

Committee: Cabinet	Date: 30 th July 2008	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:	Agenda Item:
Report of: Corporate Director Communities, Localities and Culture Originating officer(s) Fiona Heyland, Head of Waste Management		Title: Recycling Improvement Plan 2008 to 2011 Wards Affected: Borough-wide		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Historically the borough has suffered from low levels of recycling and in 2005/06 Tower Hamlets recorded the lowest recycling level in England and Wales. Overall there have been strides in improvement since 2003 with the authority currently recycling approximately 14% of the collected Household Waste. However, Tower Hamlets recycling target for 2007/08 is 20% and so current performance still falls short of achieving the Government target.
- 1.2 This report outlines the current recycling services in operation for residents and businesses within the borough and what level of performance is being achieved. The report goes on to analyse the gap between current performance and the required Government target and how that gap can be closed during 2008/09 financial year through the introduction of new services funded from service improvement growth.
- 1.3 To take the Council's recycling performance beyond the 20% target, with a view to achieving the Government's national target of 40% recycling and composting, additional recycling and composting initiatives will be required in subsequent years.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet are recommended to: -

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to endorse the actions set out in the Recycling Improvement Plan summarised at section 4 of the report.

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) Section 100D
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report
Recycling Improvement Plan

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3. BACKGROUND TO CURRENT RECYCLING ARRANGEMENTS

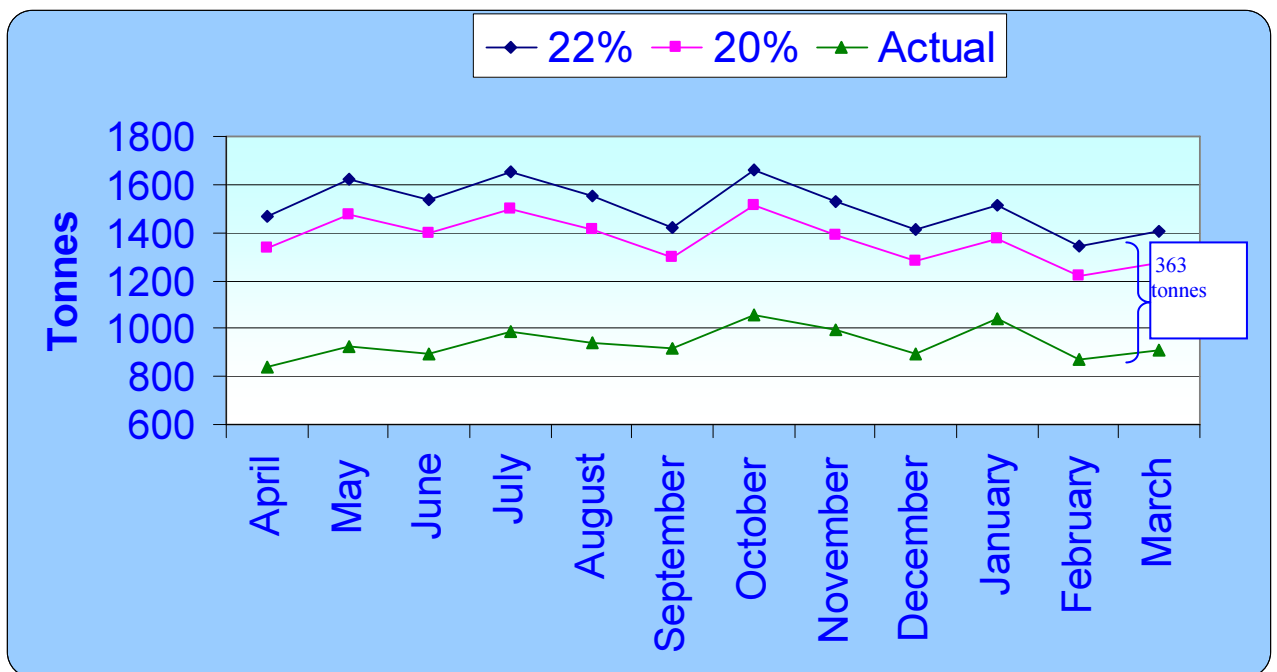
- 3.1 Tower Hamlets currently provides a weekly recycling service to collect co-mingled dry materials such as paper & card, glass bottles and jars, food and drink cans. 19,000 low rise properties and 55,000 high rise properties are on a door step collection basis and 18,600 high rise properties have communal collection facilities. The Communal systems use a variety of 360s / 660s / 770s / 1280s litre bins dependant on the physical infrastructure of the site.
- 3.2 The Authority provides 51 bring bank locations across the Borough for the collection of co-mingled paper, card, cans, aerosols, plastic bottles, beverage cartons and mixed glass. A total number of 232 bins are spread across these sites. All the communal bring banks in the authority are 1280 litre Continental design recycling banks. The Council has recently installed Commuter Recycling banks at Tower Hill, and Bethnal Green tube stations.
- 3.3 Residents are encouraged to recycle bulky and electrical materials at the Northumberland Wharf Civic Amenity Site such as Mixed Scrap Metal, Engine Oil, Car Batteries, Mobile Phones, Aluminium Foil, Textiles, White Goods, Cardboard.
- 3.4 In addition to the residential properties, the Council estimates that there are over 1000 non domestic properties producing Household Waste such as schools, colleges, charities and places of worship that could also receive a collection service. Approximately 320 of these properties have been provided with a collection service and work is ongoing to identify the remaining properties and roll out the recycling service to each one.
- 3.5 The activities outlined above have delivered a recycling performance that has been improving steadily since 2005 but this growth has predominantly been as a result of the roll out of dry recycling collection services across the borough. However despite this improvement current performance of 14% (March 2008) continues to fall short of the Council's statutory Household Waste recycling and composting target for 2007/08 of 20%. Figure 1 below shows the recycling performance, month by month, since April 2005.

Figure 1 – Growth in recycling performance since April 2005



3.6 In order to achieve the Council’s statutory recycling target more tonnage of recyclable and compostable material needs to be collected each month, either through current services or by providing additional services. Figure 2 below shows the extent of this “recycling gap”.

Figure 2 – The Recycling Gap (tonnes)



- 3.7 In 2007 the Council engaged MEL Research to undertake a Waste Analysis. This identified that Tower Hamlets' waste can be broken down into 4 main fractions.
- Dry Recyclable Material (paper, cans, bottles, glass) **40%**
 - Food Waste **42%**
 - Garden Waste **5%**
 - Residual Waste (not recyclable or compostable) **13%**
- 3.8 Not only did the Waste Analysis identify that Tower Hamlets had a high proportion of food waste in its Household Waste stream, it also identified that many residents, who were taking part in the dry materials recycling service, were only recycling a small percentage of the potential recyclable materials in their rubbish (in some cases this was as low as 14% of what could have been recycled).
- 3.9 From this Analysis it can be concluded that the best opportunities to increase recycling performance in the future is to get more residents to recycle **more** of the dry materials, through a series of initiatives and to implement the collection of food waste and garden waste. The following section of this report sets out the specific actions to be implemented in each year and the predicted increase in recycling performance.

4.0 The Next Steps for Recycling

- 4.1 Table 1 below lists the specific initiatives that formulate the Recycling Improvement Plan for 2008 to 2011. For each initiative the anticipated implementation date is given in the table.

Table 1

2008/09		
Initiative	Details	Implementation Date
Garden Waste Collection Service	Residents living in low rise properties with gardens will be provided with green re-usable garden waste sacks for their grass clippings and other green garden waste. This pilot service will be implemented in July 2008 with collections being made on a fortnightly basis.	7 th July 2008
Separation of Street Cleansing Arisings for Recycling	In August the Council's Street Cleansing Contractor Veolia will implement the separation of street litter for recycling on all daytime main route sweeping beats. Bags of recyclable litter will be deposited into the recycling bring banks and	1 st August 2008

	collected as part of the dry recyclable collection service.	
Recycling Bulky Waste	Improvements to the recycling of bulky waste through Northumberland Wharf Waste Transfer Station will be achieved through additional waste segregation processes and an alteration to collection methodologies.	1 st August 2008
Food Waste Collections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19,000 low rise properties • 5,000 – 7,000 high rise properties 	<p>Residents in low rise properties will be provided with a kitchen caddy and starch liners to contain their food waste on a daily basis and a larger bin from which the waste will be collected on a weekly kerbside collection.</p> <p>The Council in association with major RSL's will also implement a pilot food waste collection service for 5,000 – 7,000 high rise properties. Both door step and communal collection systems will be implemented as part of the trial in order to assess the costs and benefits of each collection methodology in advance of rolling out a high rise scheme borough wide.</p>	September 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,000 high rise properties 	<p>Subject to additional funding being secured from the London Waste and Recycling Fund a further 10,000 high rise properties will be included in the food waste recycling service.</p>	January 2009
Recycling Champions	To boost participation in recycling, a network of resident "Recycling Champions" will be recruited throughout the borough to help the Council with its drive to improve	September 2008

	recycling performance. It is anticipated that the Champions will predominantly be from the high rise properties within the borough where individual contact with residents is often harder to achieve on a regular basis. The Champions will be supported in their work by the Monitoring and Outreach staff and will be rewarded on the basis of increased recycling performance achieved.	
2009/10		
Initiative	Details	Implementation Date
Food Waste Collections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40,000 high rise properties 	Subject to additional funding being secured from the London Waste and Recycling Fund a further 40,000 high rise properties will be included in the food waste recycling service.	Phased from April 2009
Recycling Electrical Equipment (WEEE)	Install micro-collection points for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). For example at One Stop Shops, Ideas Stores and other public buildings. Additional funding will be required to implement this initiative.	Phased from April 2009
Ban Garden Waste from residual waste stream	Garden waste would no longer be accepted as part of the residual waste. Households would be required to use the garden waste service only to dispose of this waste	April 2009
2010/11		
Initiative	Details	Implementation Date
Food Waste Collections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25,000 high rise properties 	Subject to additional funding being secured from the London Waste and Recycling Fund a further 25,000 high rise properties will be included in the food waste	Phased from April 2010

	recycling service from January 2009.	
Kerbside collection service for textiles	Through a partnership with a 3 rd sector service provider the council would offer a regular (potentially monthly) collection service for textiles. Additional funding will be required to implement this initiative	1 st April 2010

Predicted Recycling Performance 2008/09

4.2 Based on the anticipated additional recycling and composting tonnage collected from the activities outlined above the Council will achieve a cumulative recycling rate of just over **19%** by the end of March 2009. The tonnage contribution from each of the planned activities is shown in table 2 below;

Table 2

Initiative	Percentage Contribution
Existing Services + growth	16%
Garden Waste	0.5%
Street Cleansing	0.3%
Food waste – low-rise	1.3%
Food waste – high-rise trial	0.3%
Food waste – high-rise (second phase)	0.2%
Bulky waste separation	0.4%
Other minor initiatives including waste minimisation	0.4%
TOTAL	19.4%

Predicted Recycling Performance for 2009/10

4.3 Based on the anticipated additional recycling and composting tonnage collected from the activities outlined above which are subject to additional funding being secured from the London Waste and Recycling Fund, the Council will achieve a cumulative recycling rate of **26%** by the end of March 2010. The tonnage contribution from each of the planned activities is shown in table 3 below;

Table 3

Initiative	Percentage Contribution
Existing Services + growth	21%
Food waste – high-rise	4%

additional 40,000 high rise properties	
WEEE	0.25%
Other minor initiatives including banning garden waste	0.75%
TOTAL	26%

Predicted Recycling Performance for 2010/11

- 4.4 Based on the anticipated additional recycling and composting tonnage collected from the activities outlined above the Council could achieve a cumulative recycling rate of **32%** by the end of March 2011 (if additional funding is allocated). The tonnage contribution from each of the planned activities is shown in table 4 below;

Table 4

Initiative	Percentage Contribution
Existing Services + growth	28%
Food waste – high-rise additional 25,000 high rise properties	3%
Kerbside textiles	0.3%
Other minor initiatives	0.7%
TOTAL	32%

Frequently Asked Questions

- 4.5 A list of Frequently Asked Questions covering the food waste collection service is attached as Appendix A

5 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 5.1 The cost of the proposals as outlined above equates to approximately £1.85m in 2008/09 reflecting the staggered start date for a number of the initiatives and the one off purchase of food waste containers/bins, reducing to £1.4m for the following 2 years.

These costs will mainly be met from Service Improvement Growth allocated for a Recycling Improvement Programme as part of the Budget process in 2008/09, savings accruing from reduced waste disposal costs, additional funding available to the Directorate in 08/09 via Area Based Grant and the base budget provision available for recycling activity.

- 5.2 If the Council is unsuccessful in its bid to the London Waste and Recycling Fund to further extend high rise food waste recycling consideration would need to be given to a further Service Improvement Growth bid in 2009/2010 the costs of which are still to be finalised, but which would be offset by reductions to waste disposal costs.

- 5.3 A financial summary of the Recycling Improvement Action Plan is attached to this report as Appendix B.

6 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 6.1 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is empowered by Sections 4(1) and (2) and 28(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1999 to set annually recycling targets for local authorities.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Recycling services are provided borough wide. Every effort is made to ensure that all parts of the community have access to effective and efficient recycling services.
- 7.2 Current and ongoing outreach work with schools, community and faith groups, RSL's and Housing will ensure that the new recycling services are promoted to the hard to reach groups and these groups are not disadvantaged through the implementation of the compulsory scheme.

8.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no anti-poverty implications.

9.0 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 9.1 Reducing our use of natural resources, recycling materials and recovering energy from resources are key actions for achieving one planet living and combating Climate Change.
- 9.2 Waste managed safely reduces risk to public health, damage to the environment as well as safeguarding social amenity.
- 9.3 The Recycling Improvement Plan, together with re-use and recycling activities that are already being undertaken will encourage waste prevention, waste minimisation and resource recovery on a borough wide basis.
- 9.4 Whilst previous education and publicity activities have helped to increase the amount of waste that is re-used or recycled but these activities alone have not achieved the levels of recycling performance required by the Government target. The implementation of compulsory recycling will drive up levels of participation and capture rates, ensuring that Tower Hamlets achieves the national recycling targets and reduces its carbon footprint.

10.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The predicted performance levels given in section 4 of this report are predicated on the initiatives being implemented according to the planned timetable for implementation. Any slippage of implementation dates would result in the stated recycling levels not being achieved.
- 10.2 The predicted performance levels given in section 4 of this report are also predicated on additional funding being made available in 2009/10 and 2010/11 from the London Waste and Recycling Fund. Should funding not be awarded the Council would need fund these additional activities from the General Fund in order that the predicted levels of recycling performance could be achieved.

11 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 11.1 The Government's fiscal and legislative policies in relation to waste management are driving up the cost per tonne for waste disposal, particularly in respect of final disposal to landfill. In view of these environmental drivers, increasing diversion of waste for re-use and recycling will in future years reduce the Council's overall waste management costs.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix A – Frequently Asked Questions
Appendix B - Financial Summary

