

INFORMAL WORKING GROUP – THURSDAY 13 January 2022

6.30 P.M

Topic – How Council manages its Food Waste

Present: Councillors: Tricia Clarke
 Gary Heather
 Roulin Khondoker
 Clare Jeapes

Also Present: Caz Royds, Islington Environmental Emergency Alliance

Tony Ralph, John Mootelaoa, Matthew Homer – Environment and
Regeneration

Ola Adeoye/Thomas French - Clerks

Apologies: Councillor Rowena Champion

The Chair welcomed everyone. Members, witnesses and officers introduced themselves.

The Working Group received a presentation from Dr Christian Reynolds, Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London

Dr Christian Reynolds highlighted three main ideas:

1. Idea 1 – Measure to reduce food waste
Convince people and organisations that action is needed, e.g. creating a business case
Understand what is effective at preventing or diverting FLW
Target action to where it is needed: types of food, parts of a supply chain / process, destinations
Demonstrate that progress has been made and is sufficient to hit targets
Supply chain: \$1 companies invested to reduce food loss and waste, they saved \$14 in operating costs.

2. Idea 2 – Make moments of change, moments to reduce food waste
Multiple synergies between HSE and FW
Integrate Healthy Eating and Food Waste education Welsh pilot (Low income communities) 53% increase in Fruit and Vegetable Consumption 7% food waste reduction
Hospitality and food service sector can be “champions” of message (and have major wins themselves).
Portions and Pack size can have an effect.

9% reduction in avoidable food waste generated per household per week (kg/hh/ wk) between 2017 and 2019. The amount generated fell from 1.59 kg/hh/week to 1.44 kg/hh/week.

No change in the weight of unavoidable food waste per household recycled via the caddy. On the other hand, there was a 14% increase in the amount of avoidable food waste recycled.

15% increase in Londoners demonstrating knowledge of and reporting taking action on healthy sustainable eating, according to the project evaluation survey

3. Idea 3 – Scale your solution to reduce food waste – let’s go local!

The city/municipal level is the right place to combat Food Waste. FLW action can be at multiple government levels.

Prevention

Diversion

Redistribution (Food Security)

The following questions were raised by members-

On the challenge with food waste collection in high rise buildings and flats and if there has been any study of how to address this, Dr Reynolds acknowledged that solutions to address vary from authorities, noting that in Aberdeen communal bins were introduced but there still remains issues of contamination.

Matthew Homer acknowledged that Council provides both recycling and food waste facilities not only to most of the estates but sheltered homes, community centres and schools

With regards to the 34 means of addressing food waste identified in the study, a member enquired whether there was any specific measure(s) that the Council could immediately adopt and implement, Dr Reynolds acknowledged that he would share 2 of the measures chosen by university students in a recent pilot with the committee by emailing details to the committee clerk.

Tony Ralph reiterated that the Council continues to promote among its residents it’s policy the need to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. He welcomed suggestions from Dr Reynolds, noting that officers are willing to work with him going forward.

Members were reminded that following the last meeting of the Informal working group, Islington officers have met with Dr Rembrandt, and received a presentation, details of which the Committee will be able to consider when a report is brought to the Committee in the future.

Tony Ralph acknowledged that the Council has just retrofitted some of its older vehicles which fits into the Council’s Circular Economy agenda instead of purchasing

new stock; that officers continues to work with Re London in helping the council to reduce waste; that central government has committed funds to assist authorities; that Islington is engaging in the Deposit Return scheme which has been promoted by National Policy.

In response to a question on whether research had identified any specific age profile that needs to be targeted and whether any particular food had been identified as being wasted by this group, Dr Reynolds indicated that they included both young people and people over 75 who live alone due to the death of their partners and are unable to adjust their shopping patterns and also find it difficult to purchase single items especially as most products are sold in multiple packs and most of the retail shops do not cater for single older people.

Dr Reynolds indicated that Potatoes, Chicken and Milk is identified as food that is wasted more.

On whether there are any attempts to influence suppliers to change their packaging, Dr Reynolds indicated that it remains a challenge for suppliers as it is not cost effective, however it should be noted that as reported in the news recently a major retailer is scrapping use-by-dates on milk and encouraging buyers to use 'sniff test' as part of its initiative to help reduce carbon emissions and food waste in the UK.

Caz Royds said that people living above shops are keen to recycle, that FLW matters enormously and she is involved in a measuring food waste project with Octopus. Islington Environmental Emergency Alliance took part in a food waste stall and so many people said that they didn't have any food waste. 5% England's waste is cat litter. The council is seen as a trusted friend to residents and the council can change food waste policies. 1/3 of food produced never reaches a human stomach. Food production causes 26% of green house emissions and food waste produces 6% of emissions.

The Chair thanked all for attending the meeting and welcoming Islington Officers suggestion that they would be working with Dr Reynolds going forward. Chair also reminded Tony Ralph of his intention to make available to Committee, Officers discussion with Dr Rembrandt and his presentation.