

Environment
Town Hall, Upper Street, N1

Report of: Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

Meeting of: Executive

Date: 23 March 2023

Ward(s): all wards

Subject: Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-25

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. In June 2019, the Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency. This commits Islington to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Reducing waste and recycling more is a key part of achieving this and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan sets out the Council's waste strategy through to 2025 and beyond.
- 1.2. In performing their waste functions, waste authorities need to show how they are acting in general conformity with the municipal waste provisions of the London Environment Strategy. The Mayor of London expects London local authorities to develop Waste Reduction and Recycling Plans (WRRP).
- 1.3. This report sets out Islington's draft second WRRP to cover the period April 2023 to March 2025, as well as highlighting our longer-term ambition of recycling 40% of household waste by 2030.
- 1.4. An agreed draft WRRP has been reviewed by GLA Officers on behalf of the deputy Mayor of London and their comments have been reviewed and incorporated in this final version as appropriate. There are no substantial changes to commitments as a result of GLA comments.
- 1.5. Significant amendments to the draft WRRP are highlighted in this report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To agree to the Council's overall recycling ambition to recycle 40% of household waste and 75% of the commercial waste we collect, by 2030.

- 2.2. To agree the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-25, as attached in Appendix A.

3. Background

- 3.1. In June 2019, the Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency. This commits Islington to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Reducing waste and recycling more is a key part of achieving this and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan sets out the Council's waste strategy through to 2025 and beyond.
- 3.2. Islington's recycling rate has plateaued at around 31% following the provision of comprehensive recycling services, including food waste, to most households. Islington's dry recycling rate is relatively high compared with other similar London Councils. However, recycling rates on estates remains lower than for street level properties, while participation in food waste recycling services is lower for all property types than for mixed dry recycling.
- 3.3. Our WRRP sets out actions that aim to address this, through a significant focus and investment into estate recycling services, a continuing focus on providing food waste recycling services to all properties, and communications and engagement to achieve behaviour change, leading to higher recycling rates, a reduction in waste disposal and a reduction in associated carbon emissions.
- 3.4. Our WRRP also sets out ambitious new targets for both household and commercial waste recycling.
- 3.5. The Mayor of London expects London local authorities to develop Waste Reduction and Recycling Plans (WRRP) to demonstrate how they are in general conformity with the municipal waste provisions of the London Environment Strategy (LES). Islington's first WRRP was agreed in October 2019.
- 3.6. This report sets out Islington's second WRRP to cover the period April 2023 to March 2025. The plan has four objectives:
- Objective 1 - Reduce the amount of waste that is sent for disposal, particularly avoidable food and single use plastics, and items that could be repaired, shared or reused, and move towards a more circular economy where materials stay in use for as long as possible.
 - Objective 2 - Increase the proportion of household and commercial waste that is collected for recycling, composting or reuse, with a particular focus on increasing food waste recycling rates and helping residents on estates to recycle more.
 - Objective 3 - Reduce the environmental impact, including greenhouse gas emissions, of our recycling and waste services, through minimising waste and increasing recycling, reducing fleet emissions and working with NLWA to deliver more efficient waste processing arrangements.
 - Objective 4 - Work with NLWA to support the Mayor's aim of retaining the economic value of waste within London and managing London's waste within London.

- 3.7. Significant additional commitments beyond those in the agreed draft WRRP include:
 - 3.7.1. Through the Thriving Neighbourhoods programme, an initial commitment of at least £600k has been made towards improvements to recycling facilities on ten Council estates.
 - 3.7.2. In addition, a major £2m investment programme over three years has been agreed which will transform recycling infrastructure across Council estates.
 - 3.7.3. Commitment to delivering a behaviour change campaign to increase levels of food waste recycling, funded by extra funding received from energy generation at the publicly owned Edmonton Eco-Park. This will dovetail with our support, through NLWA for a London wide food waste reduction campaign as part of the London Councils One World Living Action Plan.
- 3.8. The Plan highlights our ambition of recycling 40% of household waste by 2030 through changes and improvements to recycling services and a programme of behaviour change, communications and engagement. It includes a range of ambitious short and medium term proposals, including:
 - 3.8.1. Provision of food waste recycling services to all remaining residents living on estates.
 - 3.8.2. Providing a food waste service to residents living in flats above shops, if affordable and practical.
 - 3.8.3. A feasibility study into reducing the collection frequency of residual waste, to reduce waste and increase recycling.
 - 3.8.4. More opportunities for reuse, including a programme of Repair Cafes.
 - 3.8.5. Behaviour change campaigns to encourage residents and businesses to make more of the services we offer.
 - 3.8.6. A new ambitious commercial waste strategy with an ambition of recycling 75% of commercial waste by 2030.
- 3.9. In developing this Plan, officers took on board the results of a survey carried out by the Islington Environmental Emergency Alliance, and the outcomes of the 'Let's Talk Rubbish North London Zero Waste' survey, as well as informal feedback from residents through our Recycling Champions and community engagement work.
- 3.10. The draft WRRP has been reviewed by GLA officers on behalf of the deputy Mayor of London. Comments have been reviewed and the WRRP updated as appropriate. There are no substantial changes to commitments as a result of GLA comments.
- 3.11. Specifically, GLA officers have provided the following comments about Islington's draft WRRP:
 - 3.11.1. "Comprehensive RRP with a strong narrative and good level of background information provided. The RRP provides a wide range of strong actions, and includes ambitious targets, framed within the context of the key themes of the London Environment Strategy i.e. minimising waste, increasing recycling, reducing the environmental impact of waste management services, making best use of local waste sites and supporting the circular economy.

- 3.11.2. “The GLA commends the innovative actions and projects in Islington’s RRP, such as the food waste collection trial from flats above shops, proposals for a mobile reuse and recycling centre and the leading on the development of a new recycling lid design. There are further good examples of actions included around maximising recycling in flats and estates, tackling single use plastics, food waste reduction and circular economy initiatives such as partnering with the Library of Things and repair and reuse community cafes.”

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

- 4.1.1. As part of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan Council has approved an annual allocation of £0.100m until 2024/25 for recycling site improvements across council housing estates.
- 4.1.2. The Council has approved a £10m three year Thriving Neighbourhoods programme, from which at least £600k has so far been committed to support estate recycling improvements and an expanded Recycling Team.
- 4.1.3. As part of the Council’s budget for 2023-24, a further £2m has been agreed over three years for further investment in improved recycling facilities on Council estates.

4.2. Legal Implications

- 4.2.1. Working in partnership with the North London Waste Authority, the Council must comply with its statutory obligations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (“EPA”) as amended by the Environment Act 2021 with regards to the collection and disposal of controlled waste. Section 46 EPA empowers a waste collection authority to stipulate that residents place their household waste out for collection in designated containers and separated into specific waste streams. Under s.63A EPA the relevant authority also has a power to take steps to minimise the generation of controlled waste. The Council must also observe its general duty under s.3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In exercising its functions, taking such steps and making such arrangements, the Council must also ensure that it has due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, as explored more fully in section 4.4 of this report.

4.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- 4.3.1. The Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan aims to reduce waste and increase recycling, and reduce overall emissions from our waste and recycling operations. The proposals are therefore expected to have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions.

4.3.2. While some proposals, such as additional collections of recyclable materials, may result in additional vehicle miles, the overall Plan is subject to measurement under the Emissions Performance Standard, which indicates a net reduction in GHG emissions resulting from these proposals.

4.4. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

4.4.1. 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.

4.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report, because the impacts of the proposals are either neutral or positive for residents with any specific protected characteristic, and further Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out in relation to specific initiatives if and when they are considered for approval beyond trial or feasibility stage.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1. Our Reduction and Recycling Plan sets out how we intend to increase recycling rates and reduce waste in support of our Net Zero Carbon strategy.

Appendices:

- Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023-25

Background papers:

- None

Final report clearance:

Approved by:

Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

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