

Ref: SharePoint/Scrutiny/Env/Correspondence 11.01.2024

Date: 23 January 2024

Matt Wakelam

Assistant Director Street Scene - Waste



By email

Dear Matt

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 11th January 2024

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee a sincere thank you for attending Committee to provide an update in relation to the roll out of the **Recycling Strategy for Cardiff**, in the absence of the Cabinet report that has been delayed due to industrial action. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations. You will find our requests, listed at the end of the letter.

Roll out of segregated recycling.

The committee acknowledged that as a core city Cardiff is successful at recycling, however, from a Wales perspective it could be doing better.

You helpfully provided the committee copies of letters and literature being provided to resident to the next phase of the rollout. However, one committee member noted that his ward was included and that he was unaware of this imminent change. You apologised for this oversight and commented that there was a long lead in time for this change to allow communications and bins/bags to be delivered to residents.

Members noted that concerns had previously been raised about the weight of the reusable sacks being used and the potential for them to blow away. You reassured the committee that the weighted sacks have been introduced following consultation with Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and councils that are already using them, and you also commented that work was ongoing with staff regarding the return of caddies and sacks to residents.

The committee commented that an increase of 1.6% of recycled materials appeared low and would we be better to invest in enforcement in areas where there is poor compliance. You stated that in waste all of the percentages relate to tonnage so a 1.6%

increase is quite substantial, however, you also noted that improving recycling was also supporting Wales circular economy so that it can become more resilient in facing and dealing with external issues. You also acknowledged that education and enforcement are important, however, enforcement is a last resort.

Members noted the potential for an increase in fly tipping with the proposed change in collection frequency. You confirmed that there are currently policies in place to support larger families and those with many pets and these are not changing, you also reiterated that the purpose of the proposed changes is to recover as much recyclable material from residual waste as possible.

The committee acknowledged that a significant proportion of waste can be recycled at the kerbside, now including tetrapaks, and that there are increased opportunities to recycle items at local [Hubs](#), however, some residents do not own cars and their nearest Hub is some distance away. The lack of a HWRC in North Cardiff was noted. The committee asked is there anything further that can be done to support residents without cars to recycle.

Industrial action.

Committee members asked about the impact that the industrial action was having on recycling and waste collections across the city. You informed members that before Christmas, garden waste stopped being collected, however, ever since Christmas the volume of waste and recycling being collected increase significantly, filling the Recycling Collection Vehicles (RCVs) more quickly meaning they needed to be emptied more frequently, causing delays. You also noted that despite the industrial action the tonnage of recycling collected was up by 700 tonnes compared to the same period last year.

For ease of reference, the requests detailed in this letter are:

- That councillors are informed of the rollout of segregated recycling in their wards before leaflets and information are distributed to residents.
- Although not mentioned in the meeting itself, previously issues in relation to solutions for HMO's have been raised therefore the committee requests any further details of recycling solutions for HMO's.

Once again thank you once more for attending Committee and for considering our comments.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen Jones', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Owen Jones

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

cc: *Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee*
Cllr Caro Wild, Cabinet Member for Climate Change
Neil Hanratty, Director – Economic Development
Graham Porter – Committee Clerk