

**Ref:** Scrutiny/Env/16/03/2023

**Date:** 27 March 2023

**Matt Wakelam**

Assistant Director Street Scene - Waste



Dear Matt

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 16 March 2023**

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**. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations. You will find our requests, listed at the end of the letter.

**Feedback from local ward councillors**

I also invited councillors whose wards are currently separating their recycling to provide feedback from their constituents.

Firstly, there was a lot of praise and thanks to a number of staff who have supported the roll out that included the collection teams and namely, Claire, Danielle, Graham and yourself.

The feedback from wards was mixed, whilst there was a lot of support for the scheme in principle it was noted that there were practical issues that needed to be reviewed, which included the following issues:

- construction/weight of the bags,
- incorrect labelling of bags causing confusion,
- obstruction in streets caused by bags/caddies not being replaced tidily,
- cleanliness of the streets following collections,
- some streets too narrow for larger RCVs, resulting in non-collection of waste,
- concern in relation to the elderly/infirm needing to carry numerous bags and caddies,
- concern for those with dementia or Alzheimer's getting confused about the 'rules'.

We noted that to address some of the concerns that type of vehicle being used to collect materials are/will be changed to a split body RCV for containers and fibres rather than a single kerbside sort vehicle with multiple compartments, which means emptying the bags is easier for the crews. In relation to presenting bags back to customers they should be placed under containers and the service restructure should allow cleansing crews to follow collections.

You also acknowledged the need for a wider range of collection bags and containers to meet the differing needs of households. Although we noted that the bags are a similar construction and weight already being used by other local authorities.

### **Questions from Committee Members**

Committee members asked about recycling rates by ward, which you explained was difficult to provide as collection routes cross ward boundaries, you have previously provided some information which will be recirculated to members. They also asked about what happens to our recycling following collection and you gave a brief overview and suggested that the [My Recycling Wales](#) website provides a significant amount of information and details that may be of interest to members.

It was also noted that Newport appears to have a very good service, and you commented that this is a contracted-out service delivered by Wastesavers on behalf of Newport City Council.

Members asked about the current sickness levels in the service, we noted that for the current financial year the target is 20 days per WTE and that this has been reduced from 24 days in the previous year, due to active management of sickness and the availability of Occupational Health Service on site at Lamby Way.

The committee asked for clarification if the pilot increased the quantity of recycling and not just the quality, and you confirmed that the reduction in contamination means that more waste is recyclable, however that any remaining 'contaminated' recycling is incinerated and that the 'incinerator bottom ash' is recycled.

Members also noted concerns about the roll out of separated recycling to the large number of flats and HMOs in the city. You informed us that smaller flats are currently in

part of the rollout and have been provided the same bags and containers, and that work is ongoing with other local authorities investigating suitable solutions with a view to roll out in 2024/25, and that engagement and officer support was key to supporting the change, and finding solutions that worked for different types of households.

The committee asked about kerbside collection of 'tetrapaks' and textiles for rags and you confirmed that there is currently a pilot in relation to tetrapaks where they are picked out in the process after being collected with plastic and tins/cans. However, they can be taken to HWRCs. You also noted that there are no plans to include textiles in kerbside collections although the possibility of increased collections at hubs and clothes banks at schools was being investigated.

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

- Any further details in relation to recycling information by ward.

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 blue 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*