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**TITLE: TACKLING RECYCLING IN LOW PERFORMANCE AREAS**

Committee: Regulatory Services Committee

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1.0 ISSUE

Tackling low levels of participation in geographical areas where there is a concentration of households which participate less in the councils recycling service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to note the action plan which has been developed to tackle low performing recycling areas identified within the district. (Appendix 1) .

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 The current dry recycling rates are 57.4 % across the district (2016/17).

3.2 The districts target recycling rate is 60%.

3.3 In order to improve the district recycling rate we need to target areas within the district which have a lower recycling rate than better performing areas within the district.

3.4 Targeting low performing areas ensures that the council is using its resources efficiency.

3.5 We need to overcome barriers and address the question of why households are not participating in recycling. Do they understand why we are asking them to recycle?

3.6 Low performing areas can have recycling rates as low as 10 to 20%.

3.7 Low performing areas within the district have been identified using three sources of information.

- Data obtained from 'it pays to recycle scheme'. The councils recycling team have been following the Veolia dry recycling crews for two years. As part of the scheme a note was made of any household that did not present their bin for collection. This process has produced data which can be used to assist the identification of low performing areas throughout the district.

- Crew weighbridge reports. The refuse vehicles are weighed as they

enter the Waste Management Park at Waterbeach. The net weight is calculated and recorded. This process can provide an indication of those recycling rounds which are not recycling as much as other areas.

- Feedback from the councils recycling team and the Veolia operatives also provide a useful insight into the areas within the district which are not participating in the recycling as much as other areas they visit.
- 3.8 In order to assist in the creation of an action plan, case studies from other councils were considered.
- 3.9 Studies have found that calling on householders door-to-door can raise participation in recycling schemes by 4.4 percent. This method was utilised by Rugby Borough Council and was thought to be principal reason for their recycling rate increase from 32.6% to 37% (Lets recycle, 2005).
- 3.10 Other methods included sending letters to residents, which gave a 3.1 percentage point boost and placing awareness stickers on bins, which resulted in a 1.46 percentage point increase in participation. Sending a newsletter to residents proved least effective, generating a boost in of just 0.11 percentage points
- 3.11 Warwick District Council successfully carried out a 12 month project and increased their dry recycling from 52 to 55%. The council sent out leaflets out to households. The first leaflet presented a clear and concise message of why it is important to recycle. Importantly a second leaflet was distributed six months later reinforcing the message of why it is important to recycle.
- 3.12 Warwick District Council also attributes the success of their scheme to vehicle signage, social media, P R events and information on their website.
- 3.13 Published case studies list the following as important in any low participation strategies;
- Bin hangers
  - Website information
  - Clear and concise message
  - Posters
  - Parish council Magazines
  - Social Media
  - Press Release
  - Officers visiting targeted households
  - Well informed customer services and elected members
- 3.14 A successful project should not be reluctant to challenge households who repeatedly fail to recycle.
- 3.15 It is important to re-monitor to determine impact. In order to evaluate the success of the project there must be 'Pre' and 'Post' intervention surveys.
- 3.16 In tackling low performing areas we are aiming for a long term behaviour change.

3.17 Action plans must be constantly reviewed and seen as a long term strategy and not a quick fix.

#### 4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 An action plan has been developed to tackle low performing areas within the district. This has been achieved by gathering data on recycling rates within the district and reviewing published case studies.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Action plan to be carried out within existing resources.

5.2 No changes are proposed the delivery of services; therefore, an Equalities Impact assessment is not required.

#### 6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 – Low Performance Areas Action plan 2017/18

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<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
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