

AMENDED AGENDA

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 12 April 2016
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors D Mortimer, Newton, Mrs Parvin,
Perry, Mrs Ring (Chairman),
Mrs Robertson, Webb, Webster and
J.A. Wilson

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Urgent Items
4. Notification of Visiting Members
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers

Continued Over/:

Issued on Wednesday 6 April 2016

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Caroline Matthews on 01622 602743**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

6. Disclosures of Lobbying
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.
8. Minutes (Part I) of the Meeting held on 15 March 2016
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)
10. Questions and answer session for members of the public (if any)
11. Reference from Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee - Draft Low Emission Strategy
12. Reference from Licensing Committee - Licensing Partnership: London Borough of Bexley
13. Report of the Head of Housing and Community Services - Response to Referral from Council on Young People and Homelessness
14. Report of the Head of Housing and Community Services - Unauthorised Development Matrix
15. Report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm - Review of Waste Strategy 2014-19 1 - 28

PART II

To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part II of the Agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reasons specified having applied the Public Interest Test.

Head of Schedule 12 A and Brief Description

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| 16. Minutes (Part II) of the Meeting held on 15 March 2016 | Para 3 – Information re financial/business affairs |
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Communities, Housing and Environment

12th April 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Review of Waste Strategy 2014-2019

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Head of Environment & Public Realm
Lead Officer and Report Author	Waste Management Officer
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. Notes progress made so far against the objectives set out in the Waste Strategy 2014 – 2019 (Appendix A)
2. Revises the target for recycling, reuse and composting to 55% by 2020; and
3. Agrees a new target to be included in the Waste Strategy of achieving less than 8% contamination of recycling; and
4. Agrees the action plan to support the waste strategy, included in Appendix D

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Great Place - Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – the strategy supports improvements to the waste and recycling service, ensuring waste is managed in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive manner

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Corporate Leadership Team	5 April 2016
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	12 April 2016

Review of Waste Strategy 2014-19

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report reviews the performance of our current waste strategy (Appendix A); and
 - 1.2 Identifies areas for targeting work and focusing areas for improvement as highlighted in a recent waste composition analysis
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council initially adopted a 5 year waste strategy in order to provide a focused and target driven approach to managing waste in Maidstone. This strategy set a number of targets including a recycling rate of 50% and a reduction in total waste by 2015.
- 2.2 The Strategy followed the waste hierarchy by identifying actions which would reduce, reuse and recycle waste where possible, including the introduction of weekly food waste collections alongside fortnightly refuse collections in 2011.
- 2.3 During this time, the new Mid Kent Waste Contract was implemented in partnership with Ashford and Swale Borough Councils and Kent County Council. This contract saved Maidstone Borough Council over £1 million per year and significantly improved the recycling services, including enhanced kerbside recycling collections of glass, textiles and small electrical items.
- 2.4 These actions resulted in the Council achieving the targets with the Strategy a year early, with the recycling rate rising from 34% to peaking at over 50% in the final quarter of 2013/14.
- 2.5 In 2014, a new 5 year waste strategy was adopted which set more ambitious targets of 60% recycling by 2019 and zero waste to landfill by 2015/16, building upon the successes of the previous waste strategy.
- 2.6 The Strategy was set against a backdrop of uncertainty within the industry with the new Waste Framework Directive coming into force from 1 January 2015, requiring Councils to provide separate recycling collections of paper, plastic, metals and glass.
- 2.7 In 2014, the Council carried out a Necessity and Technically, Economically and Environmentally Practicable (TEEP) test to determine whether the Council's existing commingled recycling service met the requirements under the Directive.
- 2.8 Whilst the results of the Necessity Test deemed that the Council's service met the requirements of the Directive and it was not necessary to make changes to the Service, a number of actions were identified which have been implemented as part of the 2014-19 Waste Strategy.

- 2.9 One key focus of the Necessity and TEEP assessment is with the quality of recycle. Currently Maidstone's contamination rate averages around 9.5% and so working to decrease the percentage of contamination will improve our recycling rate and the quality of materials sent for reprocessing.

Achievements

- 2.10 Over the past 2 years, the focus of the service has been on behavioural change as opposed to the large service changes previously implemented:
- 2.11 **The Big Maidstone Food Waste Challenge Incentive Scheme** – The Council was successfully awarded funding from the DCLG to offer a residents' incentive scheme to encourage and reward use of the weekly food collection service. The uptake of this has been fairly slow despite incentives including shopping vouchers and free swims.
- 2.12 **Flats weekly food waste collections** – The Council has extended the weekly food waste recycling service to flats which have been assessed as suitable for the service and altered their refuse and recycling collection frequency to alternate fortnightly collections. New recycling containers with different apertures and reusable bags have also been piloted to determine their success at encouraging recycling.
- 2.13 **Door-knocking** – A door-knocking campaign was implemented to identify and address residents' barriers to using the service as well as providing information about the final destination of their food waste and recycling.
- 2.14 **Composition analysis** – Analysis of the waste thrown away by residents has not been undertaken since 2008, prior to the significant service changes implemented and therefore it was considered necessary to understand what residents are throwing away in order to deliver behavioural change. Analysis of the contents of the refuse, recycling and food waste bins of different ACORN socio-demographics was carried out in November 2015. A summary of the results is included in Appendix B.
- 2.15 **Design a Dustcart Competition** - a competition to design livery for one dustcart was run for primary schools within the Borough. The aim of this was to engage children with recycling and asked them to provide a design which showed why they felt recycling was important. Assemblies and workshops were also carried out in some schools to support the understanding of recycling. This has formed part of the wider communication campaign which has included roadshows, adverts, press releases and improvements to the website.
- 2.16 **Refreshed vehicle livery** – the images on the sides of the refuse and recycling vehicles have been refreshed to support the wider campaign to encourage residents to recycle specific items including kitchen and bathroom items such as detergent bottles and cereal boxes.

- 2.17 **Kent-wide Communications** – the Council has worked with the Kent Resource Partnership to deliver Kent-wide messages about recycling kitchen and bathroom products and Metal Matters, a metal recycling campaign. Leaflets have been delivered to all households to increase awareness of what can be recycled and to increase the capture of recyclable materials including plastics, metals and cardboard packaging.
- 2.18 **Informational Leaflet** – a new recycling leaflet has been designed and is due to be delivered to all households in the next few weeks. This has been designed to improve awareness of the services provided and remind residents about what can be recycled as well as the benefits of recycling.
- 2.19 **Street sweeping recycling** – work has been undertaken to secure an outlet for street sweepings to enable them to be recycled. This is due to start in the next month.

Results

2.20 The actions taken to increase awareness and change recycling behaviours to capture more recycling has had the following impact on the objectives:

2.21 **Objective 1:** *To maintain low levels of total household waste and recycling at the levels achieved in 2011/12 of 813kg per household*

The Service is continuing to work towards this target through the promotion of waste minimisation and reduction initiatives and increased engagement with residents. In 2014/15, the Borough achieved 833kg per household. Nationally, trends have shown levels of waste increasing and is likely to be, in part, a result of the improving financial climate.

2.22 **Objective 2:** *To increase the amount of household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting to 60%*

Despite significant focus on improving awareness of the services, recycling levels have plateaued just below 50%. National trends have shown reductions in recycling rates of high performing Councils, which in many cases has been attributed to the waste minimisation measures employed by major retailers to reduce the packaging content of their products. An example of this is the reduction of plastic in fizzy drinks bottles creating light weight products. Whilst this supports the waste hierarchy and Maidstone's objective to reduce waste, as the majority of these items are recycled, it is having a negative impact on recycling rates. Compared with other authorities across Kent, Maidstone's recycling rate has remained stable and continued to increase marginally. The majority of other Kent authorities have experienced decreases in recycling rates over the past 12 months. Appendix C shows the comparison of recycling rates across Kent.

In addition, the waste compositional analysis has highlighted increases in garden waste being thrown away in the refuse bin along with the type of food waste which is not being captured by the food waste recycling service. This has highlighted that the service has become uninteresting and residents need to be

re-engaged with the benefits of recycling. The incentive scheme is an example of one approach of exploring how to encourage residents to re-engage with recycling.

2.23 Objective 3: *To achieve zero waste to landfill by 2015/16*

Recently published information for Maidstone shows that for 2014/15 only 0.3% of Maidstone's waste was sent to landfill. The only waste sent to landfill is bulky waste and waste collected by the Saturday Freighter, which has now been discontinued. With the withdrawal of the Saturday Freighter service and planned activities to work with 3rd sector reuse organisations, we expect this low figure to continue to be minimised. Whilst the Strategy target is zero to landfill, this was considered aspirational and therefore the level achieved is exceptionally low.

2.24 Objective 4: *To maintain value for money of the waste collection service and achieve a cost per household below £40 per year.*

For 2014/15 the cost per household of the waste collection service was £37.41. The current joint waste collection contract has delivered savings in excess of £1 million per annum for Maidstone and by continuing to increase recycling further the Council may benefit from a share of any additional waste disposal savings. The Council is committed to work with the Partnership and Kent County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, to maximise the value obtained from recyclates through effective procurement and improving the quality of recycling collected.

2.25 Objective 5: *To improve residents' satisfaction with Maidstone Borough Council's waste and recycling services.*

Recent satisfaction results show that overall satisfaction with the service remains the same as the last survey complete in 2013, however there was an increase of 3% in those 'very satisfied' with the service. The current satisfaction levels are 82% satisfied with the refuse and recycling collection service.

2.26 Objective 6: *To support the Council's objective of 3% annual carbon reduction by 2015 and to continue to contribute to the Council's Carbon Management Plan in order to meet the targets set out in the Kent Environment Strategy*

2.27 By continuing to follow the principles of the waste hierarchy we can promote waste prevention and minimisation, including home composting, which will reduce the transportation requirements and subsequent carbon footprint of the service. Since the start of the new contract, there has been a significant reduction in the number of vehicles being used for the service. The Council is also working with Kent County Council, the waste disposal authority, to minimise the distance waste travels and to identify reprocessors and recycling outlets within Kent and the UK.

Conclusion

- 2.28 This report outlines the progress being made against the targets set in the approved 5 year Waste Strategy, which has provided focus and helps to ensure that decisions are taken which will support the Service's vision and the waste hierarchy.
- 2.29 Having a clear direction for the Service also ensures other stakeholders, including Kent County Council have a clear understanding of how services are likely to integrate and enable more effective planning of waste flows.
- 2.30 However it is important that the Strategy reflects the national and local landscape and whilst remaining ambitious, it should drive performance rather than provide an aspiration horizon.
- 2.31 The report sets out the reasons for revising the recycling target from 60% by 2019 to a more realistic target of 55% by 2020, based on progress to date, national trends in recycling and waste prevention measures being employed across the Country. The new target will remain above the EU target of 50% by 2020 and continue to contribute to the longer term EU target of 65% recycling by 2030.
- 2.32 The recommendation that a new target is included in the Waste Strategy to achieve a contamination rate of less than 8% is intended to ensure that the Service focuses on maximising the quality of the recycling collected through the elimination of contaminants.
- 2.33 The annual action plan, set out in Appendix D, has been designed to achieve the strategic objectives through targeting the waste streams identified in the waste compositional analysis, direct engagement and further educational work with children of all ages. The Action Plan will be monitored against recycling performance in order to determine the effectiveness of various approaches to increase capture rates, reduce contamination and increase recycling levels.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee could agree the recommendations outlined on page one of this report, specifically:
- Notes progress made so far against the objectives set out in the Waste Strategy 2014 – 2019 (Appendix A)
 - Revises the target for recycling, reuse and composting to 55% by 2020; and
 - Agrees a new target to be included in the Waste Strategy of achieving less than 8% contamination of recycling; and
 - Agrees the action plan to support the waste strategy, included in Appendix D

- 3.2 Alternatively the Committee could reject the recommendations made within this report and propose alternative actions are explored.
- 3.3 The Committee could decide to reject the recommendations and decide that the existing waste strategy should be retained.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is to implement the recommendations contained within the report. These actions have been identified to support the Council’s continued commitment to delivering cost effective and sustainable waste and recycling services and takes into account recent EU targets and waste legislation.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 Results from the residents satisfaction survey recently completed that broadly, satisfaction across the demographic areas for refuse and recycling collections is similar to that of 2013. The age profile of those surveyed is similar to that seen in 2013. The 25 to 34 years age group have the lowest levels of satisfaction and the over 75’s have the highest rate. Satisfaction improved for four age groups, the greatest being the 45 to 54 year olds group which had a 5% increase in satisfaction. The results also showed an increase of 3% in those ‘very satisfied’ with the service.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Waste Strategy will be updated to reflect the amended recycling target and will continue to be promoted through the website.
- 6.2 The Action Plan contained in Appendix D will be implemented.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – the proposals support this priority by continuing to encourage and support responsible waste disposal and reuse and recycling.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Risk Management	Failure to communicate how to use the service could result in residents not engaging and not manage their	Head of Environment and Public

	<p>waste correctly.</p> <p>Failure to meet the EU target of 50% recycling of household waste by 2020 may result in financial penalties.</p> <p>Recycling performance will continue to be monitored monthly to determine the effectiveness of the actions.</p>	Realm
Financial	Finances required to provide the actions set out will be covered by the existing recycling budget and the external funding awarded to the Council for the incentive scheme by the Department for Government and Local Communities (DLCG)	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Staffing	The activities highlighted in the action plan can be carried out with the current staff structure. Where additional staff are required, for example to complete a door knocking campaign, this will be funded through the existing service budget and the DCLG incentive funding.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Legal	The council has a duty to provide a household waste collection service.	Head of Legal
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	None – there is no proposal to change the services provided	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The waste strategy and proposed action plan offer the most sustainable service to Maidstone tax payers and focus on reducing the Council's impact on the environment through waste prevention, minimisation, reuse and recycling.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Community Safety	None	
Human Rights Act	None	
Procurement	None	
Asset Management	None	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A – Waste Strategy 2014 - 2019

- Appendix B - Summary of Compositional Analysis
 - Appendix C – Comparison of recycling performance across Kent
 - Appendix D – Action Plan
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Waste Strategy 2014-2019



Introduction

Over the past 5 years, Maidstone Borough Council has demonstrated its commitment to deliver cost effective and sustainable waste and recycling services. This has included the introduction of comprehensive recycling collections, notably a weekly food waste service and a fully co-mingled collection of paper, cardboard, cans, glass and plastic packaging.

In 2010, the Council adopted its first five-year Waste Strategy to outline the key principles for waste management in Maidstone and set ambitious targets for reducing waste and increasing recycling. By following the principles of the waste hierarchy, the Council achieved the objectives set out in this strategy in 2013/14.

In August 2013, Maidstone Borough Council joined with Ashford and Swale Borough Councils and Kent County Council to deliver the Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership. Waste collection and some elements of street cleansing are now operated by Biffa Municipal Limited across the three boroughs. The new collection contract has delivered significant savings for the Council, in excess of £1 million per year, whilst improving services for local residents.

As part of the Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership, Maidstone Borough Council will benefit from shared disposal savings generated from reductions in waste arisings and through increased recycling.

This new strategy looks to build upon the successful service improvements introduced over the past few years and set new objectives for the next five years.

As part of the Kent Resource Partnership, Maidstone Borough Council continues to support the Kent Waste Strategy which was refreshed in 2012/13.

This focuses on three key policy areas: Materials Security and Resource Efficiency; Value for Money for Kent Taxpayers; and Supporting Kent's Interests

These are reflected in Maidstone's vision and the objectives set out in this strategy.

Nationally, the government carried out a review of waste policies in England in 2010 and has recently issued guidance regarding waste collections. Following this the government set out their principle commitments which included managing waste in line with the waste hierarchy, supporting incentives, improving the quality of collections and making it easier for people to recycle. This strategy supports these commitments and the government's ambition for a zero waste economy.

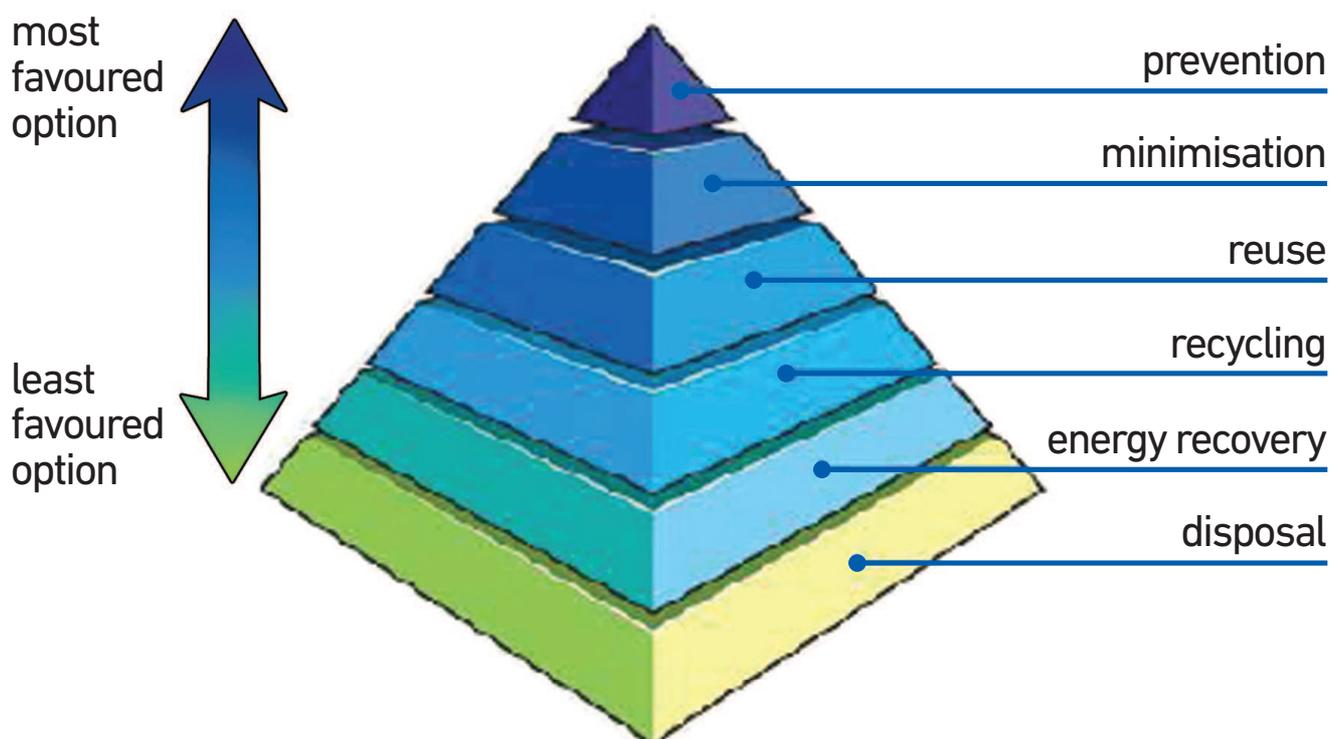


The revised EU Waste Framework Directive has also now been adopted into UK legislation and the key focus is on the quality of recycle as well as the application of the waste hierarchy into UK legislation. The EU Directive requires the separate collection of paper, metal, plastic and glass by 2015 and there is currently national debate regarding the acceptable quality of these recyclables through co-mingled collections. Separate collections are required where they are “technically, environmentally and economically practicable” (TEEP) otherwise co-mingled collections will be allowed. The Council is committed to ensuring the recycling services meet the requirements and that quality recycling is collected.

This strategy supports the revised directive, the recycling targets set and the collection of high quality recyclables.

This is the second Waste Strategy that the Council has produced and will sit alongside the Council’s medium term plans (Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan).

Whilst the Council launched a commercial waste service in 2013/14, this will not be included as part of this Strategy. Commercial waste is required by law to be measured separately to household waste and therefore will be excluded from the Waste Strategy.



Our Vision

Overall the Council wants Maidstone Borough to be a great place to live and one that provides value for money for local taxpayers. For waste services this is to provide an excellent service which will reduce waste, ensure sustainable and cost effective recycling collections and enable Maidstone residents to achieve high levels of participation.

Objectives - what are we going to do?

In order to achieve the vision for the future of the service, the following objectives are proposed:

1. To maintain low levels of total household waste and recycling at the level achieved in 2011/12 of 813kg per household
2. To increase the amount of household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting to 60% by 2019
3. To achieve zero waste to landfill by 2015/16
4. To maintain the value for money of the waste collection service and achieve a cost per household below £40 per year
5. To improve residents' satisfaction with Maidstone Borough Council's waste and recycling services
6. To support the Council's objective of 3% annual carbon reduction by 2015 and to continue to contribute to the Council's Carbon Management Plan in order to meet the targets set out in the Kent Environment Strategy.

How are we going to do it?

In order to achieve the objectives and ultimately the vision for Maidstone's waste and recycling services, there needs to be a combination of innovative service improvements and targeted promotion. Priority will be given to development options which best support the objectives and principles of the waste hierarchy, starting with waste prevention as the most favourable option.

1. Waste Prevention

Waste prevention primarily focuses on the avoidance of waste from manufacturers and retailers; however it is important that residents are aware of ways they can also help. This will remain a key message throughout the educational campaigns, with advice about avoiding products with excessive packaging and using their consumer power to force manufacturers to improve their sustainability.

The Council also supports the Kent Resource Partnership's "Fresher for Longer" campaign with Marks and Spencer which aims to prevent the unnecessary waste of food. Information will be provided to residents at promotional events and on the Council's website..

2. Waste Minimisation

This is a key priority for the Council and it is important that local residents understand the

benefits of reducing the amount of waste they throw away. All options which support this priority will be considered by the Council.

Following the introduction of comprehensive recycling collections and fortnightly refuse collections, the total amount of waste produced by residents in the borough reduced by 11%. This was an incredible achievement and was the result of residents having a better understanding of what they threw away, especially in relation to food waste.

It is essential that residents understand what happens to the waste they throw away. Therefore the Council will carry out an engagement campaign to identify the potential barriers to recycling as well as possible incentives to promote waste reduction.

The majority of methods to encourage waste minimisation are through education and increasing public awareness, including the use of the Love Food Hate Waste campaign. The Council recently carried out a large recycling event in Jubilee Square which incorporated a Love Food Hate Waste roadshow with cooking demonstrations. This gained a large amount of publicity and was well supported by local residents. Waste minimisation initiatives such as this will continue along with school workshops and community events.

The Council also continues to promote home composting as this offers two major benefits; the composting of garden waste and vegetable peelings produces nutritious plant food whilst also reducing the amount of waste which needs to be collected for disposal or treatment. Although the recycling of garden waste through the kerbside collection or the Household Waste Recycling Centre is preferable to disposing of it in landfill or burning it, reducing



the amount of garden waste collected significantly reduces the transportation and energy requirements, providing environmental and financial benefits. The Council currently promotes subsidised home compost bins in order to encourage residents to use this option for waste reduction over the alternatives. The scheme has continued to be popular over the past few years and will be monitored throughout 2014/15 to identify ways to increase uptake year on year.

3. Reuse

The reuse of items, such as furniture, is a very effective way of reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal.

Alongside the fortnightly rubbish collection, the Council operates a bulky waste collection and Saturday freighter service which enable residents to dispose of unwanted household items. Unfortunately neither of these services currently supports the Council's objectives as the waste is sent to landfill, the least favourable option of the waste hierarchy.

In order to reduce unnecessary waste, it is important that these services are reviewed and more sustainable options are identified. Many items collected through these services have the potential for being reused or recycled, whilst for other items there are already better disposal options available.

The existing bulky collection and Saturday freighter services do not allow items to be reused or recycled easily. The waste is currently mixed together and in the case of the Saturday freighter, it is crushed by the vehicle. Discussions have already taken place with private and voluntary sector organisations regarding the reuse of furniture and electrical items, however the current arrangements limit the opportunities.

The Council will combine these services into a single service which aims to separate reusable items either by signposting residents to a voluntary sector organisation or through separate collections for reusable items.

Another key area for improvement is the reuse of textiles. The Council launched a kerbside collection of textiles in August 2013; however uptake has been fairly low. Promotion of this service is essential to improve participation; however this will be carried out alongside the existing promotion of charity shops and textile banks within the borough.

Smaller scale reuse also plays a fundamental role in the educational activities, with workshops and school assemblies showing children how to reuse everyday items into fun creativity. These remain an essential part of the Council's comprehensive educational campaign along with fostering children's imaginations through challenges and competitions.

4. Recycling

Following the expansion of recycling services in 2013, Maidstone's recycling rate increased from 45% to nearly 50%, however it is important that the Council maintains this performance and looks to build upon this success in the future. Despite the improvements, participation levels have declined over the past 2 years. It is essential that the Council focuses on re-engaging local residents and communities and promote the huge benefits of recycling more.

Recent informational visits to local authorities with similar recycling services have shown that a recycling rate of 60% is ambitious but achievable.

The Council intends to achieve a recycling rate of 60% by 2019 through the implementation of the following improvements to the existing recycling service:

Recycling for Residents living in Flats

There are over 7,000 flats in Maidstone, many of which have weekly collections of rubbish. Recycling bins have been provided for many of these, however there is little incentive for residents to use them and they regularly become contaminated with general rubbish.

It is essential that residents living within flats are encouraged to recycle and options which make recycling easier will be explored. A key step will be to bring collections in line with those provided to individual houses and apply a single policy across all housing stock. This will include limiting the amount of rubbish collected.

Communal food waste bins will also be provided to flats along with kitchen caddies to help



residents separate food waste in their kitchen.

Extra recycling bins will also be provided where needed and the Council will work with managing agents and landlords to encourage residents to separate their recycling correctly. Direct engagement with residents through face to face activity as well as providing welcome packs and posters will be used. Where possible, recycling points will be designed with the support of managing agents and landlords in order to improve accessibility and visual appearance.

Street Litter Recycling

Although Maidstone has previously trialled on-street recycling bins unsuccessfully, there is still a significant opportunity to recycle more from the litter collected from our streets.

Many other authorities have introduced on-street recycling bins which are clearly visible and can be differentiated from other litter bins. These have been very successful and therefore Maidstone will identify other options to separate litter using on-street recycling bins.

A significant amount of litter collected manually or mechanically can still be recycled. Therefore the Council will explore all opportunities to separate this recycling, including using recycling sacks on the hand-barrows and working with Kent County Council to procure an outlet for waste from the mechanical sweepers.

Extra Recycling Capacity

Currently households who produce more recycling than can fit in their recycling bin or black box are able to leave extra recycling next to it. This can be difficult and unfortunately many residents appear to stop recycling when their bin or box is full.

The Council will engage with residents to identify options for increasing the capture of recycling, particularly when their bin or box is full.

Initially a trial of clear recycling sacks will be explored with residents who currently are not able to store wheeled bins. Opportunities to make these sacks available to other residents via local retailers will also be investigated.

5. Energy Recovery

Maidstone's priority is to reduce the overall volume of waste requiring treatment and maximise diversion of waste from energy recovery to recycling and reuse. Energy recovery however presents a more favourable option to disposal through landfill. Therefore household waste which cannot be reused or recycled will be sent for energy recovery wherever possible. The Allington Energy from Waste (EfW) facility allows the recovery of energy from the majority of Maidstone's household waste.

6. Disposal

Disposal is the least favourable option as it is costly both environmentally and financially. Maidstone Borough Council is committed to maximising the diversion of waste away from disposal.

At present the only waste which is sent to landfill from Maidstone is bulky waste collected through the bulky waste service and the Saturday freighter. The Council is committed to achieving zero waste to landfill by 2015 with the support of Kent County Council, the waste disposal authority.

Public engagement and community ownership

The key to achieving the targets set out in this strategy will be engaging with the public and ensuring they understand the importance of managing their rubbish effectively, by reducing, reusing and recycling as much as possible.

Throughout the implementation of the Strategy, customer satisfaction will be measured and feedback sought in order to understand residents' views to waste reduction, reuse and recycling. This information will be used to focus campaigns on dispelling myths and overcoming barriers as well as ensuring initiatives with proven results are prioritised.

The following campaigns will be implemented to increase public engagement and community ownership:

Doorknocking

A widespread face to face engagement campaign will be carried out to firstly understand the barriers to recycling and then to dispel some of the myths and improve awareness.

It is important that this campaign compliments the service improvements, for example it will be carried out to support increasing recycling in flats.

Think Green NOT Grey

A comprehensive campaign to encourage residents to recycle more and promote awareness that most items can now be recycled will be launched. This will include branding of the services, information stickers on residents' wheeled bins and roadshow events.

Resident feedback has demonstrated that some are still confused about what can be recycled and if in doubt the items are often thrown away. It is important to change this behaviour so recycling is considered in the first instance and only the few non-recyclable items are put in the rubbish bin.

Monitoring of the campaign's success will help shape it going forward. This will enable new initiatives to be trialled following feedback from residents about barriers to recycling.

A strong brand will be created to ensure that residents can relate to the services and understand what happens beyond the bin being left out for collection.

Incentives

The use of incentives to encourage recycling has been trialled widely across the UK following recent government support. These vary greatly from complex loyalty point systems to simple raffle prizes; however overall have been found to have a positive impact on recycling.

The Council will explore options to introduce an incentive for local residents to regularly participate in the recycling services. Due to the high administrative requirements, a complex loyalty card scheme will not be considered, however other incentives will be identified.

Reuse and Recycling Directory

An online reuse and recycling directory will be designed to help residents understand what can be recycled as well as some more innovative ideas on recycling and reuse around the home. This will be used in conjunction with the other campaigns to help boost recycling awareness and increase capture rates.

Recycling Champions

Prior to the launch of the weekly food waste collections in January 2011, the service was trialled with some "foodies". Testimonials from these residents were used to great effect on the radio, website and in the local press.

Using local residents who are already committed to recycling to engage with others less interested will help reinforce the Council's key messages. A recycling champion scheme will be set up to identify key people within the community who would be happy to assist with the promotion of recycling services

Social Media

Social media is becoming an increasingly important tool to engage with people in a more informal way. The Council already uses Twitter and Facebook to promote services, however there is still a greater potential to use these to spread wider recycling and reuse messages. The use of social media will be incorporated into all awareness campaigns in the future.

Financial implications

Over the past three years, Maidstone has significantly improved the efficiency of the waste and recycling services. Joining in partnership with Ashford and Swale Borough Councils and Kent County Council has enabled Maidstone to save in excess of £1 million per year. At the same time, services have also been improved with enhanced recycling collections and weekly food waste collections. The Services are projected to cost £2.5 million in 2014/15, which is in the region of £38 per household. However, the contract price will be reviewed annually to take into account property growth and inflation.

By increasing recycling above 50%, Maidstone will benefit from a share in any additional savings generated by Kent County Council through reduced disposal costs and additional recyclate income. Whilst the specific financial benefits of exceeding 50% are currently unknown, if recycling levels are not maintained costs are expected to increase. The Council will continue to work with Ashford and Swale Borough Councils and Kent County Council to maximise the value of recyclate and manage the share of profits across the Partnership.

The costs of implementing this strategy will predominantly be met from the existing recycling budget. Partnership funding will be sought for larger initiatives including the reuse of bulky waste and street litter recycling.

The Kent Resource Partnership has also committed to provide funding in the region of £40,000 towards a residents' communication campaign.

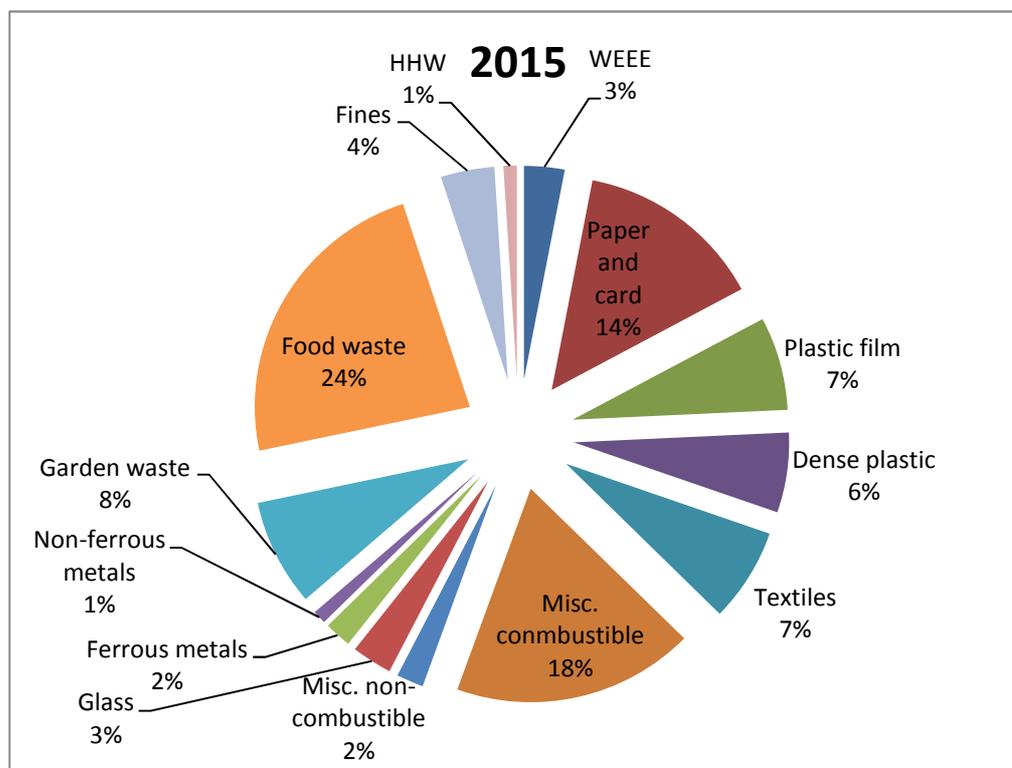
Further details

If you require any details please contact the waste and recycling team on 01622 602600 or email waste@maidstone.gov.uk

Alternatively information on waste and recycling initiatives can be found on the Council's website at www.maidstone.gov.uk/recyclingrubbishandwaste

Appendix B: Summary of Waste Composition Analysis

Composition of the average residual waste bin 2015



Houses

- For households, the overall Mid Kent and Canterbury average data is based on samples from 956 households and a combined residual waste sample weight of 13 tonnes, 2.6 tonnes of separately collected food waste and 7.3 tonnes of mixed dry recycling.
- Overall 88% of the sampled Mid Kent and Canterbury households set out a residual waste bin for collection. Although up to 6% of the sampled households had bins that were overfull, the majority were not, suggesting the fortnightly collection service for residual waste suits most households.
- Set out rates for the mixed recycling scheme were generally good, but the ACORN 4 and 5 Canterbury and Swale householders need to be encouraged to participate in this scheme more fully. The average set out rate for households in these Mid Kent and Canterbury sample areas was 79%.
- Set out rates for the food waste schemes were not high. All households across the board need to be encouraged to participate in the food waste scheme more regularly. The average set out rate for households in these Mid Kent and Canterbury sample areas was 41%.
- Since 2008 weights in the residual waste bins have reduced by 26%, from 10.3kg per household per week to 7.6kg per household per week.
- Since 2008 the weights of mixed recycling found in the residual waste have reduced by 47%, from 2.5kg per household per week to 1.3kg per household per week.
- Since 2008 the weights of food found in the residual waste have reduced by 50%, from 3.5kg per household per week to 1.7kg per household per week.

- There was a slight increase in the weights for garden waste and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). WEEE occurs in the residual waste erratically, as and when items break down. The weight for garden waste may be higher because in 2015 sampling was carried out during October/November and in 2008 sampling was carried out in December.
- Households in Ashford, Maidstone and Swale all reduced the weight of residual waste they set out for collection between 2008 and 2015, but for Canterbury households the overall weight increased by 3%.
- Households in all areas reduced the weight of mixed recycling and food waste in their residual waste. This reduction was most noticeable for the Ashford households.
- The greatest weights of food waste found in the residual waste were seen for Canterbury households at an average of 2.4kg per household per week. The lowest figure was from the Ashford average household at 1kg/household per week.
- The majority of the food waste that households are throwing away is avoidable food waste. The average Mid Kent and Canterbury household threw away 0.2kg per week of untouched, unopened food. A food waste scheme needs to highlight this waste of good food and good money.
- Similar weights of mixed recycling were found in each area, the average weights, minus contamination, were 2.7kg per household per week for Ashford households, 2.8kg for Canterbury and Swale households and 3.1kg for Maidstone households. The mixed recycling from the Ashford and Swale households contained high weights of contamination compared to the other two areas. The lowest weights of contamination were seen for the Canterbury households.
- Ashford households achieved the highest overall capture rate for mixed recycling with a rate of 75%. Maidstone households achieved the lowest rate at only 59%.
- The Ashford food waste scheme is achieving the best results. It has the highest set out rate at 63% and a capture rate of 69%. The households in the Canterbury sample areas are faring less well, only 23% of these households set out a food waste bin capturing only 22% of the total food. Households in the ACORN 4 and 5 sampling areas appeared to be disconnected from the scheme.

Flats

- For flats, the overall Mid Kent and Canterbury average data is based on samples from 807 households and a combined residual waste sample weight of 9 tonnes, 0.5 tonnes of separately collected food waste from 369 households (Ashford and Maidstone flats only) and 1.7 tonnes of mixed dry recycling from 594 flats (no mixed recycling from Swale flats).
- The lowest weights of residual waste were produced by the wealthy or comfortably off, singles and couples living in the flats sampled in Ashford, and the greatest weights of residual waste were produced by the Maidstone and Swale flatted households that covered larger struggling families.
- For all flats 50% of the material placed in the refuse bins could have been diverted into a mixed recycling or food waste scheme. Although this concentration appears to be high the weights it represents were not high.
- The Swale flats are not offered a mixed dry recycling scheme. Ashford flats placed large weights of contamination into their mixed recycling bins. The Maidstone recycling samples were also contaminated but not to such an extent. For the Canterbury flats the majority of the mixed dry recycling was found in the residual waste bins suggesting low participation rates.
- Currently a food waste scheme is not offered to Swale and Canterbury flats. The

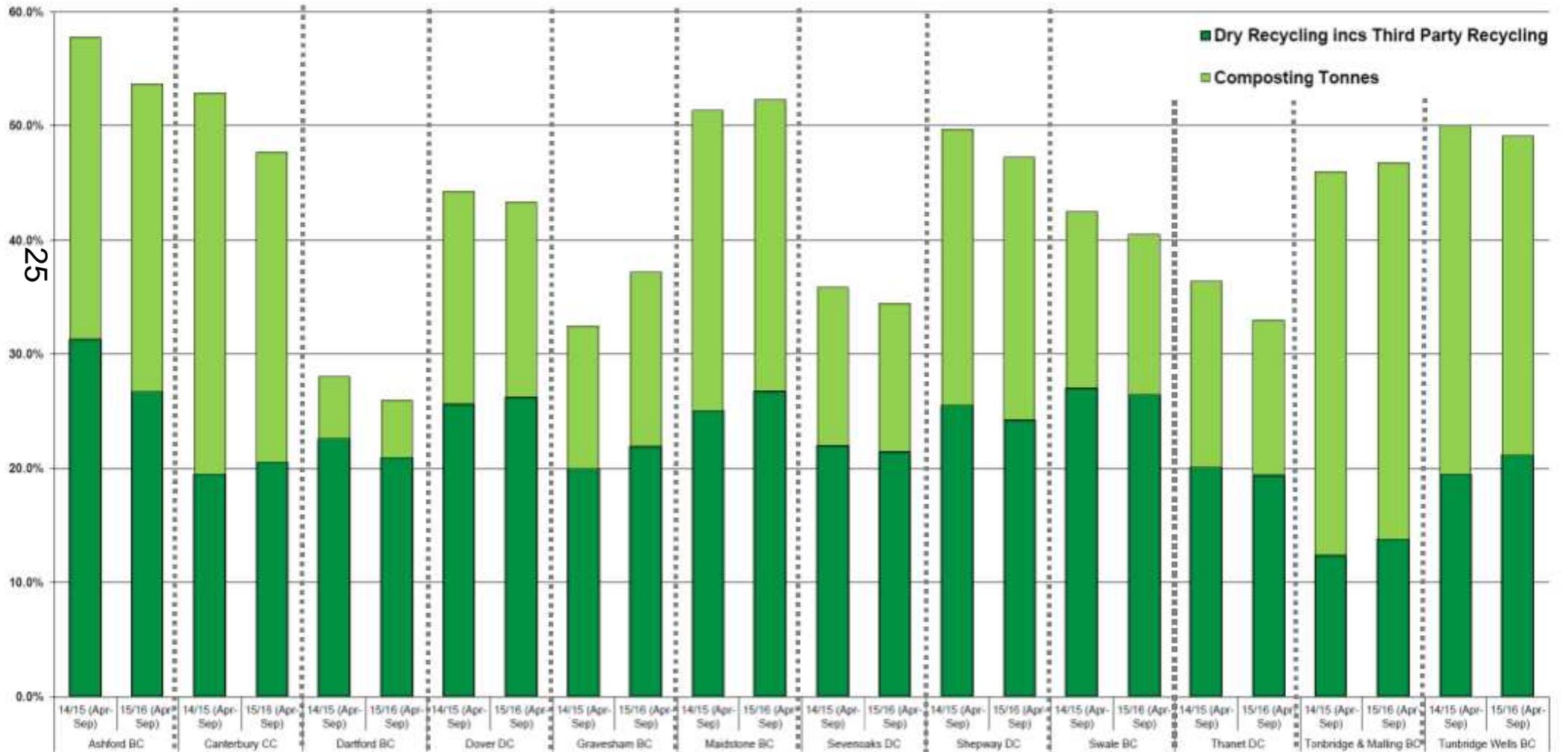
average Ashford flat diverted 0.4kg per week into their food scheme whilst the average Maidstone flat diverted 0.9kg per week. The food waste scheme capture rates were similar for the two areas at 38% for Ashford and 35% for Maidstone.

- Nearly 50% of the food in the Ashford scheme was raw fruit and vegetable matter – mainly unavoidable peeling pips etc. For the Maidstone flats over 55% of the weight of food in the scheme was avoidable cooked and prepared food.
- In both Boroughs over 50% of the cooked food was captured by the scheme. In Ashford 47% of the unavoidable raw fruit and vegetable matter was captured and 43% in Maidstone.
- The Ashford food scheme captured 31% of avoidable food waste and 44% of the unavoidable food waste. The figures for the Maidstone scheme were slightly lower at 29% and 40%.

Although the flats in all sample areas could recycle more food and mixed recycling, in many cases the weights in the residual waste were low and the levels of contamination in the recycling and food schemes were high. It may be worth considering cherry picking the flats that are provided with mixed recycling and food waste schemes.

Appendix C

**Dry Recycling and Composting Performance:
Comparison between 2014/15 (April to September) with 2015/16 (April to September)**



Appendix D – Action Plan

Action	Description	Waste Stream	Responsibility	Planned Start Date
Waste prevention	Highlight food waste prevention and reduction advice for avoidable food waste - we will continue to promote the <i>Fresher for Longer</i> and <i>Love Food Hate Waste</i> campaigns.	Food waste	Education Officer	April 2016
Refresh and promote food waste service	Rebrand the food waste collection as “Food Recycling Collection” as this removes the negative connotation of “waste” which can instantly turn residents against the idea of using the service. This will then be advertised to residents along with the benefits of using the service.	Food waste	Waste Management Officer	April 2016
Highlight avoidable and unavoidable food waste	Highlight use of the food recycling collection service for unavoidable food waste and promote this. Highlight the avoidable waste of food and support this with advise for reducing avoidable food waste where possible.	Food waste	Education Officer	On-going
Food Waste Incentive Scheme	Strong promotion of the existing food waste incentive scheme- The Big Maidstone Food Waste Challenge including the activities set out in the bid for engagement and promotion- this will include targeted engagement and door knocking	Food waste	Recycling Officer	June 2016
“No Food Waste” stickers	Use of “No food waste please” stickers on all residents refuse bins to improve participation in the food recycling scheme and discourage disposal of food via the residual waste stream	Food waste	Recycling Officer	September 2016
Promotion of Garden Waste Collection Service	Actively promote the Council run garden waste collection service and also home composting	Garden waste	Education Officer	March 2017
Monitor uptake of garden schemes	Monitor uptake of the home compost bin offer and also increases in the use of the garden waste collection service.	Garden waste	Recycling Officer	March 2017

Appendix D – Action Plan

Christmas tree disposal options	Explore options for disposal of Christmas trees with our contractor and charities	Garden Waste	Waste Management Officer	September 2016
Reuse of bulky items	Seek to work with 3 rd sector organisations and charities to promote reuse and recycling of bulky items	Bulky Waste	Waste Management Officer	June 2016
Bulky Waste Collection Service	Promote the council run bulky waste collection service	Bulky Waste	Education Officer	June 2016
Quality and capture of recycle	Increasing recycling rate- Capture of materials & tackling contamination issues	Mixed dry recycling	Waste Management Officer	May 2016
Recycling communications	Focused communications to advice of the materials we are able to collect for recycling	Mixed dry recycling	Education Officer	May 2016
Recycling guide	Design and delivery of a borough wide household waste and recycling guide	All collections	Waste Management Officer	May 2016
Flats waste collection monitoring	Monitor flats collections and work with residents in flats and managing agents to promote correct use of the recycling service	Mixed dry recycling & food waste	Recycling Officer	June 2016
Flats recycling trials	Continue trials of alternative recycling apetures and reusable bags for in flats and monitor the success of different systems to encourage and facilitate recycling	Mixed dry recycling	Recycling Officer	June 2016
Kerbside textiles, WEEE & batteries	Promotion of the textiles, small WEEE and battery collection services	Kerbside textiles, WEEE & batteries	Education Officer	September 2016

Appendix D – Action Plan

Website information	Improvement to the waste and recycling information on our website	All collections	Waste Management Officer	May 2016
Contamination monitoring	Introduce robust monitoring and reporting of contamination by crews collecting recycling	Mixed dry recycling	Recycling Officer	May 2016
Collection crew education	Ensure that the crews are aware of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable for recycling	Mixed dry recycling	Education Officer	April 2016
Recycling engagement	Communicate to residents what we can collect for recycling in their green bins	Mixed dry recycling	Education Officer	On- going
Communication Plan	Update and implement the communications plan	All collections	Education Officer	On- going