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## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** TUESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2021, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

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Ref: RK/RP/MM/SE/7.12.2021

13<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Councillor Michael Michael,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Cllr Michael,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 7 December 2021 – Member Briefing Report - Draft Recycling Strategy 2021-25 and Waste Management and Collections Update**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you as well as Officers from the Economic Development Directorate for attending Committee on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December and facilitating the Committee's discussion on the Council's draft Waste Strategy 2021-25. Following our consideration, Members of the Committee have requested that I feed back the following observations, requests and recommendations to you.

**Trade Waste**

During their discussions around Trade Waste, the Committee expressed concern over private collection companies not having to meet recycling targets. The Officers responded stating that Welsh Government were continuing to have discussions around this subject and would also soon be publishing regulations for dedicated statutory targets for businesses to make it mandatory that they segregate their waste at source to allow trade waste companies to collect single stream material. The Committee **requested** that they receive sight of these regulations and targets when they are available.

## **Segregated Collection Pilot**

Members expressed concerns relating to residents having to further segregate recycling and whether this was over-complicating the process and could result in the public disengaging with the recycling scheme. Both you and Officers reassured the Committee that many other Local Authorities had already introduced similar schemes and evidence indicated that given time, communication of suitable information as well as education, recycling figures tended to improve due to the reduction of contamination.

The Committee queried the extra length of time the segregated collections would take and whether there was a need to adjust the rounds accordingly to ensure they are timely and achievable and do not lead to miss collections. Reassurances were provided once more from yourself that the trials would help identify what adjustments need to be made and further rounds would be added if required to ensure that the scheme is delivered effectively. Members welcomed this response but **requested** clarification as to whether there would still be a 'mop up' service factored in that was provided on the weekend to pick up any missed collections

## **Collection Trials**

Officers highlighted that there would be a series of trials undertaken to examine what worked best for the collection of segregated recycling and that it was agreed that one size would not fit all. This information would then inform which model to go forward with. Members raised concerns that the location for the proposed trials was not an area that contained a substantial number of flats or HMOs so would possibly not reflect some of the issues that these residents would likely experience. Members **requested** clarification on whether further trials targeting residents living in HMOs and flats would be undertaken to determine whether the proposed model and adaptations would be appropriate for these types of premises or whether different adaptations were required. Members also **requested** detail of how the findings from the segregation pilot and various trials will be fed back to the Council and whether this was going to be similar to the Blue Caddy feedback email system.

## **Engagement, Consultation and Support**

The Committee questioned the approaches for the planned engagement surrounding the proposed changes, particularly how the Council planned to overcome barriers in communication with hard-to-reach groups and those who may not have access to the internet etc. Officers stated that they would be sending out pictorial leaflets and would be engaging directly with those who are on the assisted lifts list. The Committee agreed with your suggestion that there was a need for dedicated officers to go door to door to engage hard-to-reach communities and residents. The Committee **recommend** that this be a priority for the engagement and consultation process where additional officers are employed possibly on a short-term basis to undertake this work.

Furthermore, it is **recommended** that additional factors, such as the requirement for translators, be incorporated into this process to engage individuals where English may not be their first language. Likewise, where further assistance or targeted support may be needed for vulnerable individuals such as older people and those with dementia. It is felt that it is essential that the information is communicated effectively from the beginning and suitable support provided to ensure compliance and avoid any potential for misunderstanding and possible future penalisation.

## **Potential Covid-19 Impact**

The Committee raised concerns regarding the possible implications of the new Covid variant and how this could have an impact on the segregated pilot and any face-to-face interaction proposed for engagement and consultation. Members **requested** clarification over whether there were any provisions being planned to mitigate against this risk.

## **Planning and Recycling**

During the Committee's discussions, Members made reference to the development of a toolkit for property management companies that the draft Strategy alludes to, the aim of which is to work in partnership to improve recycling facilities at targeted blocks of flats. Members commented that within the current planning process, there are very little observations made from internal consultees relating to recycling and waste. The Committee

highlighted the need for the strategies to be more aligned for them to be successful. The Committee therefore **recommend** improved coordination between the recycling strategy and the planning process with increased input from Recycling Services Officers at the earlier design and planning approval stage, particularly on new builds.

### **Section 46 Notices**

Members understand the need for Section 46 notices, however they expressed concern over the wording when these are presented to entire streets. This can cause confusion for residents as well as animosity towards the Council when the issue may not directly relate to all individual households. It is **recommended** that the Section 46 notices be reviewed and reworded appropriately to account for this to try to avoid any future misunderstanding.

### **Bulky Collections**

The Committee appreciate the statements made by Officers regarding a backlog for the collection of bulky waste items and welcomed reports that this backlog had now been cleared. Members **requested** that they receive recent figures for bulky waste items collected on the day specified and how this has changed over time as evidence of the improvement.

### **Schools and Recycling**

Members highlighted that the draft Waste Strategy does not make any reference to recycling of waste produced in schools. The Committee **requested** detail of how recycling in schools is currently undertaken and also **recommend** that recycling in schools be incorporated into the draft Waste Strategy, particularly given that schools fall under the Council's remit.

### **Requests following this scrutiny**

For ease of reference the requests contained in the letter are as follows:

- That the Committee receive sight of the WG regulations and dedicated statutory targets for businesses to segregate their waste at source when they are available.
- Clarification as to whether there would still be a 'mop up' service factored in to the new segregated recycling scheme provided on the weekend to pick up any missed collections.
- Clarification on whether further trials targeting residents living in HMOs and flats would be undertaken to determine whether different adaptations were required.
- That the Committee receive detail of how the findings from the segregation pilot and various trials will be fed back to the Council and whether this was going to be similar to the Blue Caddy feedback email system.
- Clarification over whether there were any provisions being planned to mitigate against the risk of the new Covid variant and its potential impact on the segregated pilot and any face-to-face interaction proposed for engagement and consultation.
- That the Committee receive recent figures for bulky waste items collected on the day specified and how this has changed over time as evidence of the improvement.
- That the Committee receive detail of how recycling in schools is currently undertaken.

### **Recommendations to be monitored following this scrutiny**

To summarise, the Scrutiny Committees made four formal recommendations which are set out below. As part of the response to this letter we would be grateful if you could, for each recommendation, state whether the recommendation is accepted, partially accepted or not accepted and summarise the Cabinet's response. If the recommendation is accepted or partially accepted, I would also be grateful if you could identify the responsible officer and provide an action date. This will ensure that progress can be monitored as part of the approach agreed by Cabinet in December 2020.

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
<p>1(a) The Committee agreed with your suggestion that there was a need for dedicated officers to go door to door to engage hard-to-reach communities and residents. The Committee recommend that this be a priority for the engagement and consultation process where additional officers are employed possibly on a short-term basis to undertake this work.</p>				
<p>1(b) Furthermore, it is recommended that additional factors, such as the requirement for translators, be incorporated into this process to engage individuals where English may not be their first language. Likewise, where further assistance or targeted support may be needed for vulnerable individuals such as older people and those with dementia.</p>				
<p>2. The Committee recommend improved coordination between the recycling strategy and the planning process with increased input from Recycling Services Officers at the earlier design and planning approval stage, particularly on new builds.</p>				
<p>3. Members understand the need for Section 46 notices, however they expressed concern over the wording when these are presented to entire streets. This can cause confusion for residents as well as animosity towards the Council when the issue may not directly relate to all individual households. It is recommended that the Section 46 notices be reviewed and reworded appropriately to account for this to try to avoid any future misunderstanding.</p>				
<p>4. The Committee <b>recommend</b> that recycling in schools be incorporated</p>				

into the draft Waste Strategy, particularly given that schools fall under the Council's remit.				
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Regards,



Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Neil Hanratty – Director for Economic Development
- Graham Harris - Operational Manager, Recycling Services
- Claire Cutforth – Operational Manager - Business Performance & Policy
- Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Office
- Cabinet Support Office
- Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager
- Clair James, Director of Economic Development's Office
- Leaders of the Opposition
- Tim Gordon - Head of Communications & External Relations
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee

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## SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM46894

Dyddiad / Date: 21st December 2021

Councillor Ramesh Patel  
Chairperson  
Environmental Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Councillor Patel

### Environment Scrutiny - 7 Dec 2021 - Draft Recycling Strategy 2021-25 And Waste Management And Collections Update

Thank you for your feedback following the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Please find below responses to your requests and recommendations from the above Committee Meeting.

#### Requests

##### 1. Trade Waste

The Welsh Government are planning to introduce regulations to encourage the segregation and recycling of trade waste. The Welsh Government consultation regarding these proposals ended in December 2019. The consultation outcome document can be found here [Increasing recycling by businesses | GOV.WALES](#). Implementation of these Regulations has been delayed due to the pandemic. Further information will be shared once available.

##### 2. Mop Up service (GH/LP to check)

As the trial will only involve 4,000 properties, it is not envisaged that there will be a need for a mop up service at this stage. A 'back-up' vehicle is available should we encounter operational issues such as breakdowns. However, should the need arise, mop-up collections will be arranged. Any missed collections can be reported via the same channels; Cardiff Gov app, [www.cardiff.gov.uk/missedcollections](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/missedcollections) or by contacting C2C (029) 2087 2087.

#### GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

#### WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



### **3. Collection Trials - Flats**

The waste strategy team is currently undertaking some small scale pilots to segregate recyclable material within blocks of flats. The trials are taking place in 19 blocks of flats using shared, communal facilities.

Flats are being provided with 40 litre blue re-useable sacks to store recyclables in their flats. These blue sacks are then used to transport the material to the communal area, at a frequency the residents choose.

New communal bins have been provided which have a lid and a 'restrictor plate'. This restrictor plate essentially only allows loose material to be placed in, thus reducing the risk of contamination.

The first phase of the pilot aims to improve the quality of co-mingled (mixed) material by changing the bin type available, along with improved signage, education of residents and surveys to understand behaviour.

The second phase of the pilot will involve individual, 240L bins being provided with materials separated in the same manner as kerbside properties. Separate bins will be provided for packaging (tins/cans/plastics), fibres (paper/cardboard) and glass. These bins will have apertures to help ensure the correct materials are placed in the correct bins.

The bins have been funded via Welsh Government's circular economy fund, and staff to manage the project are funded on a temporary basis via FRM funds.

In addition to this project, the team have also produced a toolkit for property management companies/housing associations to utilise, providing suggestions and recommendations of how to improve recycling within blocks of flats. This contains recommendations regarding signage, bin store design and layout, communications etc.

We also know that consistency of collections is key to improving recycling within blocks of flats. Residents will be less engaged to recycle if communal bins are not emptied to schedule, and contain additional bin bags/loose litter etc. For this reason, we have placed bin sensors within some blocks of flats, so we can monitor collections are taking place, along with identifying where bins are filling up in advance of scheduled collection days. We will use this data to target interventions required, which may include crew monitoring, requesting the management company purchase additional bins/collections or encouraging participation in recycling.

In terms of terraced kerbside properties and HMOs, we are looking to send out a 'call to action' to ask households of differing types if they would be willing to trial the separate recycling collection. This will provide us with some additional qualitative data, to help us understand how those with challenges such as lack of internal/external storage space, would cope with separating their recycling.

We are also in contact with the 10 local authorities using sacks throughout Wales, to understand the challenges faced by differing housing stocks.

#### **4. Trial Feedback**

Unfortunately, we encountered delays with our bin stock arriving on site, due to global raw material/haulage concerns. However, the communal bins arrived in October, and we were able to begin delivering them on a phased schedule to the blocks involved in the pilot.

All feedback surveys have been completed, with the team being able to speak with 80 residents on the door-step.

Initial feedback on the quality of the material within the bins has been positive. The restrictor plate, and the locked lid, means that residents are unable to place in mixed bags of material. Whilst there is still some form of contamination, mainly in the form of plastic film (carrier bags, crisp packets etc), there does seem to be far less 'dirty' material such as food waste/nappies.

We are also weighing the non-recyclable, recyclable and food bins before, and during the pilot, to see if there has been any change.

We will continue to gather data over the next few months, and full evaluation will be provided in April.

We are still awaiting the bins to be delivered for phase 2 of the project to begin.

In terms of the bin sensor project, we now have 3 months worth of data to analyse. This analysis will be complete over the coming weeks and conclusions drawn and communicated for each block participating.

#### **5. Potential Covid Impact**

Risk assessments are in place in relation to outreach work undertaken by the education and enforcement teams. The Risk Assessments are regularly reviewed in line with the latest government guidance. Door knocking is an outdoor activity, where risks can be mitigated on the main with social distancing, maintaining hand hygiene and wearing of a face covering. However, where face to face discussion is not possible, letters can be issued, and translations are available where required.

#### **6. Bulky Collections**

The backlog in bulky collections has now been cleared. This service will not be operating for a 2-week period over Christmas (from 27<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022). However, appointments are available from the week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The below figures show the improved position:

Status	Month (2021)					
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Not collected on scheduled day	282	63	142	4	6	2
Collected on scheduled day	1343	1511	1481	2014	1518	629

## 7. Schools Recycling

The majority of schools are on contract with the Council's Trade Waste department for their waste and recycling collections. As such, schools will be required to segregate recyclables in line with the upcoming legislation [Increasing recycling by businesses | GOV.WALES](#). Some schools are already piloting this new approach.

In addition, we have the Really Rubbish campaign which is designed to raise awareness and encourage recycling within schools. This campaign will be reinvigorated and rebranded in 2021, to incorporate the Love Where You Live campaign. This is referenced in the Waste Strategy.

### Recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted/ Partially Accepted/ Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
1a) Additional Officers for door-knocking in hard to reach communities	Partially Accepted: Subject to the availability of funding.		CC	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
1b) Some of the outreach team should be translators where English is not first language and support should be provided for the elderly and vulnerable.	Partially Accepted – it is not possible to cater for the wide variety of languages spoken within Cardiff. We have information translated into over a dozen languages, and it is impractical to recruit sufficient personnel who speak such a variety of languages. However, ability to speak an additional language is already listed as a desirable criteria within the personal specification of the role.		CC	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2022

2. Improved coordination between Planning and Waste at planning approval stage	Partially Accepted; There is already a dedicated officer within waste who reviews planning applications. The extent to which feedback can be enforced is a problem in this area.		LP	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
3. Review wording of section 46 notices as they cause confusion and animosity to Council.	Accepted: Officers are already working with LAs to benchmark and review current notices.		LB	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
4. Include Schools Recycling in the Waste Strategy	Partially accepted – Schools are already mentioned within the strategy, but officers will look to strengthen this.		CC	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022

I trust the above is of assistance,

Yn gywir  
Yours sincerely



**Councillor / Y Cyngorydd Michael Michael**  
**Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Strydoedd Glân, Ailgylchu a'r Amgylchedd**

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