



**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place**

Report to:	<b>Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>11 April 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Waste Engagement Initiatives</b>

**Summary:**

The Environment Act 2021 will potentially see a number of changes to household waste collections and other initiatives that will provide the biggest changes in the waste sector for over 20 years. As a result, the service understands that this will require behaviour change to meet the changes from both within the service, and also from the general public as our customers.

In order to both meet the changing needs that the legislation will bring about, and to support residents to be accountable and responsible for their actions in meeting the waste hierarchy, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has invested time and effort in public engagement to help meet these changing demands. This report summaries those activities to date and details actions going forward.

**Actions Required:**

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee is invited to review and comment on the contents of this report and seek assurance that action is taken that allows Lincolnshire County Council to adhere to its statutory obligations as Waste Disposal Authority and continue to improve the efficiency of the service.

## **1. Background**

Lincolnshire County Council Waste Services introduced the role of the Performance and Improvement Officer as part of the Twin Stream roll out trial in 2019. Building on the success of the trial and the decision to roll out the initiative county-wide, this role and its effectiveness was reviewed. Data and feedback from the trial showed that the public were very keen to engage and play their part in recycling and waste minimisation and therefore it was agreed that engagement was an integral part to this and has grown from then onwards.

In order to deliver sustainable engagement a number of activities and initiatives have been put into place including:

## Lincolnshire County Council Performance and Improvement Team

A team of officers directly employed by the Waste Service has been established and their successful interventions include:

- Supporting the rollout of waste improvement projects including the Twin Stream initiative and also engaging with members of the public at our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and numerous community events.
- Directly engaging with members of the public subject to the roll out of Twin Stream; in excess of 3000 direct reactive visits to householders have taken place over the last two years, helping residents to put the right thing in the right bin and improve the quality of waste collection and disposal.
- Proactively working with the waste collection authorities (WCAs) to support the collection rounds and engage on-street with residents to help address queries and concerns.
- Sustainment plans to continue to work with the WCAs that have implemented the twin stream rollout to help to maintain improvements to the quality of the recycling collected which has shown that contamination levels have reduced from 32% to below 15%.
- Development of a community and schools programme “Let’s Talk Rubbish” which delivers presentations, talks and activities to bring to life the importance of the waste hierarchy and encourage participants to think about and change their behaviour towards waste creation and disposal. Over 250 primary schools in Lincolnshire have been contacted and in the last 12 months the team have worked with over 30 of these schools and engaged with over 600 children. A further 23 schools have already signed up to the programme in the current year.
- Delivering talks and engagement sessions to with wider community groups such as Residents Associations, Women’s Institute, Cubs and Scouts.
- Delivering engagement via market stalls to residents.
- Engaging at community events including Lincolnshire Show, Revesby County Fair, Lincolnshire Wolds Festival.
- Working alongside FCC Environment Ltd to facilitate over 20 schools and community visits to the Energy from Waste facility at North Hykeham as well as welcoming over 600 visitors to the successful open day.

The demand on the team to support activities is growing on a daily basis and therefore shows the effectiveness of public engagement. Feedback from schools and community groups is sought and examples are shown below:

*“The afternoon was fantastic. It was amazing hearing all the interesting things that the children learned from your visit. Every aspect was engaging for the class, you could see they were all hanging off your every word. Some children that don’t normally engage and put themselves out there were fully engaged and interacting. This was amazing.”*

*“Positive across the school was overwhelmingly positive with both adults and children stating that they had learned something new. Thank you so much for coming!”*

*“A fabulous learning experience for all pupils. All were engaged throughout, and they were keen to share prior experience and ask questions. Thankyou”*

*“Great presentation and very engaging for the children.”*

### **University of Lincoln Engagement**

The service has established a relationship with the School of Geography and wider Student Services at the University of Lincoln to support students within the campus and wider community. For the last four years we have been invited to deliver a lecture to the third year students on the subject of Waste Management in Lincolnshire which has been well received and now forms a core part of the final semester for students.

In addition, we have successfully hosted a student placement to support Year 2 of the Geography course and have been approached to host further students in both Years 2 and 3 along with potential opportunities to host work experience placements.

We are also planning activities for the new academic year to work with the Student Services division and the Student Union to support new and returning students to the city in ensuring they minimise waste and maximise recycling in both student accommodation and across the wider city. These will include engaging at freshers’ fairs, open days and wider university events.

### **Customer Digital Strategy (CDD) and Website Improvements**

As part of the CDD project Waste Services has been engaging with the project leads to improve customer access to the service. Having undertaken an initial analysis of customer interactions by both telephone, email and via the website the Waste Services pages of the website have been redesigned to best meet the needs of our residents, making it easier to access the most sought-after information, introducing regular Twitter and social media notifications where there are any service disruptions and updating the telephony IVR messaging to address the most common enquiries.

To this end a new page giving a comprehensive A-Z of waste types has been introduced to the website to allow residents to understand how to correctly dispose of waste both at kerbside and at the HWRCs and the interactions with this continue to be analysed and ongoing improvements made to the service.

The next steps include ongoing use of data and analytics to understand how best to meet customers’ needs and, where appropriate, support them to self-serve for most common enquiries.

## **Communications Campaigns and Strategy**

As part of the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership the importance of providing a clear, concise, and effective communications package is imperative. The current focus is the 'Right Thing, Right Bin' campaign, enabled by achieving our Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) objective "to move towards a common set of recycling materials".

In line with the Consistent Collections identified in the Environment Act 2021, the list of recyclables accepted across Lincolnshire has been reviewed and used to focus the 'Right Thing, Right Bin' campaign making it easier to explain to residents what should go in which bin. Using the Residents Recycling Panel, assets and materials have been created in written, pictorial and video form to help provide clear, consistent and recognisable messaging across the county. The campaign is now being used across the partnership on marketing materials and social media platforms to convey ongoing messages.

### **2. Conclusion**

We continue to build our community presence and working with partners in the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership to deliver programmes and engagement to ensure that there is consistency and improvements across Lincolnshire.

In this direction, we ask that the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee review and comment on the contents of this report and seek assurance that action is taken that allows Lincolnshire County Council to adhere to its statutory obligations as Waste Disposal Authority and continue to improve the efficiency of the service.

### **3. Consultation**

#### **a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

### **4. Background Papers**

No Background Papers within section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this Report.

This report was written by Rachel Stamp, Waste Partnership and Projects Manager, and Mike Reed, Head of Waste, who can be contacted on [Rachel.stamp@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.stamp@lincolnshire.gov.uk) and at [mike.reed@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:mike.reed@lincolnshire.gov.uk).