

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: 5th February 2019

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: FOOD WASTE RECYCLING CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Contact Officer: Amy Harris, Waste Strategy Manager
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Chief Officer: Executive Director of Environment & Community Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report provides an update on the food waste recycling campaign.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Environment and Community PDS Committee:

- **Note the food waste recycling campaign update.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Not applicable
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment Excellent Council
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Not Applicable
 4. Total current budget for this head: Not Applicable
 5. Source of funding: Not Applicable
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: An agency for doorstep and participation monitoring was commissioned following consideration of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Contract Procedure Rules. The company was procured through the London Tenders Portal (ProContract) using the Request for Quotation route.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 23,000 households were contacted directly as part of the food waste recycling campaign.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 In 2017/18, Bromley achieved it's 2017-2020 Environment Portfolio Plan ambition to recycle 50% of it's household waste and the Borough was ranked second highest for household recycling in London. However, over recent years, the recycling rate has plateaued and the amount of waste produced per household has risen.
- 3.2 Over the last five years, the amount of food waste collected through the separate food waste recycling scheme has decreased by 19% (2,039 tonnes over 5 years). The proportion of household waste that was separated as food waste and recycled has dropped from 9% to 7% during this period.

Year	Food Waste (t)	Variance in Food Waste (t/yr)	Household Waste (t)	Household Food Waste Composted (%)
2013/14	10,975		121,719	9.0%
2014/15	10,404	-571	121,252	8.6%
2015/16	9,959	-445	120,167	8.3%
2016/17	9,201	-758	123,023	7.5%
2017/18	8,934	-267	120,189	7.4%

- 3.3 At 2018/19 prices, within the current contract it costs £69 per tonne more to send food waste for disposal than for composting. Therefore, this decline is not financially sustainable. On average, over the last 4 years the reduction in food waste recycled (510 tonnes), is generating an additional disposal cost of £35k a year.
- 3.4 In addition, the 2016 Waste Composition Analysis, indicated that 28% of non-recyclable refuse comprises food waste, which meant that food waste was being sent for disposal that could have been separated by residents for composting.
- 3.5 Through national research and staff experience it is known that by encouraging non-recyclers to recycle food waste and encouraging existing recyclers to recycle more food, it is possible to reduce the costs of waste disposal and increase recycling. Therefore, to build on the Food for Thought Campaign officers commissioned the delivery of a targeted face-to-face engagement exercise to motivate and re-energise residents to recycle more food.
- 3.6 Following a successful funding bid to Resource London, Bromley was awarded £14.5k for the development of campaign materials for this exercise.

Food Waste Campaign

- 3.7 An exercise was conducted to identify the areas of the borough where there was the maximum potential for increasing food waste recycling and enhance the value for money gained from the campaign.
- 3.8 The tonnage of food waste and non-recyclable refuse was analysed for a two week period in April 2018, to identify the areas within the borough where the lowest amount of food waste and highest amount of non-recyclable refuse was collected. Each of the lowest performing collection rounds were reviewed against housing types and local factors to ensure that there were no external factors that may be limiting use of the food waste collection scheme. The 21 collection rounds (23,000 households) identified to be the lowest performing for food waste were selected

for the targeted engagement activity. These collection rounds were located across 16 wards. For more details please see Appendix A (for later circulation).

- 3.9 Local Green Points, the agency commissioned to conduct the doorstepping campaign, organised for trained staff to contact 23,000 households in October and November 2018 with the aim to encourage households to start using, or to ensure all their food waste was placed in, the food waste collection scheme. Having a direct conversation allowed them to address barriers to resident participation.
- 3.10 Communication materials about the food waste campaign were distributed to the target audience. In addition, as a result of the Resource London funding, a free roll of 50 food waste liners was distributed to 5,000 households in the four lowest performing food waste collection rounds.
- 3.11 Additional communication materials were distributed across the borough to increase the coverage and impact of the campaign. These materials included:
- Press release (Published in the News Shopper and The Bromley Times)
 - Article in Environment Matters
 - Social media coverage
 - JC Decaux banners in Bromley High Street
 - Vehicle panels (to be displayed on the recycling trucks from mid-February)
- 3.12 The approach to the evaluation of the campaign was considered at the beginning of the food waste campaign and included the following:

Monitoring	Details
Pre and Post Participation Monitoring	Monitoring set out rates of the containers for the food waste scheme over a three week period. A representative sample was selected by the Council (one area included within the doorstepping campaign and for a control, an area that was not included within the doorstepping campaign)
Food Waste Tonnage Data	For a two week period before and after the campaign activity, tonnage data measurement of the separate food waste scheme tonnages per collection round is required to ascertain whether there has been an increase in the tonnages collected. In addition, borough-wide food waste data is collected and reported on a monthly basis.
Doorstepping Contact Rate	The percentage of households that the Local Green Points Team have a face-to-face conversation with out of the total number of properties identified for the doorstepping element of the campaign.
Doorstepping Survey Findings	During the doorstepping exercise, residents were asked some food waste behaviour questions to find out whether they recycled food, what types of food waste were recycled and if there were any barriers to using the food waste service.

Indicative Results

- 3.13 The pre-campaign participation monitoring exercise took place from 4 October to 19 October 2018 and the post-campaign monitoring exercise took place from 6 December and 21 December 2018.
- 3.14 Participation in the Council's food waste collection scheme increased by 2.5% following the food waste recycling campaign. It is worth noting that the area selected for monitoring had a high participation rate before the campaign began, which means that it is possible participation

increased at a higher rate in areas targeted by the doorstepping campaign that had a lower participation rate before the campaign.

Round	Pre Campaign Participation rate	Post Campaign Participation rate	Percent change
Control Round: Thursday REC-03	85.0%	84.8%	-0.2%
Intervention Round: Friday REC-04	88.2%	90.7%	+2.5%

- 3.15 The amount of food waste collected in December 2018 at 709 tonnes was 5% higher when compared to the amount of food waste collected in December 2017 at 678 tonnes. Further data analysis will take place to identify whether this increase in food waste tonnage can be fully attributed to the campaign and whether it will be sustainable over time.
- 3.16 Of the 23,000 households in the campaign target area, all households received campaign materials and 41% received face-to-face engagement about the food waste collection service. The proportion of households that received face-to-face engagement was achieved by contacting residents during weekends and evenings.
- 3.17 Residents were contacted between October and November 2018 and asked some questions about their behaviour in relation to food waste. Key findings from the surveys were:
- 79% of surveyed residents said they participated in the food waste recycling scheme;
 - 5% of those that did not use the food waste scheme, composted at home;
 - Other reasons for not using the scheme were not having the right container, time, space, previous experience of a missed collection and not understanding the benefits of recycling;
 - The majority of residents that use the food waste scheme are aware of all of the types materials that can be recycled through the food waste scheme.

Future Plans

- 3.18 Building on this food waste campaign, officers are reviewing how they can continue to work with residents to increase recycling and decrease waste management costs. The analysis of recycling and residual waste tonnages across different areas of the borough that was completed as part of the planning stage for the food waste campaign could be used to generate a campaign competition between different parts of the borough.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Priority Outcome 4.2 (Minimising Waste and Increasing Recycling) within the Environment Portfolio Plan 2019-20 (the Council's environmental service aims and objectives) identifies "encouraging and assisting residents to minimise their waste and recycle more with a special focus this year on promoting an enhanced use of the Food Waste Recycling Service through the 'Food for Thought' campaign" as a key initiative.
- 4.2 This project will also contribute to the Building a Better Bromley's 'Quality Environment' aspiration to:
- Encourage further improvements in recycling and seek to reduce waste to manage costs and protect the environment

4.3 Local awareness raising activity focused on increasing food waste recycling assists us in demonstrating our general conformity with the Mayor of London's London Environment Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The commissioning of an agency for the implementation of the food waste campaign cost £30k, funded from the waste management budget. In addition, £15.5k was spent on free waste liners, stickers, promotional and information leaflets, with £14.5k funded by a grant from Resource London, and the remaining £1k funded from the promotional budget within waste services.
- 5.2 Within the new waste contract commencing in April 2019, it will cost an additional £101 per tonne to dispose of food waste within residual waste rather than composting. It is therefore essential to continue the promotion to encourage residents to recycle more food waste to ensure waste costs do not increase.

6. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An agency was procured to conduct a food waste recycling campaign on our behalf. The agency was commissioned following consideration of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Contract Procedure Rules.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal, Personnel and Impact on Vulnerable Children and Adults
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Officer Gateway Report for the Commissioning of a Food Waste Campaign