

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)**

### **IMPROVING RECYCLING THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION**

#### **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Whilst recycling has become a part of every day life for many people, it is recognised both locally and nationally that further action is still required to divert waste away from landfill.
- 1.2 Recycling remains a key priority for the Council and Scrutiny has continued to monitor the Council's progress in implementing the Leeds Integrated Waste Strategy 2005-2035, which sets out its aims to reduce the impact of waste management on the environment and significantly reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.
- 1.3 In December 2011, the Executive Board reaffirmed the vision and key principles of the Integrated Waste Strategy. Linked to this, it agreed to revise the Council's household waste recycling targets to achieve a combined recycling and composting rate of greater than 55% of household waste by 2016 with a long term target to exceed 60%.
- 1.4 The Council continues to make good progress as the recycling performance at July 2012 was 48%. This was the highest individual months performance ever achieved in Leeds, indicating a year to date performance of 44% against the 2012/13 overall target of 44%.
- 1.5 Scrutiny remains committed to assisting the Council achieve its recycling targets. In September 2012, the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board agreed to undertake further work to explore how recycling participation rates can be greater improved.
- 1.6 The Scrutiny Board acknowledges that during 2009/10, an in-depth inquiry into recycling was conducted by the former Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board. Based around the principle that 'one size does not fit all', the main focus of this inquiry was to explore the different options available for collecting recyclables, taking into account the diverse range of communities and housing types that exist in Leeds.
- 1.7 In moving forward, the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board recognises that further work is now needed to encourage greater participation in the recycling options already available. As part of this review, the Scrutiny Board will therefore be exploring which communication methods would be more fruitful within different areas of the city and particularly for those areas in need of a more targeted education campaign. Effective communication is also paramount in

successfully delivering any planned operational changes and the introduction of new schemes, such as the forthcoming pilot scheme for alternate weekly collections.

- 1.8 This scrutiny review therefore sets out to improve recycling through effective communication and education.

## **2.0 Scope of the inquiry**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- the general principles for effective communication with the public in successfully delivering planned operational changes;
- the outcome of the bid to DCLG's Weekly Collection Fund, specifically the development of an incentive scheme;
- the Council's strategy for preparing residents ahead of the pilot scheme for alternate weekly collections and also food waste expansion;
- the Council's current methods of communication with the public on the existing range of recycling options available in Leeds;
- the use of existing demographic profile data to determine preferred communication and service channel preferences across the city in relation to recycling methods;
- potential improvements to existing communication materials with staff and the public to help reduce contaminated waste and missed collections;
- examples of best practice within comparator authorities;
- Evidence arising from the Scrutiny Board's public listening exercises across 3 specific areas of the city.

## **3.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member**

- 3.1 In line with Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 12.1 where a Scrutiny Board undertakes an Inquiry the Scrutiny Board shall consult with any relevant Director and Executive Member on the terms of reference.

## **4.0 Timetable for the inquiry**

- 4.1 The Inquiry will take place over a number of sessions. These sessions will involve smaller working group meetings, which will provide flexibility for the Board to gather and consider evidence that will aid the discussions during the public Board meetings.
- 4.2 The length of the Inquiry is subject to change. It is anticipated that a final report will be produced in April 2013. However, the timeliness of specific service operations and forthcoming programmes will require the Scrutiny Board to also make relevant recommendations in advance of the final report. This will be reported during the course of the inquiry.

## **5.0 Submission of evidence**

### **5.1 Session one – November 2012**

To determine the general principles for effective communication with the public in relation to operational changes.

To consider the outcome of the bid to DCLG's Weekly Collection Fund and the Council's strategy for preparing residents ahead of the pilot scheme for alternate weekly collections and also food waste expansion.

### **5.2 Session two – December 2012**

To consider how the Council communicates with the public on the existing range of recycling options available in Leeds and how this can be improved to encourage greater take-up.

To consider the preferred communication and service channel preferences across the city using existing demographic profile data and how this could be applied to improving recycling.

To consider examples of best practice within comparator authorities.

To identify 3 areas of the city for the Scrutiny Board to undertake a listening exercise in February 2013 using the following criteria:

- An area with a low recycling participation rate
- An area that is showing a steady improvement in recycling
- An area already achieving a good sustainable recycling rate

### **5.3 Session three – January 2013**

To explore how communication materials with staff and public can be improved to help reduce contaminated waste and missed collections.

To also review what is reasonable to expect from residents in terms of a 'social contract' to help reduce contaminated waste and missed collections.

### **5.4 Session four – February 2013**

To undertake a public listening exercise within 3 areas of city based on the following themes:

- General awareness of existing recycling options available
- Key issues that are preventing people to recycle (both general and specific to that area)

- Preferred communication links with the Council in relation to recycling

#### 5.5 **Session five – March 2013**

To consider the draft recommendations arising from the review

#### 5.6 **Session six – April 2013**

To agree the Board's final report.

### **6.0 Witnesses**

- 6.1 The following witnesses have been identified as possible contributors to the Inquiry:

Executive Board Member for Environment  
Chief Officer, Waste Management  
Strategy and Development Manager, Waste Management  
Service Manager, Refuse and Waste  
Communication Manager, Executive Support  
Chief Officer: Contact Centre

### **7.0 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 7.1 The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 to 2015 have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve its ambition to be the best City in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity.
- 7.2 Equality and diversity will be a consideration throughout the Scrutiny Inquiry and due regard will be given to equality through the use of evidence, written and verbal, outcomes from consultation and engagement activities.
- 7.3 The Scrutiny Board may engage and involve interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the council) to inform recommendations.
- 7.4 Where an impact has been identified this will be reflected in the final inquiry report, post inquiry. Where a Scrutiny Board recommendation is agreed the individual, organisation or group responsible for implementation or delivery should give due regard to equality and diversity, conducting impact assessments where it is deemed appropriate.

## **8.0 Post inquiry report monitoring arrangements**

- 8.1 Following the completion of the Scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.
- 8.2 The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored.

## **9.0 Measures of success**

- 9.1 It is important to consider how the Scrutiny Board will deem if their inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.