



SOUTH LONDON WASTE PARTNERSHIP

Report to: South London Waste Partnership Joint Committee

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Report of: South London Waste Partnership Management Group

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Chair of the Meeting:

Councillor Mike Brunt, Chair of the South London Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Report Title:

**Communications and Engagement
South London Waste Partnership - Phase A and Phase B contracts**

Summary

This paper provides an update to members of the South London Waste Partnership Joint Committee on communications and stakeholder engagement activities relating to the Partnership's Phase A (transport & residual waste management, HRRC services and marketing of recyclates) and Phase B (residual waste treatment) contracts.

This report focuses on activity that has taken place between September and November 2018.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and comment on any aspects of communications and engagement activities relating to the Phase A and Phase B contracts.

1. 'PLASTIC PLANET' CAMPAIGN

1.1 The 'Plastic Planet' public awareness campaign ran from 3 September to 5 November 2018. It used targeted paid-for social media advertising to:

- Highlight the fact that 79% of the plastic waste ever created is still in the environment – encouraging residents to reduce their use of single-use plastics and to recycle as much of their unavoidable plastic waste as possible.

- Utilise a series of short (15-second), eye-catching videos created by WRAP, focusing on the effects that plastic waste has on wildlife (sea life in particular) and the environment.
 - Be delivered via Facebook platforms to residents who live in the four SLWP boroughs (16-34 year olds in particular).
- 1.2 Total advertising spend on the Plastic Planet campaign was £5,448 (plus £2,050 agency costs). The campaign delivered the following results:
- **Reach = 177,876** (number of different people in the SLWP region who saw the campaign)
 - **Impressions = 932,905** (number of times one of the Plastic Planet videos was 'served' in someone's Facebook timeline)
 - **Click throughs to the SLWP website = 1,194**
 - **3 second views of the videos = 366,100**
 - **10 second views of the videos = 141,672**
 - **Cost per 10 second view = 4p** (*anything under 10p per 10 second view is widely considered in the industry to have performed well*)
 - **10 second views of the videos by borough:**
 - Sutton = 27,371
 - Croydon = 31,302
 - Merton = 50,417
 - Kingston = 32,582
- 1.3 The campaign performed very well, with a cost per 10-second view of just 4p and 1,200 click-throughs to supporting information on the SLWP website.
- 1.4 Engagement with the campaign was particularly strong in Merton - most likely as a result of the campaign going live at the same time as Merton introduced significant changes to the way recycling and rubbish is collected from households.
- 1.5 Given the success of this campaign, it is recommended that targeted Facebook video campaigns are used in the future as a cost-effective way of reaching a key target audience for the SLWP (residents aged 16-34 years).

2. 'DESTINATION: RECYCLING' CAMPAIGN

- 2.1 The four SLWP boroughs are making good progress in improving their recycling rates. This is being achieved through a combination of education campaigns and changes to collection services.
- 2.2 If recycling rates are to continue to rise it is vital that residents have faith that the SLWP is handling their recycling and waste materials responsibly. Trust is key.
- 2.3 Historically, there has been widespread cynicism amongst the public

around the country that not everything they sort out for recycling is actually recycled. This view is periodically reinforced by news reports of recycling being sent overseas and disposed of by rogue operators. This sows a seed of doubt in the minds of local people and inevitably has an impact on the amount of effort some are willing to put into sorting their materials prior to collection.

2.4 In 2010, independent social research carried out on behalf of the SLWP found that 31% of residents had 'serious concerns' that their council does not recycle everything it could. The good news is that trust has been improving in recent years. In 2012 only 27% had 'serious concerns' that their council does not recycle everything it could, and this fell further to 19% in 2015. It is vital that this trend of improving levels of trust continues.

2.5 Stated objectives of the SLWP Communications Strategy are to:

- Continue to reassure residents about where their recycling is taken and what it is turned in to.
- Be specific, wherever possible, about the destination of recyclable materials - giving the message authenticity and building trust.
- Reduce the proportion of residents who have 'serious concerns' that not everything they sort of recycling is actually recycled from 19% to 15%.

2.2 To help achieve these objectives, the SLWP Communications Advisor has recommended to the SLWP boroughs that existing funds in the 2018/19 SLWP communications budget are used to commission a specialist film production company to produce a short film (no more than 5 minutes) that tells the story of what happens to recycling and waste after its been collected from the doorstep.

2.3 It is also recommended that 10-second 'trailers' are produced for the short film. These trailers can be used as the basis of a targeted 'Destination: Recycling' Facebook campaign in 2019/20, driving traffic to the short film (following the success of Plastic Planet – see Section 1).

2.4 Five specialist film production companies have been sent a detailed Brief and have been invited to submit proposals. The following indicative timetable has been set:

- December 2018 - evaluation of proposals and awards of contract
- January 2019 - mobilisation and planning
- February 2019 - filming and production
- March 2019 - launch of short film
- April 2019 - launch of film trailers via targeted social media campaign

3. PHASE A BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Phase A contracts encompass transport & residual waste management, HRRC services and marketing of recyclates.
- 3.2 From a communications and stakeholder engagement perspective, the elements of the Phase A contracts that are of most significance are:
- the management of the six Household Reuse, and Recycling Centres (HRRCs), and
 - the landfill operations at Beddington.

4. HOUSEHOLD REUSE AND RECYCLING CENTRES (HRRCs)

- 4.1 This contract is operated by Veolia on behalf of the Partnership.
- 4.2 A trial of a new HRRC scheme for vans and large vehicles is due to start at Villiers Road (Kingston) and Kimpton Park Way (Sutton) in December 2018. Under the pilot scheme, people visiting the two HRRC sites in qualifying vehicles (van, pick-up truck, minibus (with 10 seats or more), a vehicle with panels instead of rear windows or vehicles with rear seats permanently removed) will need to register the day before via an online form.
- 4.3 The aim of the new scheme is to prevent the illegal use of the sites by rogue traders. This will save local taxpayers money and shorten the queue times for genuine site users.
- 4.4 The SLWP Communications Advisor is providing Veolia, Kingston and Sutton with communications support. Key communications materials developed include:
- Large posters for displaying on A-frames at the site entrances
 - Leaflets for site staff to hand out to site users in larger vehicles
 - Press release
 - Social media posts
 - Copy for borough websites
- 4.5 Key dates for the introduction of the scheme are:
- Monday 19 November: Press release, social media and posters/leaflets on site for two weeks
 - Monday 3 December: Soft launch for 4 weeks (qualifying vehicles that arrive without pre-registering will complete the Google Form on site for their 1st visit)
 - Monday 31 December (Start of week 5) - qualifying vehicles turned away if they have not pre-registered.

5. BEDDINGTON LANDFILL OPERATIONS

- 5.1 This contract is operated by Viridor on behalf of the Partnership.

- 5.2 The focus of communications and engagement activities has been two-fold:
- Educating local residents and key stakeholders about the landfill operations at Beddington – i.e. how it is providing vital waste disposal capacity for hundreds of thousands of local households and businesses and how the site is being managed in order to minimise any negative environmental impacts;
 - Providing information on how the 120-hectare Beddington Farmlands site (which incorporates the landfill) is being restored into a rich patchwork of habitats for wildlife with public access.
- 5.3 There are no significant communications and engagement updates since the last Committee meeting in September 2018.

6. PHASE B BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Phase B contract (residual waste treatment) was awarded to Viridor in 2009. In order to fulfill the contract, Viridor are constructing a £205m state-of-the-art Energy Recovery Facility in Beddington that will become operational in late 2018. Household waste from the four Partner boroughs that has not been sorted by residents for recycling will be treated at the facility and turned into electricity.
- 6.2 The SLWP Communications Advisor continues to work closely with Viridor to:
- Ensure Viridor are meeting their contractual requirements with regards to communications and stakeholder engagement around the construction of the Beddington ERF
 - Ensure local people understand why it is we need an ERF and provide reassurance around the safety of modern, well-run facilities such as this
 - Ensure the Partnership understands the views of local people with regards to waste treatment and ERF technologies in particular.

7. BEDDINGTON ERF COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 A visit to the Beddington ERF by Members of the Joint Committee (accompanied by senior officers from the boroughs) took place on 7 November 2018.
- 7.2 The visit included a presentation by Viridor, a tour of the ERF construction site and a presentation and 'Question & Answer' session with Louise McGoochan, Regulatory Officer at the Environment Agency (who has responsibility for monitoring the Beddington site). A Briefing Note of the Q&A session with the Environment Agency Officer can be found appended to agenda item 5).

- 7.3 The Beddington ERF is nearing completion and is currently in its commissioning phase – when each component and process is tested to ensure it is operating correctly and within the strict emissions limits.
- 7.4 With the ERF due to become operational soon, attention is now focused on how the local community and other stakeholders will be engaged with once commissioning is complete and the ERF is treating all the Partnership’s residual waste.
- 7.5 The SLWP continues to work closely with Viridor to develop the ERF visitor and community engagement offering (Members were provided with a detailed update at the September 2018 meeting of this Committee). This will include:
- An on-site Education Centre
 - Guided tours of the facility
 - A Virtual Visitor Centre (web-based)
 - Publication of continuous emissions monitoring data
 - Schools engagement programme
 - Community newsletter
 - Community Liaison Group meetings

8. IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Legal

- 8.1 None

Finance

- 8.2 The South London Waste Partnership’s Communications Advisor post is funded through the core activities budget.
- 8.3 A £25,000 Communications Budget is available to support communications and engagement activities.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and comment on any aspects of communications and engagement activities relating to the Phase A and Phase B contracts