

TO: JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD
23rd January 2020

PROGRESS REPORT
Report of the re3 Project Director

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board on progress in the delivery of the re3 Joint Waste PFI Contract.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That Members note the contents of this report.**
- 2.2 **That Members request a report on the outcomes of the trade waste trial at the re3 recycling centres, as described at 5.20, be presented at the meeting of the JWDB in April 2020.**
- 2.3 **That Members approve the recommendation for usage of commercial and commercial-type vehicle permits to be monitored from the start of each contract year, commencing 1st April 2020, as described from 5.44.**
- 2.4 **That Members request a report on the outcomes of the contamination project with WRAP, as described at 5.51, be presented at the meeting of the JWDB in October 2020.**
- 2.5 **That Members approve the recommendation for a supplementary condition to changes to the residency checks as described at 6.10.**

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 None for this report.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Members in relation to progress in delivery of the re3 Joint Waste PFI Contract.

5 PROGRESS IN RELATION TO WASTE MANAGEMENT

re3 Waste Strategy 2018 to 2020

- 5.1 The re3 Strategy describes the context in which the re3 partnership is seeking to improve waste management. The principal themes of the re3 Strategy are a reflection of that context. They are: (i) reduce the net cost of waste, and (ii) recycle 50%.
- 5.2 The re3 Strategy also identifies 13 objectives, which are designed to either promote direct improvements or to support improvements indirectly. In 2018, each of the re3 councils formally adopted the re3 Strategy for 2018 to 2020.
- 5.3 For the period April 2019 to December 2019, the provisional headline results are as follows:

Recycling Rate

Council	Target	Actual
Bracknell Forest	43%	44.1%
Reading	39%	36.4%
Wokingham	52%	53.5%

- 5.4 The full range of provisional results for the period April 2019 to December 2019 are presented at Appendix One.
- 5.5 The current re3 Strategy was designed to run from 2018 to 2020. It has been an effective focus for developments in many areas of the wider waste service, not least the incorporation of food waste processing within the services available to the re3 partnership.
- 5.6 A forthcoming Environment Bill, reaffirmed within the post-election Queen’s Speech, is expected to incorporate significant changes to waste management and waste collection. Alongside legislative change, the dynamic nature of the local government operating environment, is also an ongoing factor which means that working together on waste management will continue to be a valid and viable response for the re3 councils – both to support individual and shared imperatives.
- 5.7 Accordingly, officers will provide, to the next re3 Board meeting: (1) a brief review of the 2018 to 2020 strategy, and (2) a proposal for a replacement Strategy, which synthesises the salient external and internal conditions applicable to the re3 partnership and the councils.

Trade Waste at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

- 5.8 In line with the seven month trial agreed by Members in July 2019, acceptance of trade waste from registered traders commenced on Monday 4th November 2019.
- 5.9 The new service is promoted regularly via re3 and Councils social media, re3 email newsletter, direct emails to local traders and Bracknell Forest e-newsletter.
- 5.10 Targeted social media advertising was used during November and December and the advert has been also placed within the confirmation email produced for residents applying for the commercial and commercial-type vehicle permits.
- 5.11 Above activities resulted in over 600 unique users to the relevant web page between October and December.
- 5.12 As of the end of December 2019, 20 traders had successfully received permits for participation in the trial and nine of these had used the service, making 17 visits between them.
- 5.13 In order to establish ways in which we might be able to increase participation in the trial, Officers produced a telephone survey to be conducted by Contractor staff with registered users.
- 5.14 In response to the survey, all 12 respondents confirmed that they had found the registration system for the service easy to use. Of the 8 respondents who had used the service, all said that they were happy with the way the charges were assessed on site and with the range of items they could dispose of. Furthermore, they all said that they would continue to use the service and recommend it to others.

- 5.15 Of the four respondents who had not used the service at the time of the survey, three said that they were still planning to use it in future. Only one said that they may not use the service and cited the scheme as too expensive to dispose of large quantities of garden waste.
- 5.16 In addition to the survey of registered users, Officers also sought feedback from admin staff and the Meet and Greet teams at both sites. All groups noted conversations with perspective customers in which it was advised that traders would like to be able to dispose of items, such as large electricals, that can be difficult to dispose of elsewhere.
- 5.17 The desire for additional items to be added to the charging structure may also be a factor in the high levels of views to the relevant webpage, but the relatively low number of sign ups.
- 5.18 As a result, Officers plan to add the additional waste types listed in Appendix Two to the charging structure, and to use these changes as an opportunity to seek further customers for the trial, through additional communication. In line with previous legal advice and the calculations for the original materials, the prices are designed to be non-profit making. Officers have sought to cover the costs of waste disposal as well as existing overhead charges and will review these prices at the end of the trial. In the case of engine oil, advice has also been sought from Trading Standards in regards to assessing charges for liquid waste.
- 5.19 Although the prices, particularly for the large electrical items and tyres, may be low in comparison to other disposal options, we will continue to maintain the limit on the number of traders that can participate in the trial. In addition, in order to maintain compliance with the site permits, the acceptance of hazardous items will be restricted to one item, per category, per visit. By not overcharging for disposal, we can continue to discourage fly-tipping, in line with the aims of the trial.
- 5.20 Officers will present further results from the trial at the meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board in April, with a recommendation regarding the continuation of this service.

Reuse Shop

- 5.21 As discussed at the October 2019 re3 Board meeting, Officers have been exploring the potential for expanded and combined reuse and retail opportunities either on site, at the existing Recycling Centres, or at complementary locations nearby.
- 5.22 As Officers considered that sufficient space for a shop to be operated within the boundaries of the Longshot Lane Recycling Centre was unlikely to be available, one consideration was whether a shop in Bracknell should be in close proximity to the site.
- 5.23 Officers have contacted the property services team at Bracknell Forest Council with regards to vacant units on the Longshot Lane industrial estate but have been advised that the Head Lease would not permit the proposed activities.
- 5.24 Officers will continue to explore options and are currently arranging visits to see the best examples of reuse shops already operated at FCC-run recycling centres.

Paint Reuse

- 5.25 At the meeting of the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board in October 2019, Officers presented a series of options in relation to the reuse of water-based paint received at the recycling centres.
- 5.26 Members agreed to replace the previous arrangement with an alternative, and Officers have since liaised further with the Contractor on the operation of an exchange area.
- 5.27 It is proposed that staff would make suitable paint available at the exchange area, located undercover at both re3 recycling centres, at the start of each day. This paint would then be available for re3 residents to take from the sites, free of charge, subject to the agreement of a suitable disclaimer.
- 5.28 The quantity of paint reused via this scheme would be measured through deducting the weight of the paint available at the start of the day, to the weight of the paint remaining at the end of the day.
- 5.29 The details of the proposal have been shared with the Environment Agency (EA) and the Contractor assesses that the EA are supportive of the plans, in the absence of any objections.
- 5.30 The Contractor has committed to make the scheme operational in February 2020, with Officers currently in the process of finalising details and drafting appropriate signage.

Barriers at Longshot Lane

- 5.31 In August 2019, a serious injury was caused to a resident and visitor to Longshot Lane Recycling Centre by a driver of a vehicle who was also visiting the site as a resident. As the incident is the subject of further proceedings/prosecution, Officers will not describe the specific details in this report.
- 5.32 Following any such incident, however, it is normal and correct to review all relevant activities and control measures.
- 5.33 Following this review, a walkway was created in front of the four large bays in the lower half of the site used for cardboard, wood and garden waste. This walkway is protected by temporary barriers designed to segregate pedestrians from vehicles.
- 5.34 In order to control waste which may otherwise spill out onto the footpath and into areas used by traffic, metal barriers have also been added within each of the bays used for cardboard and garden waste. Through requiring residents to place their waste behind the barriers, these help to maximise the capacity in the bays, and consequently, the availability of the site.
- 5.35 The metal barriers are of the type first used in the garden waste bays in February 2014. They are set at 1.1m in height, which is the minimum legal requirement and same height as the walls over which residents deposit their general waste. Site staff are also available to help with lifting bags, where such assistance is necessary.
- 5.36 Officers have liaised with Contractor staff regarding the use of permanent barriers for the walkway and the Contractor is subsequently working with operational and health and safety staff to consider suitable designs. They are also developing safe working procedures that will enable the contents of the bays in the Longshot Lane Recycling Centre to be 'pushed up' without the need for the whole site to be temporarily unavailable to residents.

Expiry Dates for Commercial and Commercial Type Vehicle Permits

- 5.37 Members will recall that residents must apply for a permit before each visit to the recycling centres, if using a commercial or commercial-type vehicle. This system was designed to enable usage to be monitored and abuse by traders identified.
- 5.38 As the follow up process required a significant amount of Officer time, an investigation began into ways in which the process could become less labour intensive, whilst continuing to deliver the expected savings.
- 5.39 In January 2019, Officers reported that due to the relatively low numbers of frequent users and resource limitations, the introduction of a limit on the number of permits that could be applied for per household was not proposed.
- 5.40 Instead, Officers advised that they were investigating ways in which permit usage could be monitored from the start of each contract year. This would have two main benefits. Firstly, the proposed amendment would provide a clear structure for making contact with residents and ensure that high frequency users know that their usage continues to be monitored. Residents would continue to be written to where they use nine or more permits in a 12 month period. Secondly, the amendment would enable the partnership to manage the size of the database, which has now become very large.
- 5.41 Officers have previously reported that a significant proportion of commercial vehicle users are utilising permits on the same day as they apply; rather than at least 24 hours in advance. These permits are not currently recognised by the ipads used by the Meet and Greet teams because data is only transferred from Reading Borough Council (as host of the application Webform), to FCC, once per day.
- 5.42 In order to monitor permit usage from the start of each contract year, permits will effectively expire at the end of each contract year and also be unrecognised by the system. In order to avoid confusion between same day permits and expired permits it was necessary to increase the frequency at which data from commercial vehicle permit applications is uploaded to the FCC database. This will have the added benefit of helping to ensure that users are not able to use the same permit on multiple occasions, potentially as a way of seeking to deposit trade waste at the tax-payers expense.
- 5.43 Officers have liaised with IT colleagues in Reading Borough Council, and with FCC, and now understand that this amendment will be made in January 2020.
- 5.44 As such, Officers propose to implement the new system from April 1st 2020.
- 5.45 Most permit users should be unaffected by the change because permits are designed to be applied for as and when they are needed, rather than a long way in advance. In particular the permit requires that details of the waste type being deposited are recorded. The main group of people who may be affected are residents who would expect to apply for a permit at the end of March, for use in early April. Officers will therefore ensure that the Webform is updated to highlight the change, a couple of months in advance.

Joint Policy on Contamination of Kerbside Collected MDR

- 5.46 As Members will be aware, there is a level of contamination present within the mixed dry recyclables (MDR) collected from the kerbside. As shown in Appendix One, levels

of non-target and non-recyclable material (excluding non-target paper and card) currently make up between 10% and 15% of the total.

- 5.47 As a high level of contamination can affect the ability of the MRF to process the good recyclables, Officers reported in October 2019 that the three Councils had agreed to work together to draft a joint contamination policy, setting out a phased approach for dealing with contaminated bins. WRAP had indicated that they could support the implementation of the policy in trial areas through the provision on funding and technical advice and Officers reported that they would keep Members informed of any developments including approval and implementation of the policy.
- 5.48 Following discussions with colleagues, a funding agreement with WRAP was signed on behalf of the re3 Partnership in December 2019. In addition the location of suitable areas, in which to trial the implementation of the policy, were identified. These areas will cover approximately 16,000 houses across the re3 area.
- 5.49 The project with WRAP will be formed of three stages, each lasting approximately three months. The first stage commenced in early December and relates to the collection of pre-implementation data; including MRF sampling results from the trial areas, information on the number of contaminated containers recorded by the collection crews the number of visits made to the Council's waste and recycling webpages. The second stage is the implementation of the contamination policy and is due to commence on the 23rd of March. During this stage a Recyclate Quality Officer will be employed to monitor the tagging of contaminated containers. The final stage relates to the collection of post-implementation data, and will conclude at the end of September. This stage will require the ongoing implementation of the policy, so that the number of stage four contamination incidents (as defined by the re3 Contamination Policy) can be monitored.
- 5.50 Prior to the commencement of stage two of the project, re3 Officers will work with WRAP and Council Colleagues in order to design communication leaflets to be delivered to all households in the trial areas, print contamination tags for use on contaminated containers and train crews and contact centre staff in relation to the new policy. In addition, an individual will be appointed as the Recyclate Quality Officer.
- 5.51 It is proposed that the outcomes of the project be reported the Members of the Joint Waste Disposal Board at the meeting of October 2020, with updates being provided as appropriate in April and July also.

6 COMMUNICATIONS

Plastic recycling

- 6.1 Based on the findings from compositional analysis of the residual waste undertaken in February 2019, mixed plastics had lower capture rate in comparison to other plastic items i.e. plastic bottles, equating to over 70% of recyclable plastic found in the residual household bins.
- 6.2 To reduce confusion and increase plastic recycling re3 Marketing and Communications Officer implemented recycling campaign: "Put a spin on your plastic recycling", promoting more information on recyclable plastic items, including publishing Plastic Recycling Guide, promoting TerraCycle drop off locations and placing adverts with similar theme in the Council Magazines.

- 6.3 Another element of the campaign was 'Plastic Recycling Wheel'. The wheel is a handy tool to help residents check what they can do with different types of plastic packaging or items. The wheels were sent to approx. 16,000 householders living in Warfield, Tilehurst and Woodley. The wheel was also distributed to the Council offices, public libraries, community hubs and displayed at the Recycling Centres and promoted via re3 and Councils social media channels. Following distribution, re3 received directly, via direct emails and on social media positive comments, complementing the concept.
- 6.4 Progress in plastic recycling campaign is measured by evaluating residents' response to the communication materials available on the website, social media, direct as well as is supported by MRF tonnages data and MRF sampling results of targeted rounds.
- 6.5 Officers will present further results from the campaign at the meeting of the Joint Waste Disposal Board in April.

Residency checks changes

- 6.6 During the JWDB meeting in October 2019, Members agreed that windscreen permits be no longer accepted as proof of residency at the re3 Recycling Centres from February 2020.
- 6.7 Changes to the residency checks were covered by BBC TV South and BBC Radio Berkshire and was aired in October what helped spreading the information. Local press team were invited to produce news report at the Smallmead Recycling Centres and several residents were interviewed. The reportage was positive with residents responding well or in neutral way towards announced changes.
- 6.8 In addition, re3 Marketing and Communication Officer communicated this information to residents using available re3 and Council channels such as:
- Placing relevant information on the re3 website and Waste Acceptance Policy;
 - Briefing Meet & Greet and Recycling Centres staff to communicate this information to visitors;
 - Displaying new signage at both HWRC sites;
 - Producing leaflets and large format posters displayed around the HWRC sites;
 - Issuing press release to local media, parishes and local organisations (coverage by key local outlets: [Berkshire Live](#), [Bracknell News](#), [The Wokingham Paper](#));
 - Placing editorial in the Borough News (Wokingham Council magazine);
 - Adding information to subsequent edition of re3 Monthly Newsletter as well as to Bracknell Forest e-newsletter sent out to Bracknell Forest Council e-card holders;
 - Publishing regular posts on re3 social media that were amplified by the Councils social accounts;
- 6.9 The information has appeared to be very engaging and outreaching significant number of residents, i.e. social media posts exceeding over 28,000 users organic reach.
- 6.10 Despite general neutral sentiment of received feedback, re3 noted concerns regarding this change ie. extended checks time. Positive feedback noted that many residents already is using other form of documentation and agreed that carrying

driving license is generally a common practice.

- 6.11 Following feedback, including from the Meet & Greet team and despite confidence that this information is wide-spread, Officers recommend adding supplementary condition to decision taken during the JWDB in October 2019 and allow unaware residents about changes who arrive only with windscreen permit, to access the Recycling Centres after 1st February 2020 for a period of six months. This will give residents a chance to hand-over their windscreen permits to site staff and ensure they bring one of the many forms of identification on their next visit.

Video assets

- 6.12 The re3 facilities continue to be popular with residents. The most recent User Satisfaction Survey, undertaken in September 2019, shows that overall 98% of users rate the public facilities as either 'Good' or 'Very Good'.
- 6.13 However, less is known about the other aspects of the re3 service – principally because while they are undertaken within the same facilities, they are not as visible and involve considerable amounts of work undertaken away from where residents can see what's going on. Some activities, such as the sorting and preparation of collected recyclables are essential in dealing with waste and recycling from re3 residents. Successful tours of the recycling facilities (the Material Recycling Facility, or MRF) have been offered over the last two years – and they've been 'sold out' on each occasion - but they, naturally, have a limited capacity.
- 6.14 Accordingly, the re3 Project Team has commissioned, and contributed to, the preparation of two series of videos about what happens to collected recycling and food waste.
- 6.15 Members of the re3 Board and officers have featured in the videos that provide insights into the recycling process from the moment of collection through sorting, baling and sending to the recycling companies. Both videos focus on benefits of recycling, allowing residents to feel reassured about their efforts.
- 6.16 Videos will be used as an educational tool and will be made available to interested community groups and schools. They will be also used to display during the educational sessions provided to young visitors, that unable to attend full tour of the MRF.
- 6.17 Videos will be published on the website and social media.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

Head of Legal Services

- 7.1 None for this report.

Corporate Finance Business Partner

- 7.2 None for this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 None.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

None

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Principal Groups Consulted

Not applicable.

8.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

8.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

Background Papers

None

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APPENDIX ONE – Objective C and D

Bracknell Forest

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance					
		Target/Indicator		Quarter 3		Equivalent Period 2018/19	
C1A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	Target: 43%		44.07%		39.91%	
C1B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	Target: 23%		23.82%		24.01%	
C1C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	9%		8%		8%	
C1E Contamination	<i>Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.</i>	Target	80.72%	Target	86.26%	Target	81.68%
		Non Target Paper and Card	3.10%	Non Target Paper and Card	2.52%	Non Target Paper and Card	3.06%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	16.17%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	11.22%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	15.26%

Reading

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance					
		Target/Indicator		Quarter 3		Equivalent Period 2018/19	
C2A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	Target: 39%		36.44%		32.03%	
C2B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	Target: 24%		20.42%		19.09%	
C2C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	11%		10%		11%	
C1E Contamination	<i>Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.</i>	Target	79.42%	Target	81.75%	Target	84.61%
		Non Target Paper and Card	2.68%	Non Target Paper and Card	3.78%	Non Target Paper and Card	2.35%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	17.90%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	14.48%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	13.04%

Wokingham

Category	Background	Cumulative Performance					
		Target/Indicator	Quarter 3	Equivalent Period 2018/19			
C3A Statutory Recycling Target	This target is the traditional 'recycling rate' target that should be comparable with other councils in the UK.	Target: 52%	53.46%	40.51%			
C3B Kerbside Recycling	Using the respective weekly council kerbside collections is an effective way to recycle. This indicator looks at this service alone.	Target: 26%	30.78%	22.74%			
C3C Including Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA)	<i>Despite displacing 'virgin' materials, the recycling of IBA into building blocks is not yet counted as 'recycling' by the Government. Nonetheless, re3 recognises the value of this activity.</i>	9%	8%	9%			
C1E Contamination	<i>Contamination is the term used to describe items which are not supposed to be present within recyclables. The level of contamination is, therefore, an indicator of the effectiveness of waste collection arrangements. It also has an impact on recycling because at high levels of contamination it can become harder to separate 'good' recyclables from the unwanted items.</i>	Target	77.53%	Target	76.54%	Target	83.78%
		Non Target Paper and Card	11.79%	Non Target Paper and Card	12.60%	Non Target Paper and Card	8.08%
		Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	10.68%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	10.86%	Other Non-Target and Non-Recyclable Material	8.14%

Recycling Centres

Category	Cumulative Performance		
	Target (2018/19)	Quarter 3	Equivalent Period 2018/19
D Longshot Lane	Target: 60%	73.07%	53.01%
D Smallmead	Target: 55%	78.62%	52.24%

Appendix Two – Trade Waste Pricing Structure at re3 Recycling Centres

Note: Materials in italics are additions to the original pricing structure.

Waste Type	Price per 25L bag or equivalent (Inc VAT)
Plasterboard	£3
Rubble (e.g. bricks, tiles, gravel, sand)	£3
Soil	£3
Bagged General Waste (Non-recyclable)	£1.50
Garden Waste	£1
Wood	£1
Paper and Cardboard	£0
Tins, Cans and Plastic Bottles, Pots, Tubs and Trays	£0
Glass Bottles and Jars	£0
Scrap Metal	£0
Textiles	£0
Waste Type	Price per single item (Inc VAT)
Rubble (e.g. ceramic/porcelain sink, toilet, shower tray)	£3
Bulky Residual Items (e.g. sofa, mattress, roll of carpet)*	£6
Small Electrical Items (e.g. kettle, toaster, radio)	£1
<i>Large Electrical Items (e.g. washing machine)**</i>	£2
<i>Computers, TVs and Monitors**</i>	£2
<i>Domestic Fridges and Freezers**</i>	£2
<i>Commercial Fridges and Freezers**</i>	£62 [#]
<i>Car and Motorcycle Tyres</i>	£2
<i>Ink Cartridges</i>	£1
Waste Type	Price per 5 Litre Container (Inc VAT)
<i>Engine Oil***</i>	£1
Waste Type	Price per 20kg (Inc VAT)
Asbestos	£8

* Non-hazardous items only.

** Only one item can be deposited, per category, per trip.

*** Price stated is for volumes up to and including 5 litres.

Please note that commercial fridges and freezers are not covered under our Producer Compliance Scheme and so attract a higher disposal charge than other items of waste electrical and electronic equipment.