

East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership

Communications and Engagement Strategy 2019

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Version Control	Version	Changes
	0.1- June 2017	
	0.2-January 2019	Original Procurement Plan expanded to Communications and Engagement Strategy following appointment of Biffa.
	0.3 – March 2019	Minor amendments following Comms kick-off meeting
	0.4 – March 2019	Minor amendments
	0.5 – March 2019	Minor amendments pre JWRC
	0.6 – April 2019	Minor amendments pre-JWRC

1. Overview

Following the agreement of the mutual exit agreement with Kier in relation to the waste collection, recycling and street and beach cleansing services, the Partnership has procured a new contract with Biffa to start from 29 June 2019, for seven years.

This Strategy sets out a protocol for the management of communications and planned activities for **residents** from December 2018. There are two phases to the communications:

- **Phase 1** – this covers up to July 2019 and the commencement of the Biffa contract;
- **Phase 2** – this will cover the service/round changes that Biffa will implement, currently anticipated to be at least three months after the start of the contract.

The Strategy is a live document and will be updated as required. Once Biffa announce their service/round changes and the timing for the service change, the Strategy will be extended to cover the required resident communications.

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide co-ordination for all communications activities that affect **all residents** in the Partnership area. Communications messages that are local to one council area and affect some or all of its residents will be handled by that council and fall outside of the remit of this Strategy.

2. Aims

- To meet Government recycling targets.
- To reduce the impact of change to residents and communities.
- To provide key messages for residents in a clear, timely, informative and consistent manner using a variety of mediums, with agreed timings;
- To ensure that relevant council staff are fully briefed and able to impart messages to residents.
- To ensure co-ordination between Kier and Biffa and consistency of communication to employees.

3. Scope

- To deliver, monitor and manage proactive communication with stakeholders.
- To provide a timely response to media enquiries.
- To ensure consistency of content messages and timings across the Partnership, incorporating where necessary Eastbourne Borough Council's change to an in-house collections and cleansing service, and Hastings Borough Council's change to an in-house cleansing service.

4. Objectives

The key messages to residents for **Phase 1** are:

- Changes to the contractor and who does what?

- Changes to the collection method and what materials go in which container.
- Glass box no longer required and how to recycle glass.
- What to do with glass boxes.
- Information to improve volume and quality of recycling.

The key messages to residents for **Phase 2** are:

- Service/round changes – the changes to the resident's collection days and when does the change commence.
- Information to improve volume and quality of recycling.

Kier and Biffa have the responsibility to provide key messages to staff transferring from one authority to another, and the Partnership's role in this is to ensure co-ordination between the two and consistency of communication. These messages include the announcement of the new employer, information about transfer to the new employer, and clarity on roles and duties.

5. Customer and Stakeholder Assessment

The following stakeholders have been identified:

Primary Stakeholders

- Residents
- Members/councillors
- Local, trade and national press
- Kier staff (includes Business Manager, Operations Managers, Supervisors and all other local staff)
- Trades unions – GMB and Unison
- Hastings, Rother and Wealden waste and customer services staff
- East Sussex County Council (ESCC) (as disposal authority)
- Veolia
- DMR (dry mixed recycling) contractor(s) currently being procured by ESCC
- Parish councils

Secondary stakeholders

- Directors and Senior Officers (ESCC and Districts/Boroughs)
- Kier Corporate staff

Tertiary Stakeholders

- Local environmental & sustainability groups
- Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

6. Contact Information for Stakeholder Groups

Stakeholder	Method of Communication
Kier Staff	Kier staff newsletter Face-to-face meetings Direct communication
Residents	Council websites MyAlerts Facebook

	Twitter Press releases FAQs Advertising materials
Unions (GMB & Unison)	Face-to-face meetings Regular internal newsletters Direct communications including personal letters
Councillors	Council specific bulletins

7. Communications Protocol

The Joint Waste Office should be informed of all media enquiries and have the opportunity to review any response prior to it being issued to ensure consistency of message.

8. Contacts

NAME	ORGANISATION	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
Madeleine Gorman	East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership	<i>Personal contact information redacted for public circulation.</i>	
Cathy Pennock	East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership		
Sue Oliver	East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership		
Barbara Browning	Hastings Borough Council		
Hollie Farley	Rother District Council		
Jim Van den Bos	Wealden District Council		
Andrew Chalk	Biffa		
Gabriella Johnson	Kier		

9. Design and Branding

The following matters are under consideration:

Uniforms

- Biffa staff shall be identifiable by the public at all times by wearing a company corporate uniform and carrying an approved means of identification (see Specification 1.20.3). The uniform details will be recorded by the Joint Waste Office and approval provided for the means of identification.
- Biffa has confirmed the detail of their uniforms and local branding.
- Hastings has confirmed the uniforms and branding for their Direct Services Organisation.

Vehicle livery

All vehicles operated by Biffa to deliver services under the Contract (rather than other Biffa commercial work in the area) must be maintained with a consistent and agreed livery.

The Biffa vehicles will be white, display the Biffa corporate brand together with council logos and an agreed permanent (not easily replaced) vinyl panel design on the main body of the vehicles.

Biffa has also included the cost of three full vehicle vinyl wraps within their bid (clarified as three small vehicles or one large one). Biffa are designing these with the support of their dedicated marketing team and design consultants.

The Partnership has opportunity to make further use of the vehicles for communications and promotional purposes by funding retro-fitted and replaceable “zipped” panels for each vehicle if required in due course.

10. Communications Activity Planner for Residents

Currently the Communications Activity Planner sets out detail of the communications planned for residents by the Joint Waste Partnership (JWP) and has two phases:

- **Phase 1** covers communications to residents in the lead up to and commencement of the Biffa contract, the key message being that glass will go into the recycling bin/sack with all other materials and what to do/what not to do with the glass box. The detail is shown below.
- **Phase 2** covers communications to residents about the service change, currently anticipated to be at least three months from the date Biffa commence the contract.

Current focus and activity is on Phase 1 and once there is clearer information about the service change and the numbers of residents and rounds affected, initial planning for Phase 2 will commence in June.

Residents – Phase 1

Note (1): Council specific communications are identified by the Lead Role

Note (2): Actions shaded in green are completed.

Date	Stakeholder	Contents of Communication	Method of Communication	Lead role
2018				
12 December	WDC residents	WDC – Garden waste service change to charged service from 29 June 2019	Press release MyAlerts Facebook Leaflet	WDC (specific)
2019				
8 January	Press	Announcement of Biffa as new contractor & start date	Press release	JWO
January	Residents	Announcement of Biffa as new contractor & start date	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter	HBC RDC WDC
14 January	WDC residents	WDC – Garden waste service change	WDC web site inc. FAQs	WDC (specific)
4 – 25 February	WDC residents	WDC – Garden waste service change	MyAlerts Twitter Facebook	WDC (specific)
11 February	WDC residents	Garden waste collection service changes	Leaflet	WDC (specific)
15 April –	WDC	WDC – Reminder to sign up	Mail-out	WDC

Date	Stakeholder	Contents of Communication	Method of Communication	Lead role
6 May	residents	to charged Garden waste service	Website Press release Twitter Facebook	(specific)
	RDC residents	RDC – Reminder to sign up to charged garden waste service (must register before 17 May for guaranteed service)	Mail-out Website My Alerts Twitter Facebook	RDC (specific)
May	Relevant council staff	Policy document issued to include local & central client roles and responsibilities	Document & briefing	JWO
June	Residents	Information on new collection system and that recycling will go into one container	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter Advertising materials	HBC RDC WDC ESCC
June	Residents	Information on importance of recycling to improve the volume and quality of recycling	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter Advertising materials	HBC RDC WDC ESCC
June	Residents	Glass box no longer required and what should residents do with them	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter Advertising materials	HBC RDC WDC ESCC
June	Residents	Local comms in Hastings and Rother for residents whose recycling is collected in sacks	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter Advertising materials	HBC RDC (specific)
June	Press	Explanation of new collection system	Press release	JWO
10 – 17 June	WDC residents	WDC – Garden waste service change	Bin hangers	WDC (specific)
June	WDC residents	WDC – Garden waste permits issued to residents	Direct communication to resident	WDC (specific)
July	Residents	Reminder on new collection system and assurance that collection days remain the same	MyAlerts Websites Facebook Twitter	HBC RDC WDC

Residents – Phase 2

Note (1): Further Council specific communications may also be required

Date	Stakeholder	Contents of Communication	Method of Communication	Lead role
2019				
September-	Residents	Changes to collection	Calendar	Biffa

Date	Stakeholder	Contents of Communication	Method of Communication	Lead role
October		schedule(s)		
September-October	Residents	<i>Location specific matters (as necessary)</i>	<i>to be confirmed</i>	<i>to be confirmed</i>

Increased customer contact is anticipated at both Phase 1 and Phase 2. To assist the councils, Biffa have undertaken to support the planned communications activity with press releases and other relevant information, and Biffa and customer contact staff will be working closely to ensure efficient services for residents.

To allow customer contact staff to handle customer enquiries about services to their property, the councils' customer contact staff will have access to WhiteSpace Municipal (Biffa's IT system), and cascade training will be provided.

Once the contract commences, Biffa will affix bin tags to the wheeled recycling containers, to alert any residents who are continuing to put their glass boxes out for collection. If the resident continues to use the glass box, it will not be collected and the relevant council will be notified to make contact with the resident and explain the change in service.

Phase 1 funding and budget

ESCC is keen to work in partnership with the districts and boroughs to develop key messages relating to increasing the volume and improving the quality of recycling and to explore additional communication channels. ESCC has indicated that they will contribute to the costs of this work and in particular communications direct to residents. Further work will be undertaken to scope and cost this work.

Phase 2 funding and budget

As part of the procurement for the contract, bidders were asked to allow £200,000 for resident communications for service change. This is only available for Phase 2 communications and not for Phase 1. Biffa's Marketing and Communications Manager will assist each authority in producing a series of press releases to inform residents about the services being provided and the positive changes. The councils are working with Biffa to plan how this resource will be utilised effectively.

11. UK Resources & Waste Strategy

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published a policy paper entitled "Our Waste, Our Resources: a Strategy for England" in December 2018. This document considers all of our natural resources and has significant implications for waste and recycling, as follows:

- Review of plastic packaging, in particular single use.
- Improving the quantity, quality and consistency of recyclable materials.
- Tackling waste crime.
- Consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS).
- Consultation on legal powers to introduce food waste targets (which would mean the introduction of food waste collections).
- Consultation on free garden waste services.

Certain elements of the Strategy require consultation, and developments will be monitored to ensure that any changes affecting the introduction and delivery of the Biffa service from 29 June 2019 onwards are incorporated into the communication activities.

12. Local Activity

Some communications activity will be unique to each council, and local decisions will be made on the content, scope and timing of messages. At present these include:

- Wealden District Council (WDC) considered measures to reduce single use plastics at their Cabinet meeting in December 2018, and a wide range of proposals were reviewed. The one that potentially impacts on the waste and recycling contract is segregated on-street litter bins, and actions will be included in the Communications Activity Planner as required.
- WDC's change to a charged garden waste service.
- Introduction of the Direct Services Organisation in Hastings.
- Messages for residents that use recycling sacks in Hastings and Rother.
- Potential changes to collection frequencies in Hastings and Rother for some residents.

13. Strategy Review and Update

This document is the responsibility of the Joint Waste Office working in partnership with the districts and boroughs and ESCC. It will be reviewed monthly and refreshed as necessary, in line with the mobilisation and communications plans being developed by each council and the contractor.