

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE:

Update on Communications Campaign on Household Recycling

REPORT OF:

HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

FOR SUBMISSION TO:

AUTHORITY MEETING

DATE:

22 June 2017

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report provides an update on the Authority's Communications Campaign on Household Recycling, including the results of the first year of the campaign and plans for year two of the campaign (April 2017 to March 2018).

RECOMMENDATION:

To note the results of the first year of the Campaign and to note the Campaign's direction of travel for year two.

SIGNED:

Head of Legal and Governance

DATE: 12 June 2017

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report details the output and impacts of the first of a three year recycling communications campaign approved by the Authority in February 2015. The report details the communications activity that resulted and provides a summary of the impact to date and outlines proposals to continue with a similar creative approach and media mix for the campaign in year two.
- 1.2 The Communications Campaign on Household Recycling (previously known as the Joint Recycling Communications Campaign) was launched in 2012 to address low recycling performance across the NLWA area. It was recognised at the time that there may be economies of scale to be realised if NLWA could deliver a campaign which was supplementary to borough activity. A pan-north London campaign may also be able to use communications media that it would be difficult for individual boroughs to justify using on cost effectiveness grounds e.g. advertising on buses with routes crossing more than one borough.
- 1.3 In February 2015 Members approved proposals to extend the existing Communications Campaign on Household Recycling to a three year programme of activity to be delivered by the Authority from 2015/16 to 2017/18 (the Campaign) to allow for continuity of planning and delivery. The report to the February 2015 Authority meeting outlined that in committing to a three year programme of activity, each of the associated three years' of budget for the Campaign would be in line with previous years' annual budgets.
- 1.4 A report to the February 2016 Authority meeting on the consumer creative agency (or communications agency) procurement for the Campaign recommended that Members note the progress of the procurement, and included officers' proposals that the Campaign be delivered between 2016 and 2019 rather than from 2015 to 2018 as originally agreed (with an anticipated contract commencement in July 2016).
- 1.5 At the June 2016 Authority meeting members agreed a recommendation to award the contract for the delivery of the Campaign to an agency called Media Therapy (now known as 'Therapy') (the Agency), as their tender was evaluated to be the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with the award criteria.
- 1.6 The Authority's procurement documents for the Campaign requested that bidders provide proposals for targeting the campaign. The brief requested the development of a high-level (non-instructional) and motivational campaign with a compelling and persuasive proposition for north Londoners which would focus on motivating them to recycle more. It was recognised that many of the existing approaches to communications to increase recycling were now, after many years, having more limited success than in the past.

2.0 UPDATE ON CAMPAIGN PROGRESS – YEAR ONE

- 2.1 Following the June 2016 Authority meeting, officers worked with the Agency to develop a high level and inspirational behaviour change campaign strategy. The starting point for the Agency was to propose that they work with a group of residents who were not engaging with existing messaging about recycling - the most fertile target for change. National research had identified that a section of the population categorised as ‘aware but inactive’ and ‘contemplated but not engaged’ recyclers were likely to be aged 18 – 34 living in flats, terraces or maisonettes and to be either childless or with children. Accordingly the Agency cross referenced this research and proposed a focus on 18 – 34 year olds, a group often known as ‘millennials’.
- 2.2 Further research by the Agency also identified that messages about recycling were not cutting through to millennials. This group is likely to move home more frequently than older age groups in the population and can therefore miss recycling messages as they move from one area to another. Research also showed that recycling was seen as an agenda that was being projected upon them from outside their world – the proposition to recycle was irrelevant and insufficiently tangible to motivate them to act. As a result Therapy proposed a media strategy which would principally target north London millennials with messages in the home and using an approach and language which was relevant to them – the word ‘recycling’ would not be used for example in the key messaging of the campaign.
- 2.3 The research also showed that messages from figures of authority were not as likely to be as effective with this group of adults as with some others, because their communications focussed relatively more on peer to peer communication. Accordingly unbranded creative ideas formed the basis of the Campaign, which was further developed with regular reporting to the Members Recycling Working Group (MRWG) (in line with the recommendation of the February 2015 Authority report) to ensure ongoing Member involvement.
- 2.4 The strategy agreed for the Campaign was therefore an ‘in the home’ media strategy, focusing on targeted television advertising and digital/social media content, with other supporting activities, designed to promote household recycling in north London and to motivate residents to recycle more.
- 2.5 Focus group research was used to test different creative concepts for the advertising with the target audience. This testing confirmed that recycling messages have largely passed this group by, as they are less likely to be influenced by messages seen to come from ‘an authority’ and that a new creative approach was required.
- 2.6 The first year’s activity (2016/17) was delivered in two phases (referred to as ‘bursts’) from 16 January to 26 February 2017 and 6 March to 18 April 2017. The activity centred around a 30 second advert featuring a character called Arjen (in [A warning from the Netherlands](#) – an imagined future in which the Netherlands has run out of a number of basic materials to make regular

consumer items such as trainers). The advert, which was pre-tested with the target audience by research company 2CV, was delivered via the following media:

- Sky AdSmart – television advertising
- Collective Network – video on demand (VOD) advertising
- Collective Network – display advertising (web banners linking to a research questionnaire seeking viewers' reaction to the advert)
- You Tube – digital pre-roll advertising (advertising shown before the searched for content/video)
- Facebook – advert appearing in individuals' newsfeeds

2.7 The advert directs traffic to a new website, saveourstuff.co.uk, where visitors can find more information about the campaign and the issues raised in the advert, as well as local recycling information. The social media element of the campaign consisted of Facebook posts from 'Arjen's account' and Twitter posts from @SaveOurStuff, which were shared both organically and with a very small amount of paid promotion in order to deliver the posts to individuals' newsfeeds.

2.8 Overall the channels above performed well in terms of delivering the advert specifically to the target audience and in terms of delivering cost efficiency. Throughout the two campaign bursts it was possible to monitor and optimise the media delivery to ensure that the campaign was delivered in line with the agreed plan. With this optimisation and ongoing negotiation with media owners the Agency was able to deliver additional media value equivalent to 533,800 impressions: Impressions being one of the key media performance measures which is bought on a cost per thousand basis.

2.9 Two features of advertising campaigns that would generally be expected to increase recall of the advertising, when people are asked in a research setting whether they can remember seeing the campaign, are:

- Having a branded campaign which the target audience can remember;
- A longer running and well established advertising campaign

2.10 The NLWA campaign was not branded because the target audience is likely to be sceptical of messages from authority. The campaign was also new. In the light these two facts, a relatively high proportion of the target audience were able to recall the advert once they had seen it. This was assessed through research conducted on the Agency's behalf after burst one by consumer insights company Nielsen and by using a promoted (through display advertising) and incentivised Survey Monkey survey. Research on the target audience's awareness of the Campaign was conducted by Nielsen with a sample of 300 people. Awareness and effectiveness of the Campaign was assessed via a Survey Monkey survey with a sample of 109 people. Initial figures suggest that the advert and the social media appealed to the target audience, as shown by the age profile of the people engaging with the campaign on social media (see Appendix 1), and that the target audience was

more motivated to recycle having seen the advert. Awareness and engagement with the campaign are therefore increasing and this will be built on in year two.

Summary of year one

2.11 In summary – the selected media mix (detailed in paragraph 2.4) enabled delivery of an ‘in-home’ campaign; which allowed the advertising spend to be equally weighted across all seven boroughs; the advertisement and social media activity was appropriate for the target audience as demonstrated by the research feedback and profile of consumers who engaged with the campaign on Facebook and Twitter; and engagement rates were high – well above industry norms. As examples of the campaign’s performance:

- The top performing three tweets from Arjen resulted in engagement rates of between 14.6% and 59% against industry norms of less than 0.1%. (The engagement rate is how many of the audience share, comment on or like the page or social media post.);
- Recall of the advert was relatively high with 36.3% of the target audience recalling seeing the advert after the first burst alone.
- The campaign resulted in 6.781 million impressions 10.3% above the campaign target of a guaranteed 6.147 million impressions; impressions are the number of times the advert was shown to members of the target audience across all media. .

2.12 The only area of under-performance compared with the original plans was the number of impressions delivered by Facebook which delivered 2,260,105 impressions versus a target of 3,000,000 impressions. However, this under-performance was offset by other media which over-performed. In total 533,800 more impressions were delivered than planned.

2.13 The detailed results for the first year of the Campaign, including both the media metrics and the results of the research conducted by Nielsen and via Survey Monkey are detailed in Appendix 1.

3.0 PLANS FOR YEAR TWO

3.1 The second year of the campaign (2017/18) will continue to target those aged 18 to 34 via the ‘Save Our Stuff’ creative concept, aiming to further drive campaign engagement and increase awareness and motivation to recycle. The concept appeals to the target audience and is starting to show positive results in terms of achieving the original campaign aims of increasing awareness of recycling and motivation to recycle amongst the target audience.

3.2 The central character (Arjen) from the advert will continue to feature strongly in the campaign, both through the continuing distribution of the existing advert and through the development of a new advert, which will be distributed through similar media channels to those used in year one. The campaign will

continue to be supported through new and existing social media channels and through saveourstuff.co.uk. Further development of the website will take place to encourage visitors to spend more time on the site and to improve functionality on mobile devices, making it easier for visitors to access the more detailed information about recycling held there.

- 3.3 Other tactics will be pursued, including working with brands to deliver recycling messages through their existing advertising campaigns (the co-cycling element of the campaign), which officers are currently working on. The proposed approach to co-cycling involves seeking brands' permission to 'fly-post' over existing advertising campaigns (at the end of a run of billboard advertising) with messages about recycling the packaging of the product in question.
- 3.4 Targeted evaluation of the first year of the campaign was carried out via research conducted by Nielsen and via a Survey Monkey survey (see Appendix 1), as well as by the metrics of the media used itself. In year two of the campaign a proportion of the budget will be reserved for more extensive evaluation of the Campaign's impact on the target audience, looking at both awareness of the Campaign and motivation to recycle amongst those who have seen the Campaign. This is likely to be conducted by an independent agency.
- 3.5 Officers have worked with the Agency on developing the year two campaign strategy (as outlined in sections 3.1 to 3.4 above), and following consultation with the Chair, as communications lead for the Authority, are now working on a second advert (script development, casting, director's approach etc), which builds on the 'Save Our Stuff' concept used in the first advert. A more detailed account of the year two campaign strategy will be taken to the June meeting of the Members Recycling Working Group (MRWG).
- 3.6 The focus of the advert will continue to be on one material that can be recycled, in line with the advice of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) for targeting this group, and the material featured will be glass. Other elements of the strategy for the year two campaign, including a media plan for distributing the advert, are currently being finalised. Improvements will also be made so that the experience of those accessing the campaign website on tablets and phones will be improved. This is because a high volume of consumers (48,864) chose to click through from the film to the campaign website from their mobile device.
- 3.7 The second year of the Campaign is likely to be launched towards the end of the summer.

4.0 RESOURCE LONDON

- 4.1 In September 2016 Members delegated authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Chair, to pursue opportunities for joint working between the Authority and Resource London, to determine the extent to which the Authority's Campaign could be delivered in conjunction with Resource London, and to proceed on that basis.

- 4.2 Although the exact nature of the programme of activity and the campaign to be delivered by Resource London to promote recycling to a similar target audience on a pan-London basis is still in the planning stages, the Authority remains in close contact with Resource London to assess, on an ongoing basis, where synergies could be sought between Resource London activities and the Authority's Campaign.

5.0 PROGRESS MONITORING

- 5.1 Updates about the Campaign have been brought to MRWG throughout 2016/17, and borough officers have been involved in the Campaign development at suitable points. This approach will be continued in year two of the Campaign.
- 5.2 The results of the second year of the Campaign will be brought to a future Authority meeting.

6. COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

- 6.1 The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments to add.

7. COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER

- 7.1 The budget for the life of the three year campaign was approved at £915k, at £305k per year. To deliver the second year timetable, planning began in 2016/17 and £11k has been brought forwards from 2017/18 into 2016/17 to cover these costs.

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REPORT ENDS

APPENDIX 1

Results of year one of Communications Campaign on Household Recycling

Research results (research conducted after burst one):

- Percentage of the target audience (research sample of 109) that recalled seeing the advert after burst one: **36.3%** (Source: Survey Monkey survey)
- Percentage of the target audience (research sample of 109) that were encouraged to think more about recycling having seen the advert after burst one: **59%** (Source: Survey Monkey survey)
- Percentage increase or 'uplift' between those (research sample of 300) who hadn't seen the advert and those who had seen it three times that were encouraged to think more about recycling: **70.9%** (Source: Nielsen)

Campaign media metrics for bursts one and two:

- Number of times the advert was shown to members of the target audience (or number of impressions) across all media: **6,781,076**
- Number of impressions across Sky AdSmart: **798,724** (the advert appeared as part of scheduled advertising in 87% of available households within the target group, with each household having between four and six opportunities to see the advert).
- Number of times the audience watched the advert all the way through (or number of completed views): **1,646,632** (this figure does not include Sky AdSmart advertising, which cannot be assessed)
- Breakdown of completed views by channel:
 - Facebook – **25,678**
 - YouTube – **537,878**
 - Collective video on demand (VOD) – **1,083,076**
- Number of visits to the Campaign website - saveourstuff.co.uk: **48,864**
- Number of engagements (likes, shares, comments) with social media posts: **4,398**
- Percentage of those who engaged with social media posts who were within the target age group: **90% (Facebook)** and **60% (Twitter)**(analysis conducted after burst one)

Summary of impressions by channel

Channel	Planned impressions	Actual impressions
Digital VOD	2,000,000	2,260,105
Sky Adsmart	787,276	798,724
Digital pre-roll	Please see below	1,932,585
Facebook	3,000,000	2,260,105
Total		7,251,519

Digital pre-roll was not bought on the basis of impressions but on the basis of planned views.