

SCHEDULE 36 - COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Communications Protocol

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This protocol provides a framework for how key messages and information for communication with key stakeholders are developed, agreed and communicated between the Councils and the Contractor (including, where this involves any external communications/PR/public affairs resource retained by either of the Parties).
- 1.2 It is important that all and any information given publicly is accurate and has the full authority and confidence of the Councils when it is communicated to the Contract's community of audiences and stakeholders, *including print and broadcast media*.
- 1.3 This protocol has been developed to ensure that where information on issues is communicated it is done effectively, using the most relevant channels and media contacts, in consultation with the Councils' communications sub-group (this will be made up of a communications officer from each Council) and where appropriate, Project leadership.

Scope

- (a) The Parties will agree to a common and consistent approach for all future communications. Each Party has established internal media protocols and media staff experienced in the presentation and release of material/information for both 'good news' stories and issues requiring more sensitive handling and management.
- (b) This protocol applies to all communications through the media across all channels including media relations, plus all printed and online information, such as letters, leaflets, brochures and websites which relate to or could impact upon the Contract.
- (c) Any failure of this protocol relating to Performance Standards as described in Schedule 5 (Performance and Monitoring) will be reported in the Monthly Service Report.

Protocol

- (a) The Parties agree that there will be liaison on any proposed media and communications activity which relates directly to the Contract, including the exchange of and

opportunity to comment on draft statements and announcements before the material/information is released publicly.

- (b) The Parties recognise that there will be occasions where the media seek information directly from the Contractor about industry, technical and commercial issues. Unless there is a potential reputation risk issue identified for the Contract and/or the Parties, this should be dealt with by the Contractor without the necessity for consultation with the Councils' communications sub-group. If the Contractor is uncertain whether this information would affect the Contract, discussions should take place with a member of the Councils' communications sub-group and the Councils' Representative.
- (c) Each Party commits to alerting the other, at the earliest possible opportunity, to issues arising which may impact on the work or reputation of the Contractor and/or each respective organisation.
- (d) Where urgent communications issues arise that require an immediate response, these will be referred directly to the Councils' Representative for development, agreement and sign off. (See Approvals Process below).
- (e) For the benefit of the Parties, monthly reports on media and communications activity should be included in the Monthly Service Report to reflect ongoing interest in and issues impacting on the Contract and the Parties, and to identify aspects which need to be monitored. This may be shared through meetings of the communications sub-group at which the Contractor will be represented, or electronically via the Councils' Representative's office when it is considered more timely or efficient to do so.
- (f) The Contractor will be allowed to photograph or film in or on any property used in relation to the Contract with the prior written approval, not to be unreasonably withheld of the Councils' Representative. Approval must be sought in writing two (2) Business Days prior to the need to photograph or film and a response will be given within one (1) Business Day of receipt of the written request. If no response is given consent will be deemed to have been given. For the avoidance of doubt, the Senior Lenders' technical adviser shall be granted the right to photograph or film in or on any property used in relation to the Contract in order to fulfil their monitoring obligations to the Senior Lenders.
- (g) The Councils' Representative will be the central point of contact for all information destined for release to media or Project audiences.

- (h) A community education liaison officer (the "CELO") (as defined in Schedule 3 (Service Delivery Plan)) is to be appointed by the Contractor to foster positive relations and proactively develop a programme of education and awareness-raising activity with schools and community groups. The post holder will also be involved in support and information around the newly established visitor centre (as described in Schedule 2 (Works Delivery Plan)). On all issues involving media contact this officer will defer to the Contractor's communications lead and Councils' Representative.
- (i) The Communications Strategy should be an agenda item at the monthly monitoring meetings. When it is necessary, (for example at the outset of the Project and at key milestones in the Project plan), a separate communications meeting shall be held.
- (j) The Councils' Representative in consultation with the Contractor, the communications sub-group, and Liaison Committee will advise and decide on the most appropriate media spokesperson to address specific issues.
- (k) All communications will be within the framework of the Communications Strategy, particularly in terms of key messages and pro-active media work.
- (l) This protocol should be reviewed by the Parties at least annually to ensure it is appropriate and reflects the needs of the Project.

2 Approvals Process

2.1 **Urgent media/communications issues and crises requiring immediate attention e.g. urgent media enquiries on deadlines:**

- 2.1.1 The Parties' communications lead, the Councils' Representative and the Contractor's communications lead.
- 2.1.2 Wider alert to Liaison Committee and key Parties' personnel to be agreed and guided by the issue arising.
- 2.1.3 Final sign-off by the Councils' Representative.

2.2 **Response required within four (4) hours**

Identified as medium risk – e.g. developing issues, sensitive information needed to a specific deadline, letters to stakeholders, anticipated statements and press releases:

- 2.2.1 The Councils' communications lead, the Councils' Representative and the Contractor's communications lead plus the communications sub-group and wider Project team when the issue and timescale allows.
- 2.2.2 Wider alert to Liaison Committee and key Parties' personnel to be agreed and guided by the issue arising.
- 2.2.3 Final sign-off by the Councils' Representative.

2.3 **Response within forty eight (48) hours and beyond**

Identified as low risk/operational and planned, e.g. ongoing planned publicity and communications activity including publication sign offs, planned press releases, signage and vehicle livery, to be agreed via the Contract Communications Strategy:

- 2.3.1 The Councils' Representative in consultation with the Parties' communications lead, the communications sub-group and the Contractor's communications lead and the wider Project team.
- 2.3.2 Final sign-off by the Councils' Representative.

3 **Information Boards within the Facility**

- 3.1 The Contractor will provide Site information boards that contain its own corporate information and details of the Councils' waste minimisation strategies (as described in Schedule 3 (Service Delivery Plan)). As a minimum we would expect the information boards to detail:
 - 3.1.1 Shanks' corporate social responsibility report
 - 3.1.2 Latest copy of the SHE bulletin
 - 3.1.3 Latest waste campaign leaflets
 - 3.1.4 Site RIDDOR information
 - 3.1.5 Visitor programme
 - 3.1.6 Site quality policy

3.1.7 Liaison Committee, community liaison group and stakeholder panel minutes

3.1.8 Details of the Facility's Recycling and Landfill diversion performance.

Externally, the Contractor will provide an electronic section or version of the information boards so that key messages, performance, seasonal and promotional messages can be seen by Site users.

4 Communications Strategy

4.1 A Communications Strategy will be developed within two (2) Months of Financial Close which will clearly set out a strategy and programme for internal and external communications throughout the lifetime of the contract.

4.2 Communications will be pro-active with a well-planned communications campaign to bring forward positive messages and public information, working closely with the Councils' Representative and local authority communications teams.

4.3 The Contractor's approach will utilise three (3) main parties that have the following responsibilities:

4.3.1 Community education liaison officer (CELO)

(a) The role of the community education liaison officer (the "CELO") is to liaise with the public and interested bodies throughout the duration of the Contract. This will be through education in waste management and promotion of the Contractor as the Councils' partner. At the early stages of the Contract, through to the Planning Application stage, the CELO will organise consultation events at public places and give presentations to interested local bodies such as neighbouring parish councils.

(b) The Contractor will also produce written materials about the proposals and the future operation of the Facility, to be distributed to residents and businesses in the local area.

4.3.2 Specialist Planning and Permitting Advisers

(a) The Contractor's specialist planning and permitting adviser, Mouchel, will advise on the format of the publicity material during the planning

and permitting phase and assist in presentations to local bodies in their role as planning advisers.

4.3.3 Communications Specialists

- (a) A communications consultancy that can demonstrate expertise in organising effective stakeholder consultation and links to the local press and media will be appointed to the Project. This company will manage the release of information concerning the Planning Application to the media and assist the Contractor in the suitable wording of these statements.

5 Community Liaison

5.1 The Contractor has undertaken early communication with stakeholders and members of the public as instrumental in reducing the risk of opposition, including:

- 5.1.1 During the planning phase, a community liaison group has been established (as described in Schedule 3 (Service Delivery Plan)) to act as an interface with the local community on major issues and the community liaison group will continue into the Works Period and the Service Period.
- 5.1.2 The community relationships established at the initial stages will need to be continued throughout the Site's working life and the Contractor will facilitate this wherever possible. There are two (2) key aspects that will aid with this: the CELO and a visitor centre at the ITSAD Facility. The Contractor will work in partnership with the local council officers who are actively working within local communities around the ITSAD and TLS Facilities helping to address issues relating to community spirit and social cohesion.
- 5.1.3 To ensure that all parts of the communities are reached we will make newsletters and information leaflets available in non-English languages, Braille and large print form on request.

Development of a Community Liaison Plan

- 5.1.4 The Contractor will use its operational experience and the Councils' local knowledge and expertise in developing a Community Liaison Plan. The purpose of the Community Liaison Plan is to establish a process by which

stakeholder engagement, public participation and community liaison is undertaken to best practice according to emerging Government legislation and aligned with the Councils' Policies.

6 Plan Development

6.1 The Contractor will develop a detailed Community Liaison Plan with the Councils and the community liaison group that will provide a framework of roles and responsibilities, media protocols, branding and image management, resources, communication techniques and monitoring. As a live document, the Community Liaison Plan will be reviewed annually in consultation with the Councils. The Community Liaison Plan will have the following key principles:

- 6.1.1 ensure communications include the corporate and service iconography, marketing and operational communications standards adopted for the Service;
- 6.1.2 ensure Staff working with members of the public are readily identifiable by means of name badges, in a suitable uniform and are fully trained and competent to assist the public promptly as required;
- 6.1.3 provide adequate methods of communications to meet the needs of disabled people and people from a non-English speaking background, respecting at all times local cultural and religious needs;
- 6.1.4 ensure all documents for public consumption are written in "plain English" with all technical terms explained, and that a translation service is available on request;
- 6.1.5 ensure Staff are accessible and easily contactable through appropriate local communications channels;
- 6.1.6 ensure that all public documents and public reports are published electronically and are accessible to the public via a dedicated website;
- 6.1.7 seek opportunities for involvement through community, educational and donation programmes and where appropriate work with our customers to create added value by developing skills, education, training and shared knowledge;

- 6.1.8 be open, honest and never knowingly mislead, be transparent about the operation and management of the Facilities and to help people prepare for changes in the Service in ways people understand;
 - 6.1.9 respond promptly to customer feedback, taking speedy action to improve our performance and provide relevant information regarding our activities;
 - 6.1.10 actively engage with the media within the communities in which we operate and with the relevant trade media to promote waste awareness and facilitate local people working towards meeting Recovery and Recycling targets; and
 - 6.1.11 protect positive external communications and enhance corporate reputation.
- 6.2 The Contractor will carry out feedback and satisfaction surveys from stakeholders by ensuring procedures are in place to allow interested parties to provide feedback at any stage of the Project in a formal or informal way as preferred and in a manner which encourages open and honest responses. The Contractor will also ensure that satisfaction surveys reflecting the principles of best value (in the form of written questionnaires, interviews or other appropriate survey formats) are carried out with service users annually at intervals agreed with the Councils, as a means of assessing the perceived quality, efficiency and effectiveness of communications, stakeholder engagement and public participation.
- 6.3 **Community Education Liaison Officer (CELO)**
- 6.3.1 The Contractor will appoint a CELO who will be employed to act as a dedicated point of contact for waste awareness and will be the Contractor's lead representative on the community liaison group. The CELO's primary role will be to educate Visitors on the Services at the ITSAD Facility and to support waste minimisation and Recycling, re-use and Recovery initiatives.
 - 6.3.2 The CELO will also be responsible for welcoming Visitors to the Visitors Centre at the ITSAD Facility and ensuring that they enjoy a positive experience. The CELO will manage all enquiries relating to the provision of the Service, by a member of the public or media and will ensure effective consultation with the Councils and carry out promotional and awareness campaigns to communicate Project objectives to the community.

- 6.3.3 The CELO will be pro-active in engaging and educating the community, (including hard to reach groups) demonstrating the importance of public participation. Their duties will include visits to schools and community groups across the Administrative Area.
- 6.3.4 When a request for community or education support is received by the Contractor or Shanks, the request will be logged and passed onto the CELO who will respond to the original request within five (5) Business Days by phone, email or mail. In the event that a matter cannot be dealt with by the CELO, the CELO will contact the most relevant person within the Contractor to respond to the enquiry. A record will be kept detailing the nature of the request and the follow up action conducted which could include a Site visit, use of the visitor centre or external visit, all of which may involve waste minimisation initiatives. A list of activities will be compiled in the Monthly Service Report detailing the nature of the activity, the organisations and number of people involved and any follow up actions.
- 6.3.5 If the nature of the enquiry is a complaint, the complaint will follow the Contractor's complaints procedure.
- 6.3.6 If the nature of the enquiry could be interpreted as sensitive to the Councils or is from the press or media, the Contractor will consult with the Councils' Representative or communications officers prior to making a response to the general public or media that has made the enquiry in line with the communications protocol.
- 6.3.7 A draft annual work plan for the CELO is set out in Table 1 below. As described above, this will be developed as part of the waste minimisation plan on an annual basis in consultation with the Councils' waste minimisation officers.

Table 1 Draft CELO work activities

Activity	Purpose	Output/deliverable
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Activity		Purpose	Output/deliverable
Schools Programme	Develop monitoring aspect of schools programme	Enable schools to measure how much they are recycling	Consultation produced Waste audit trialled
	School visits	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling and waste prevention	60 in total

7 Waste Minimisation

7.1 On an annual basis and in advance of each Contract Year, the Contractor will work with the Councils' waste officers and the initiatives they already have in place to further develop a detailed joint waste minimisation plan. The plan will be fully flexible to take account of national and local as well as topical issues and will include policies and initiatives for minimising future waste growth and promoting re-use.

7.2 The plan will cover the following areas in detail:

7.2.1 Support for and promotion of waste minimisation initiatives with the waste collection authorities within Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham.

7.2.2 Support and promotion of regional and national waste campaigns as they pertain to Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham

7.2.3 Engagement and support for the work of charitable and community organisations in waste awareness, re-use and minimisation activities.

7.2.4 Use of the ITSAD Facility Visitors Centre to educate and inform the public of the benefits that the Councils' waste minimisation initiatives will provide to the communities.

7.2.5 Parties' initiatives for community Recycling and Composting such as the GroundworkDearneValley environmental charity.

- 7.2.6 Issues of equality, disabled access and social exclusion.
- 7.2.7 Communications with residents from a non-English speaking background.
- 7.2.8 Reporting on the performance of the Service.
- 7.2.9 User/customer satisfaction surveys.
- 7.2.10 Information/education packs to promote the Service.
- 7.3 The Contractor will work in partnership with the Councils to support waste minimisation across the waste hierarchy. In particular, working with the Councils' HRWC contractors, the local business sector, voluntary sector and its diverse communities. The CELO will lead the Contractor's involvement in this partnership approach. The Liaison Committee will agree the annual budget for CELO activities that will complement the work currently being undertaken by the Councils.
- 7.4 Working with the voluntary sector in real partnership, the Contractor will ensure that those volunteers who are working on regeneration can also be informed about Recycling initiatives and the benefits it can have to them as an individual and their community as a whole.
 - 7.4.1 The Contractor will work to promote the recruitment of more volunteers who can be trained and supported to promote waste minimisation in the community.
 - 7.4.2 The Contractor will support the work of local environmental groups and incorporate existing initiatives.
 - 7.4.3 The Contractor will support the genuine involvement of stakeholders and will also engage with local environmental charity groups which work with local people to help improve their environment and provide training to help them find work. Table 2 summarises the suitable actions required from different parts of society and where within the waste hierarchy their participation can play a vital role in championing waste minimisation initiatives in the coordinated approach provided by the Contractor.

Table 2 - Community Waste Minimisation Work Plan

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Where	Activity	Purpose	Output / deliverable
All	Schools Programme	Develop monitoring aspect of schools programme	Enable schools to measure how much they are recycling Consultation produced Waste audit trialled
All		School visits	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling and waste prevention 60 in total
All	Community Outreach Programme	Community workshops and talks	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling service 15 workshops or talks per quarter
All		Community events	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling service 9 events per quarter
All		Training community groups	Train community groups to become local advocates of recycling and waste prevention 2 community groups per quarter
All		Develop relationships with youth and community groups	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling services amongst hard to reach/engage groups 4 partnerships per borough leading to projects
All		Volunteer programme	Increase capacity in the community to spread the recycling message 10 volunteer hours donated per Month 2 volunteers recruited and trained per quarter
All		Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley Town Centre roadshows with trailer	Increase awareness of recycling and waste prevention 2 roadshows per Month

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Where	Activity		Purpose	Output / deliverable
All	Leaflets And Merchandise	Basic service leaflets for Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham	Increase awareness and understanding of recycling services	100,000 leaflets
All		'What happens to recycling' leaflet	Dispel myths and increase awareness about the recycling process	40,000 leaflets
All		Cotton bags	Encourage people to reuse bags and promote the campaign	6,000 bags
All		No Junk Mail stickers	Reduce junk mail entering residual waste stream	40,000 stickers
All	Website	Website development	Keep website up to date Increase visitor numbers Encourage and enable community interaction with the campaign	9,000 unique Visitors per quarter

Table 1 - Table Stakeholders and Waste Hierarchy

Less waste, more material recovery, energy from waste and much less Landfill.						
Stakeholders						
	Local Authorities	The Contractor	Business	Retailers	Consumers	
Reduce	Observe high environmental standards	Observe high environmental standards	Produce less waste	Reduce packaging waste	Purchase responsibly	

Less waste, more material recovery, energy from waste and much less Landfill.

Stakeholders					
	Local Authorities	The Contractor	Business	Retailers	Consumers
Reuse			Design less wasteful products	Use influence on consumer and supply chain	
			Build resource efficiency into business model	Reduce usage of single use carrier bags	Produce less waste
Recycle	Provide convenient recycling service for household and commercial customers	Invest in recycling and recovery facilities	Use recycled inputs	Separate their waste in to recyclables	Separate their waste in to recyclables
Recover	Provide local leadership to plan and invest in new infrastructure	Provide flexible sustainable waste services to customers			
Dispose		Creation of secondary fuels from residual waste			

8 Waste Minimisation Plan Implementation

8.1 The Contractor will proactively seek and implement the agreed work plan as part of its commitment to the Councils to assist in delivering waste minimisation.

- 8.2 Waste campaigning leaflets promoting recycling and waste minimisation will be developed in consultation with the Councils.