



Report of the Director of Place

Climate Change & Nature Recovery Service Transformation Committee
– 4 September 2023

Future Waste Strategy

Purpose:	
Policy Framework:	Climate Change & Nature Recovery Strategy
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:- <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Committee gives their views on the potential for future waste strategies to aim for reductions in residual waste, in turn leading to higher recycling rates and the resulting carbon savings2. The Committee gives their views on options to reduce future fuel usage for waste collection vehicles3. The Committee gives their views on the Reusable Containers feedback.
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1. Background

- 1.1 The Council adopted the 2022-25 Waste Strategy (**the Current Strategy**) in January 2022. The Current Strategy outlined the actions required to achieve WG's 70% statutory recycling rate by 2024/25.
- 1.2 The Current Strategy indicated that domestic waste would be collected from the kerbside primarily using diesel powered twin pack collection vehicles, with narrow access areas collected using transit tippers. Each household would receive the following collections, all wastes collected once a fortnight apart from food waste which would be collected every week.

	Week 1	Week 2
RCV 1	Residual waste (3no Black Bags limit)	Cans & Glass / Paper & Card
RCV 2	Plastic / Food waste	Garden waste / Food waste

- 1.3 The Current Strategy gave foresight of anticipated changes in legislation, including WG's indication that they intend to legislate for increases in their statutory recycling rate. WG have indicated¹ that they intend to aim for a 100% statutory recycling rate by 2050, with interim targets leading up to that date. The first new interim target is potentially within the timeframe of the Council's next waste strategy.
- 1.4 WG have also indicated that their next legislation or collections blueprint could mandate/recommend the collection of additional recycling streams at the kerbside; namely: plastic film, textiles and cartons.
- 1.5 All service improvement actions contained in the Current Strategy have been implemented. This has meant that the Council achieved a recycling rate of over 70% in 2022/23, two years earlier than required by legislation. In addition to achieving a high level of recycling, the most recent WLGA financial benchmarking from 2021/22 shows that the Council provides the most cost-effective waste management service in Wales (i.e. the lowest net cost per household).

2. Report

- 3.1 The Waste Management service is exploring how a future waste strategy could be developed to ensure the Council continues to deliver a highly effective and cost-efficient service and also deliver further carbon reductions.
- 3.2 It is expected that carbon reductions could mainly be delivered by reductions in residual waste through increased recycling, changes to the power source and/or deployment of collection vehicles, and reductions in the use of plastic recycling bags.
- 3.3 Reductions in residual waste would be achieved by diverting more waste from thermal treatment (energy from waste) into re-use or recycling through an expansion of the number of recycling streams collected at the kerbside.

¹ [beyond-recycling-strategy-document.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

- 3.4 The kerbside collection of additional recycling materials, such as plastic film, cartons, and textiles could be trialled to assess for quantities, quality, recycling markets, and sustainability. This approach is in line with WG's indicated strategy and has the benefit of increasing recycling rates whilst not reducing the overall amount of material a resident is able place at the kerbside.
- 3.5 Vehicle emissions could potentially be reduced by:
- Introducing seasonal garden collections which would lower the mileage travelled;
 - Considering switching to alternative low emissions vehicles (e.g. electric or hydrogen). These low emissions vehicles are still relatively early in their development, and further information can be brought to the Committee as these areas mature.
- 3.6 Only 5% of garden waste is collected through December and January, so consideration could be given to trialling the stopping of garden waste collections for these months to free up resource to assist in the collection of other waste stream, particularly the increased waste produced over Christmas, thereby improving the level of service whilst reducing the overall mileage travelled.
- 3.7 The Committee has previously considered the potential to reduce the volume of single use recycling bags by switching to reusable containers and has asked for further information to be brought back.
- 3.8 The Committee asked the service area to investigate the feasibility of lidded caddies being provided for glass and cans collections. The service area has been able to find lidded caddies and will now need to work through finalising the design by considering input from the Collection Crews and operational risk assessments.
- 3.9 The Committee also asked the service area to investigate the potential for a solid box or caddy to be provided for paper and card collections. Investigations are still ongoing as a suitable box or caddy does not currently exist on the market. The service area will continue the investigation prior to finalising the design of the box/caddy/hessian sack by considering input from the Collection Crews and operational risk assessments.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

3.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required. The IIA screening form is attached as **Appendix A**, with the outcome of the screening below:

- This is a low risk proposal which is likely to be seen as mostly positive change by the majority of the public. The proposal can adapt to the minority of the public that could potentially be negatively impacted by a "standard" service.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 It is considered that a reduction in residual waste through collecting additional recycling streams should provide a cost reduction, dependent upon Welsh Government funding for infrastructure changes.
- 4.2 Reduced vehicle usage through the freeing up of resources from garden waste collections through December and January should result in modest reductions in fuel usage.
- 4.3 It is considered that the introduction of reusable containers to replace single use bags, on main rounds, for paper & card and glass & cans could be achieved on a cost neutral basis, or a slight cost reduction, if Welsh Government funding can be secured for the initial purchase of the containers.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council will need to ensure that future waste strategies are flexible enough to meet anticipated changes to WG statutory recycling targets and other new legislation.

Background Papers: Waste Strategy 2022-25

Appendices: Appendix A – IIA Screening