

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 8

meeting date: TUESDAY, 12 MARCH 2019
 title: WASTE AND RESOURCE STRATEGY 2019 CONSULTATION
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the consultation on the government waste and Resource Strategy 2019.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To ensure best use of Council resources in the provision of parking.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The waste industry has been awaiting the publication of a DEFRA policy document Waste and Resources. The document has now been released for the first consultation that started on Monday, 18 February for 12 weeks.

3 Summary of Contents within the Eight Chapters of the Waste and Resource Strategy 2019 (the Summary is written as “we” ie the Government)

3.1 Chapter 1 – Sustainable Production

During the first stage of the resources lifecycle, we turn valuable natural resources and materials into the goods and services upon which modern life and a healthy, vibrant economy depend. Evidence suggests that 80% of the damage inflicted upon the environment when products become waste can be avoided if more thoughtful decisions are made at the production stage

This chapter sets out how we will:

- invoke the ‘polluter pays’ principle and extend producer responsibility for packaging, ensuring that producers pay the full costs of disposal for packaging they place on the market;
- stimulate demand for recycled plastic by introducing a tax on plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled plastic;
- harness the potential of extended producer responsibility for other product types;
- set minimum requirements through eco-design to encourage resource efficient product design;
- manage chemicals sustainably and address barriers to reuse and recycling posed by their use, through a Chemicals Strategy;
- develop a model for realising resource efficiency savings, working with businesses through ‘resource efficiency clusters’.

3.2 **Chapter 2 – Helping Consumers take more Considered Actions**

Helping consumers choose and use more sustainable products is both good for them and the environment. Despite advances in technology in recent decades, the average life span of many products we buy and use in daily life is actually lower than it was 20 years ago. We want to extend the lives of products through repair, reuse and remanufacture. We want to help consumers to be able to recycle the materials they contain and dispose of them in the most environmentally sensitive ways.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- incentivise consumers to purchase sustainably;
- provide consumers with better information on the sustainability of their purchases;
- ban plastic products where there is a clear case for it and alternatives exist;
- address barriers to reuse;
- support the market for remanufactured goods;
- encourage appropriate disposal of used products;
- lead by example through procurement and the Greening Government Commitments.

3.3 **Chapter 3 – Resource Recovery and Waste Management**

Household waste recycling rates in England have risen from around 11% in 2000/1 to about 45%. Recycling rates in construction have also improved over the same period. But since 2013 rates for both have plateaued. We need to drive better quantity and quality in recycling and more investment in domestic recycled materials markets. This government supports comprehensive and frequent waste collections and is determined to help local authorities and waste management companies act in the most sustainable and resource-efficient way possible. We want to promote UK-based recycling and export less waste to be processed abroad.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- improve recycling rates by ensuring a consistent set of dry recyclable materials is collected from all households and businesses;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions from landfill by ensuring that every householder and appropriate businesses have a weekly separate food waste collection, subject to consultation;
- improve urban recycling rates, working with business and local authorities;
- improve working arrangements and performance between local authorities;
- drive greater efficiency of Energy from Waste (EfW) plants;
- address information barriers to the use of secondary materials;
- encourage waste producers and managers to implement the waste hierarchy in respect to hazardous waste.

3.4 **Chapter 4 – Tackling Waste Crime**

Waste-related criminal activity costs the economy hundreds of millions of pounds per year. Rogue operators illegally dump or export waste, undermining legitimate businesses by disposing of waste cheaply and recklessly. This deprives the economy of tax income and harms the environment and local communities. By tackling this crime we will ensure that resources are properly recycled or recovered and fed back into the economy.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- improve the transport, management and description of waste by reforming existing regulations;
- strengthen intelligence sharing and engagement to tackle illegal activity;
- prevent illegal activity being hidden through waste exemptions by reforming the existing regime;
- mandate the digital recording of waste movements, subject to consultation;
- create a Joint Unit for Waste Crime;
- toughen penalties for waste criminals;
- increase awareness of waste regulations and publicise positive work of enforcement bodies as they tackle waste crime.

3.5 **Chapter 5 – Enough is Enough: Cutting Down on Food Waste**

We have long recognised the need to tackle food waste. In the UK alone, an estimated 10 million tonnes of food and drink are wasted post-farm gate annually, worth around £20 billion. Excess food waste costs us money and is environmentally damaging. Growing excess food that no one eats damages the Earth's ecosystems when we dispose of it. Moreover, a fifth of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are associated with food and drink, mostly created during production (agriculture and manufacturing) – and needlessly if the food and drink are wasted⁷. We are fully committed to reducing food waste, reducing our carbon footprint, and also meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goal to halve global food waste at consumer and retail levels by 2030.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- more effectively redistribute food to those who need it most before it can go to waste
- consult on annual reporting of food surplus and waste by food businesses;
- consult on legal powers to introduce food waste targets and surplus food redistribution obligations;
- publish a new food surplus and waste hierarchy;
- promote awareness of the issue by appointing a new food waste champion;
- support cross sector collaboration through the Courtauld 2025 agreement.

3.6 **Chapter 6 – Global Britain: International Leadership**

Concerns over resources and waste management cut across continents and oceans. Pollution and environmental damage do not respect national borders and tackling them requires a broad coalition. Plastic which pollutes the ocean can be carried by currents and cause damage far from where it originated: there is little to be gained by making improvements in isolation. International leadership is needed.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- promote the goals of our Resources and Waste Strategy internationally;
- drive international political commitments through the ground-breaking Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance;
- support developing nations to tackle pollution and reduce plastic waste, including through UK aid;
- improve the quality of plastics exported for recycling through the Basel and Stockholm Conventions;

- establish cross-government oversight of the UK's natural resource security.

3.7 **Chapter 7: Research and Innovation**

In some areas where we are seeking transformative change, our knowledge, data or technology has yet to match the breadth of our ambitions. Innovation here is vital – both to developing novel solutions and improving the efficiency, cost and/or effectiveness of existing technologies. As government, we can support industry and academia to stimulate innovation.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- support further investment and innovation in resource efficiency, working with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) on our Areas of Research Interest;
- launch a call for evidence on the development of standards for bio-based and biodegradable plastics;
- support further investment in resource efficient technologies, including through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund;
- support the Waste and Resources Action Programme;
- encourage innovative waste treatment technologies that create transport fuels through the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO).

3.8 **Chapter 8 – Measuring Progress: Data, Monitoring and Evaluation**

High quality data, information and insights are essential for effective policy making.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- work with our partners and stakeholders to develop a shared vision and bold new approach to data on resources and waste;
- move away from weight-based towards impact-based targets and reporting, focusing initially on carbon and natural capital accounting;
- maintain the coverage and quality of local authority-collected waste and improve data collection to meet future needs;
- work with tech firms to develop innovative digital solutions for tracking waste, and consult on options to mandate the digital recording and sharing of waste movement data.

4. **CONCLUSION**

Consultation

There will be three major consultations DEFRA intend to launch:

- DRS (Deposit Return Schemes) which, depending on the scope and reach of the DRS, may affect quantities and material types available for doorstep comingled collections.
- Collection Systems (what core materials in what format should all Councils collect). Lancashire runs a consistent collection set of co-mingled glass, cans and plastic, mixed paper and card, residual and garden waste. This may change. Garden waste may not be chargeable but weekly food waste collection seems inevitable.

- EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) which will generate significant new revenue. This it is expected will be used to help waste infrastructure improvements, though this is not actually stated in the strategy.

5. RISK ASSESSMENTS

The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – None at this time
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None at this time
- Political – None at this time
- Reputation – None at this time

6. **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 Delegate authority to the Director of Community Services to respond to the consultations on behalf of the Council.

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