

Somerset Waste Board meeting

20 December 2019

Report for information

Slim my Waste, Feed my Face – a campaign to tackle food waste

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Forward Plan Reference:	SWB/19/07/03
Summary:	This report summarises the promotional campaign planned to increase participation in food waste recycling and capture more food waste – delivering significant environmental and financial benefits.
Recommendations:	It is recommended that the Board endorses the proposed approach to driving higher levels of food waste recycling through the ‘Slim my Waste, Feed my Face’ behavioural change campaign being implemented across Somerset in early 2020.
Reasons for recommendations:	Too much of Somerset’s food waste is put in the rubbish (26% of residual waste). The food waste in our rubbish is a bigger cause of climate change than the plastic in our rubbish, and costs Somerset taxpayers £950k every year. By using a campaign successfully developed and implemented by Bristol Waste company we aim to increase the tonnage of food waste collected by 16%, saving £213k in total, and increase levels of food waste recycling participation.
Links to Priorities and Impact on Annual Business Plan:	Task 2.2.1 within the SWB Approved Business Plan 2019-24 set out our ambition to tackle food waste through a stickering and behaviour change campaign.
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	Financial savings: Turning food waste into energy and soil conditioner at our in-county anaerobic Digester is much lower cost than disposing of food waste in landfill or through Energy

	<p>from Waste. Through capturing more food waste, SWP expect that the Slim my Waste campaign will deliver financial savings of £105k in disposal costs in 2020/21 and a total saving of £213k up to 2022/23.</p> <p>Costs: The campaign will cost £283,000 of which £118,000 covers the design and production of the materials (potentially lower subject of finalisation of procurements) and £126,000 will be paid for labour and fleet movements. SWP has secured £173,000 in match funding (including from Viridor, our disposal partner) and £110,000 from Somerset County Council’s Improving Lives to Prevent Demand Fund. The anticipated increased cost of food waste caddies/bins (£39k) expected as more people start recycling their food waste will be funded from the Recycle More fund (as agreed with the Strategic management Group).</p> <p>Legal: There are no legal implications associated with this campaign.</p> <p>HR: Temporary agency staff will be required to undertake the campaign (delivering leaflets and affixing stickers to bins).</p>
<p>Equalities Implications:</p>	<p>An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken in July 2019 when funding from SCC’s prevention fund was secured. No adverse impacts were identified.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment:</p>	<p>The risks related to the behavioural change campaign are recorded in SWP’s overarching risk register. There are no red risks. The key risk we are managing at the moment is the risk that the complexity of the administering authority’s procurement processes places the implementation timetable at risk.</p>

1. Background

1.1. As part of its kerbside collection of recycling and refuse, Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) collects food waste weekly. Properties are provided with a 5-litre kitchen caddy a 25 litre outside food bin. Householders are encouraged to line their caddies with newspaper or purchase compostable liners to help keep them clean.

SWP is currently going through a process to transition its refuse collection services from fortnightly to a three weekly service and these changes are scheduled to occur from June 2020 to September 2022. This will align with a move away from landfill and accepting even more recycling each week (plastic pots, tubs and trays,

cartons/Tetrapaks, batteries, small electrical items). The constraint on what people can put in their residual bin is a crucial element in driving higher uptake of recycling and food waste collections. With refuse moving to a three-weekly collection, residents will be encouraged to recycle their food waste using the weekly service, rather than use their black refuse bin.

- 1.2.** SWP collected 18,990 tonnes of food waste last year through its weekly kerbside service and, at an anaerobic digestion plant at Walpole (near Bridgwater), turns it into renewable energy to power homes and a nutrient rich fertiliser. This saved 380 tonnes of carbon.

SWP's analysis has shown that Somerset's householder rubbish bins contain over a quarter (26%) of food waste which could be recycled. Reducing the amount of food waste being sent to landfill would, not only lead to a significant environmental benefit but also generate cost savings of up to £950,000 per annum if all the food waste in the refuse bins was recycled. From analysing the food waste in Somerset's bins we know that on average, around one third (36%) of food waste is thrown away in its packaging, including unopened and out of date food, with a further 36% being avoidable e.g. it was edible prior to disposal.

Whilst we know that significantly more people recycle their food in Somerset (62% participation) than the national average, we also know that there is significant room for improvement – with only 26% of householders recycling food waste every week. Zero waste Scotland have shown that food waste is a greater contributor to climate change than plastic – with the food waste not being recycled in Somerset leading to 882 tonnes CO₂ equivalent (carbon) per annum.

- 1.3.** In 2017, the Bristol Waste Company launched the 'Slim My Waste, feed my face' (SMW) campaign which focused on encouraging householders to use their food waste bins and kitchen caddy by decorating them with face stickers to reflect their householder personality. The campaign achieved significant results in raising awareness, increasing recycling (by 16%) and reducing the amount of food waste being sent to landfill. As a result, the Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) has agreed to deliver a variation of the campaign to residents in Somerset. It will adopt the same format as the Bristol campaign, but the artwork will be amended to reflect SWP branding and messaging and support the existing food waste collection service.

2. Approach to the campaign

- 2.1.** The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness of food waste recycling, encourage participation and increase capture. Specific objectives are to:
 - Increase the tonnage of food waste collected by 16% in 2020/21 through targeted communications
 - Prevent 5,000 tonnes of food waste from going to waste

- Save £105,000 in disposal costs in 2020/21 (£213k in total)
- Increase participation in the food waste service from 62% to 72% in 2020/21
- Engage with a minimum of 20 primary schools to raise awareness of the SMW campaign and encourage participation
- Involve 12 Co-op stores around the County as pick-up points for food waste bins/caddies

2.2. Key elements of the campaign are as follows:

- All kerbside service residents receive an information leaflet and 2 sheets of A5 'face' stickers to decorate their food waste caddy. The 6-page A5 leaflet promotes food waste recycling, explaining why we need to recycle food waste, the benefits, how to use the face stickers and step by step guide on how to use the food waste collection service. Content on what can currently be recycled at the kerbside and HWRCs and the upcoming 'Recycle More' service changes will also be included.
- Black bins have a 'I'm on a no food waste diet' sticker attached to their lid and are adorned with a bright yellow 'no food waste' measuring tape around the middle (their 'waist'). The stickers provide an ongoing visual reminder not to use their black wheelie bin for food waste.
- Targeted engagement is carried out in schools and communities in low food waste participation areas.
- We partner with Co-op county-wide as a collection point for food waste caddies.
- Residents are encouraged to share photos of their stickered bins on social media and can win a prize each month – using hashtags (e.g #Slimmywaste) to help create viral enthusiasm for the campaign
- The campaign will be supported by a dedicated page on the SWP website, a social media campaign, press releases, Sorted e-Zine, monthly parish council briefing, Your Somerset, briefings to key partner staff (e.g. customer services teams), schools engagement, roadshows and events.
- A comprehensive communications briefing pack will be issued to all stakeholders (including FAQs, key messages, social media posts etc) to ensure consistency in the campaign).

Examples of some of the communication materials will be presented to the Board at the meeting. The proposed roll-out programme is as follows:

Area	Households	Dates
Mendip & South Somerset	128,331	Late Jan – Feb 2020
Taunton Deane & Sedgemoor	109,243	March 2020
West Somerset	18,276	April 2020

2.3. As part of developing this campaign and the Recycle More campaign, SWP have developed a style guide to develop and maintain consistency in all our campaigns and communications, and to ensure that we align our branding with

national Recycle Now branding. National Recycle Now research has informed our approach, as this shows that the right tone of voice is critical to the success of recycling communication, which should:

- Provide consistent messaging to avoid confusion;
- Include positive message which encourage people to recycle more;
- Engage with people in a light-hearted and fun way rather than lecturing;
- Be factual and friendly;
- Use clear and simple language;
- Be action orientated; and
- Make recycling normal and mainstream.