



**To/
Councillor Mark Thomas
Environment and Infrastructure
Management**

BY EMAIL

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrchol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Overview & Scrutiny

01792 636292

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

19 November 2019

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure. The letter concerns the meeting on 21 October 2019 and the Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2018/19.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

On the 21 October 2019, the Panel met to discuss the Recycling and Landfill Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2018/19. The Panel are grateful to you and the Group Leader for Waste for attending to provide information and answer questions.

We have some thoughts and observations to share with you.

The Panel were pleased to hear that Swansea Council was well on target to achieving the 64% recycling measure and that the council will not incur any of the substantial fines that can be incurred. It also importantly means less waste overall going to landfill. We heard the increase in the recycling figure is partly due to the 'keep it out campaign' where a stronger approach to enforcing what is put out at the kerbside had been progressed. With 90,000 properties having black bags checked and in this process, only two have required fixed penalty notices.

We also heard that one of the key reasons we need the plastic collected to be 'cleaner' is that we can get much better financial returns on already sorted plastic waste. We understand the reasons for this change and agree that it is also the right thing to do as it will help in the drive to improve our recycling rates, especially given the target for recycling in 2024/25 is 70%.

You told us about the next steps for waste and recycling including looking at ways of working collaboratively with other councils in order to dispose of waste as will only have space in the Tir John landfill site until 2022. We will then need to move to a different option. We heard there will continue to be a push with plastics segregation at doorstep, so the public understand what is/isn't recyclable.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE

www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

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We were interested to hear that Welsh Government is introducing waste targets for private waste disposal contractors, which should put us all on a more even playing field and may enable us to better compete on some aspects of waste and recycling.

We congratulated the waste management and recycling team for the work they are doing in student areas to increase compliance. We also heard about the work needed in the many blocks of flats across Swansea to ensure sufficient space and facilities to recycle. You told us that this can be complex with different blocks requiring different solutions. We were glad to hear that you are working with individual blocks to find bespoke solutions.

We are interested in finding out a little more about the return we receive for different recyclables. We would therefore ask that you provide us with a written response by 3 December 2019 that details the income we receive and can you break this down into the different recycling materials? (We do recognise this will only be a snapshot in time due to the volatility of markets).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'CHHolley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Chris Holley
Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel
✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk