

TO: JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD
9th January 2023

re3 REUSE REPORT
Report of the re3 Project Director

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides a briefing on reuse and reuse opportunities for the re3 Board
- 1.2 Reuse is an important part of sustainable waste management, and particularly important at a time of economic uncertainty.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Members note the contents of the briefing.**
- 2.2 **That Members indicate which of the options, if any, they would like officers and the Contractor to explore further, with the intention of returning to a subsequent re3 Board meeting with proposals.**

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 None for this report.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The current reuse provision, through the re3 contract and arrangements, is good. But it could be supplemented and/or improved by being developed further.
- 4.2 Further development could increase the profile of reuse, improve environmental outcomes and support residents, and the charity sector, during difficult economic times.

5 BRIEFING

- 5.1 Reuse has been a growing part of the shared service since the partnership first began to collect items for sale via Sue Ryder charity shops, in 2011. Since that time, over 438 tonnes of items have been passed to Sue Ryder. Sue Ryder has raised £161k as a result, through sales of donated items.
- 5.2 In October 2021, the re3 partnership opened its first, two-day, re3 Pop-up Reuse Shop at the Smallmead facility and a second was opened in October 2023, at Longshot Lane. Both events were organised and supported by the Contractor, who was responsible for gathering suitable items for reuse, arranging its storage and performing quality and safety checks.
- 5.3 The pop-up shops were promoted to the public using available re3 channels such as social media and the newsletter and was also publicised in the local news outlets.
- 5.4 During the events, visitors purchased and re-homed over 550, at a total weight of just over 4.7 tonnes. The most popular items were furniture, children's toys and bikes. All profit generated, was donated for a good cause, Sue Ryder.

- 5.5 Both events were very successful and received positive feedback. Visitors praised the concept, value of items and friendly behaviour of staff.
- 5.6 Other reuse activities include: (i) working with Pre-Cycle, a Reading-based company that specialise in reuse of 'bric-a-brac, mixed media, electrical items and clothing, via arrangements in Southern Asia and Europe. (ii) the free give-away of reusable paint, at our two Recycling facilities.
- 5.7 Reuse will continue to be important, for the following reasons:
- i. Reuse prolongs the useful life of a product, helping to reduce the environmental impact that may be experienced via recycling, disposal or for the manufacture of a new product.
 - ii. Reuse often results in a local transfer of ownership, helping to reduce the environmental impact from transport (such as in recycling or disposal).
 - iii. Reuse often reflects the pre-owned status of a product, and its sale, or transfer, is often at a lower financial cost than for a new product. This is particularly helpful for lower income residents, and during economically difficult times.
 - iv. Reuse through the re3 partnership represents a form of social value, an expected measure of all significant public sector contracts.
 - v. Reuse represents a commercial opportunity for the partnership and delivers revenue to all parties.
- 5.8 The re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board has been supportive of reuse activities over many years. This report, and accompanying presentation, are intended to brief the Board on the potential for future, and consistent, reuse activities.

Future Opportunities

- 5.9 The current level of reuse activity at the re3 sites is comparable with many other councils. However, the manner of the reuse provision may mean that it is not recognised as much as in other areas.
- 5.10 The above point principally relates to: (i) ensuring that excellent reuse arrangements reflect well on the councils and partnership (including the Contractor), (ii) that reuse is promoted amongst residents so that it grows as a viable and accepted means of waste avoidance and resource efficiency, and (iii) so that reuse is maximised for the opportunities it represents to address social exclusion and income inequality.
- 5.11 Accordingly, the accompanying presentation, from our Contractor, FCC, reflects upon at identifying opportunities that have been adopted elsewhere and could potentially be developed within the re3 area.
- 5.12 With a specific focus on repair, and to explore local opportunities to complement our current reuse offering, re3 Officers have reached out to the local Repair Cafes, to identify whether collaboration opportunities exist. The prospect is particularly viable now, as there are already established Repair Cafes in Reading and Wokingham Boroughs and a new setting is due to be opened within the Bracknell Forest boundaries.
- 5.13 The current representatives of the Repair Café expressed interest in working together and appreciated the new opportunities it may bring. An offer, of increased promotion of the current events, using re3 channels have been greatly appreciated.
- 5.14 All parties will work together on coordinating the dates of the future pop-up shops to

enable engagement with the Repair Cafes; further projects and ideas such as a repair workshops, upcycling opportunities, and development of propositions such as the Library of Things, can be explored.

Next Steps

- 5.15 Following the presentation, it is hoped that Members will indicate whether there are ideas and opportunities for reuse that officers, and the contractor, should purposefully explore further, for consideration at a subsequent re3 Board meeting.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

Head of Legal Services

- 6.1 No advice

Corporate Finance Business Partner

- 6.2 None for this report, as above.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 None.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

Climate Impact Assessment

- 6.5 None from the proposed consultation responses.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Principal Groups Consulted

Not applicable.

7.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

7.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

Background Papers

N/A

Contacts for further information

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