

MERSEYSIDE TEXTILE FORUM 2012-13
WDA/24/13

Recommendation

That:

1. Members note the contents and recommendations in paragraph 6 of the Merseyside Textile Forum Outputs and Outcomes Summary Report at Appendix 1;
2. Members agree to continue the Authority's support in line with the existing financial model subject to the annual budget process. ;

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Merseyside Textile Forum 2012-13
WDA/24/13

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Merseyside Textile Forum in 2012-13; and
- 1.2 To seek Members on-going support for the Textile Forum to increase diversion of textiles from landfill.

2. Background

- 2.1 In November 2011 the Authority agreed to implement changes to the recycling credit payments for textiles (WDA 43/11). A reduction was made for these specific payments from £55.00 to a flat rate of £25.00 per tonne from April 2012.
- 2.2 The savings of £48,000 were re-invested to support actions by Textile sector organisations, particularly communication campaigns. This was a more targeted approach to support the Authority objective to incentivise increased textile recycling rather than a simple cash payment to charities for Textile recycling already completed and the Authority continues to spend no more money than that previously given as recycling credit payments.
- 2.3 The Merseyside Textile Forum was launched in April 2012 and is the first sectoral partnership of its kind in the UK. The Forum had its formal launch at Liverpool Fashion Week in October 2012.
- 2.4 Members were updated on the background and activities of the Forum in a Special Focus Report in April 2013 (WDA/11/13). The innovation of setting up the Forum has been recognised nationally with the Authority being awarded third prize at the Improvement and Efficiencies Awards 2013 which recognise and reward excellence in the public and local government sectors. The initiative has also been short-listed for the Local Authority Innovation Section of the National Recycling Awards on 3rd July 2013.

- 2.5 Officers are increasingly being invited to present and share best practice about the initiative from organisations such as the Charity Retail Association and the London Waste and Recycling Board.

3. Project Delivery

3.1 The Textile Forum has been very active in its first year working together delivering a number of projects and engaging with residents at events. Projects include:

- Support at the Liverpool Fashion Week in October 2012 including different forum members collecting textiles on each day of Fashion Week.
- Commission of communications leaflets, banners and articles in local Lifestyles and Go Live magazines and the Liverpool Student Handbook;
- Promotion of the Pass It On textiles campaign including adverts on district Refuse Collection Vehicles, displays in charity shops across Merseyside and vacant retail units in Liverpool;
- The Salvation Army purchased 100 sets of scales for distribution to Forum members to improve data reporting and aid performance improvement across Merseyside charity shops;
- The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation is leading a schools textile collection pilot; and
- The British Heart Foundation is leading a textile collections pilot from John Moores University at the end of the current academic year.

3.2 Table 1 below identifies the range of projects undertaken in 2012-13 and those in development in 2013-14. These projects and other activities demonstrate the added value of supporting the Forum with money being spent on the Authority's waste textile objectives whilst promoting social values in its support to charities on Merseyside for diverting textiles from landfill.

Table 1: Summary of projects: 2012-14

| Project | Description |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Projects completed in 2012-13 | |
| MTF Secretariat | Management, administration and technical support in |

| Project | Description |
|--|--|
| | quarter 4 up to 31 March 2013. |
| MTF Communications Plan | To reach as many people as possible with the key campaign messages on textiles recycling and re-use on Merseyside. This includes a target to divert 10% (1,300 tonnes) of the 13,000 tonnes of textiles currently estimated as available for recycling and re-use by any means by 31 March 2014. |
| RCV Textiles Livery | Design and development of 70 advertising panels, displayed on district refuse collection vehicles promoting textile recycling through the Pass It On campaign |
| Textile Leaflets | Design and printing of 20,000 'Pass it on' leaflets to promote recycling and reuse of textiles by householders. |
| Radio Advert | 105 radio adverts commissioned to run over three weeks on Radio City to promote the Pass it On message. |
| Metric weighing scales for charity shops | Purchase of 100 pairs of scales to improve the recording and reporting of accurate data on textiles received by charity shops across Merseyside. |
| Projects underway 2013-14 | |
| Bring Bank Mapping | A study to identify and map bring site locations across Merseyside, to identify gaps and locations for new bring sites. |
| School Collections | A recycling collection pilot to test the MTF branding and messaging against standard charity offerings to schools. |
| University Collections | Pilot collection project, offering textiles collection points for students at three sites on the John Moores University campus. This project began in May 2013. |
| Projects in development for 2013-14 | |
| Charity shop survey | Improve understanding of why their customers recycle, what items they chose not to recycle or reuse and why. |
| Local Participation Surveys/Research | Textile research project of households on Merseyside as part of a wider waste prevention programme evaluation. |
| On-demand Kerbside | Collection pilot project to test the feasibility and impact of an on-demand collection service for textiles for residents in St Helens. This project has been delayed pending the introduction of the new kerbside collection scheme in St Helens in 2013. |
| Business collections | Enable the MTF to test this model and compare against other methods of collection currently being piloted on Merseyside. |

3.3 The Forum drew in an additional £47,000 financial support from the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) which doubled the budget available to the Forum during the financial year. WRAP were keen to help test and potentially replicate the model being founded on Merseyside. This funding enabled a research and a baseline report and route map for

textiles in Merseyside, a Communications Plan including the early use of WRAP's new Pass It On branding and the management of the Forum for three quarters of the year.

- 3.4 MRWA officers have promoted the activities of the Forum and the Pass It On Campaign during 2012-13 through attendance at 28 events and emailing issues of the Authority's waste prevention E-Zine emailed to 2258 residents currently on our waste prevention database.
- 3.5 The Partnership website www.recycleformerseasideandhalton.com has been updated to include new pages on textiles and the Forum. The web address has been promoted in the Pass It On leaflets and on the refuse collection vehicle adverts across all districts (excluding Halton which has its own responsibilities for recycling credit payments). The adverts included the Authority's first use of QR (Quick Read) codes (excluding Wirral adverts where the contractor policy prevented their use). These codes can be scanned using mobile phones for direct access to the website pages and can be monitored.
- 3.6 There has been a three-fold increase in website activity during the year compared to 2011-12. These figures exclude mid-November and December 2012 data which was unavailable due to a technical problem. The relevant textile data between November 2012 and May 2013 is listed in Table 2 below.
- 3.7 The number of projects that have been prioritised and developed has been encouraging. However, it takes time to establish relationships amongst stakeholders to deliver the benefits of increased recycling and diversion from landfill. Equally there will be a time lag of a year or longer before the impact of the communications plan begin to show through in terms of increased recycling/re-use and demonstrate a change in behaviour of Merseyside residents.

Table 2: Partnership Website Data for Textiles

| Web Page | Page Views | Unique Page Views | Average Time | Direct Entrance (QR Code or Google) |
|------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Clothes re-use and recycling | 345 | 265 | 2.30 minutes | 193 (majority through the QR Code) |
| Textile Forum | 85 | 77 | 1.34 minutes | 24 (likely via Google) |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|------------|-----------------------|
| East Meets West Project | 43 | 35 | 43 seconds | 1 (likely via Google) |
|-------------------------|----|----|------------|-----------------------|

4. Summary of Findings, Outputs and Outcomes

4.1 A detailed report on the outputs and outcomes of the Forum in 2012-013 is attached at Appendix 1. Key facts include:

- Over 20 charities and third sector organisations have committed in kind time and resources to deliver projects in partnership and joint working with Merseyside Authorities and other stakeholders;
- Terms of reference were agreed and a Chair of the Forum appointed from the Charity Sector with active support from the British Heart Foundation in particular;
- The Forum spent £32,000 of the £48,000 allocated by MRWA and all of the £47,000 funding from WRAP resulting in an underspend of £16,000 for 2012-13. The underspend was in part due to capacity challenges and timescales, the need to establish the partnership working between disparate organisations, achieving value for money in the delivery of joint projects and using the additional funding levered in from WRAP. Similar issues have been reported by other organisations in developing partnership projects on waste management including a reported £1 million underspend in the Recycle for London campaign funded by the London Waste and Recycling Board in 2012-13.
- The Forum has engaged with wider stakeholders to share knowledge and good practice including representation on the national Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP) which brings together industry, government and the third sector; discussions with the Textiles Recycling Association to identify opportunities for collaborative efforts;
- A number of projects experienced challenges, particularly relating to management and resourcing which delayed a number of schemes. Going forward the strengthening of the project management capabilities of the Textile forum will be necessary to increase the capacity for this group to deliver success and thereby make an increased contribution to the Authority's waste objectives.;
- The constraint of project spend within one financial year is difficult especially when fitting in procurement of capital items and equipment;

- Recruitment of new organisations to the Forum is seen as a high priority to increase capacity to deliver, encourage knowledge transfer and resources for prioritised projects. Wider representation on the Forum should be considered from across the clothing supply chain which could include private sector re-use and recycling organisations, retailers and suppliers. The Textile Recycling Association has expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Forum.
- Support for projects to encourage re-use of textiles as donations of textiles to some charity shops in Merseyside are lower than any other region in England.

4.2 A number of economic and social factors are having an effect on tonnages and the decisions of householders about what they do with their textiles when they no longer need or want them. Householders may be passing on their clothing to friends and family rather than give to charity shops for recycling and re-use or indeed put them into a kerbside collection scheme such as the Knowsley pilot textile collection scheme

4.3 Cash for Clothes shops are indicative of the economic climate where private sector businesses have come into the region and directly paying householders for their clothing and rags. This reflects the current high payments received for textiles but is in direct competition to the charity sector. The Authority's support to the Textile Forum and local charities promotes added social value to the residents of Merseyside. However, the activities of the private sector do mask the contributions and impact made by the Forum to increase diversion of textiles from landfill.

4.4 It is important for the Authority to receive meaningful and consistent data to evaluate success and potential savings. Impacts from textile recycling and re-use can be gauged through analysis of data using the Waste Prevention and Carbon Toolkit but further evaluation work will need to be undertaken on the benefits and behavioural change identified from the projects delivered by the Forum.

5. **Risk Implications**

| Identified Risk | Likelihood Rating | Consequence Rating | Risk Value | Mitigation |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Failure to incentivise further textile recycling | 3 | 4 | 12 | Review of the recycling credit payment mechanism to third |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|----|---|
| | | | | <p>parties to reduce barriers for claiming.</p> <p>Impact and effectiveness of current communication schemes on residents' behaviours in the short and medium term.</p> |
| Failing of the Forum to deliver projects. | 3 | 4 | 12 | <p>Need to ensure capacity and resources are in place to deliver projects.</p> <p>Need to build in additional training for Forum members.</p> |

6. Proposed Course of Action

- 6.1 The findings of the Summary report and feedback from stakeholders demonstrates that the initial set up year for the Forum has been successful and joint working projects have been delivered. However, there is scope for improvements and efficiencies to increase recycling and re-use of textiles on Merseyside.
- 6.2 Members are asked to give their on-going backing and support for the Forum using the current funding mechanism and in line with the financial implications identified in Authority report WDA43/11. This is to continue to limit the payment for textile recycling to a flat rate of £25.00 per tonne whilst re-investing the remaining budget into the Textile Forum to incentivise diversion from landfill of this material.
- 6.3 It is proposed to extend the scope of the current fund to include a small contribution for the training and development of Forum members to get better results from the projects they develop.

- 6.4 Future Authority financial contributions for the Forum will be made on an annual basis following the approval by Members of the Authority budget.

7. HR Implications

- 7.1 There are no Human Resource implications associated with this report although there is currently a short term MRWA officer resource requirement for Forum administration until the Forum confirms a permanent replacement for technical management by the Forum membership previously funded by the WRAP funding.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The objectives of increasing textile recycling and re-use support the strategic objectives and targets of the JRWMS and Corporate Plan to:
- Achieve a 50% recycling rate;
 - Reduce the climate change/carbon impacts of waste management (Diversion of textiles from landfill having the highest carbon benefit of any household waste material);
 - Maximise waste prevention;
 - Maximise landfill diversion/recovery of residual waste; and
 - Promote behavioural /cultural change that delivers the Strategy objectives.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The project model of a reduced payment for recycling credits to incentivise increased diversion from landfill of textiles has been recognised as innovative at the national level and the Authority has received a national award and a number of requests for information about the initiative.
- 9.2 The reinvestment of the budget to support projects being delivered by the Forum remains lower than the cost of landfill and therefore financial support for the Forum continues to be a viable option.
- 9.3 Members will be presented with evidence and information each year at the time of the annual budget setting to consider funding for the Textile Forum for the following financial year.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 The development of the Merseyside Textile Forum has been a successful mechanism for partnership working particularly with the third sector and is an award winning initiative which is being identified as best practice nationally.
- 10.2 WRAP continue to be members of the Forum and other organisations have enquired about becoming members including the national Textile Recycling Association of sorters, collectors and reprocessors.
- 10.3 The activities of the Forum continue to be a viable financial option for support by the Authority. No more money has been spent by the Authority that that which would have been given to third parties as part of the recycling credit payments for textiles so the business case remains sound.
- 10.4 MRWA continues to play a pivotal role in working with the stakeholders in the Forum and wider textile sector and supporting effective projects to increase awareness and understanding of the need for textile recycling by Merseyside residents.
- 10.5 The attached report shows the added value of the Textile Forum and the projects being developed and delivered. However, it recognises the need for some limited capacity building and training and development of the Forum membership.
- 10.6 Further evaluation and research needs to be undertaken over the next twelve months as the impact of communications and projects takes effect and to help inform Members when considering future financial arrangements as part of the budget setting process for 2014-15.

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The background documents to this report are open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of The Local Government Act 1972:

1. Summary of Outputs and Outcomes Report 2012-13