries; garden waste; glass; hazardous waste liquids; catering waste; metals; paper products; plastics; textiles and shoes; waste electrical and electronic equipment; and, wood. The duty to collect recyclates applies unless the Council is satisfied that the cost of doing so would be unreasonably high (on an individual premises basis) or comparable alternative arrangements are available (section 45A of the 1990 Act).

The EU framework directive on waste requires member states to achieve 50% recycling of household waste by 2020. However, in the UK, local authorities have not been set individual recycling targets.

The Waste Minimisation and Recycling Action Plan 2018/19 is intended to facilitate improvements in the Council's performance within the legal framework which governs the Council as a waste collection authority

6.3 Environmental Implications:

Improved recycling rates alongside waste minimisation will continue to have positive environmental impacts for all residents.

4.4 Equality Impact Assessment:

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

No adverse impacts for any residents have been identified as a result of the proposals in this report, whilst improved recycling rates alongside waste minimisation will have positive impacts for all residents in terms of a more efficient use of Council resources.

7. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

7.1 This report provides an update on recycling progress over the last year and sets out priorities and service initiatives for 2018/19 to drive further improvements in service quality, performance and efficiency.

Appendices: none

Background papers: none

Signed by:



8 October 2018

Executive Member for Environment and Transport Date

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