

**RECYCLING PERFORMANCE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Argyll and Bute Council is both a waste collection and waste disposal authority. Waste and recycling collections are delivered mainly by council staff with some recycling collections carried out by third sector groups.
- 1.2 Waste disposal is dealt with by 3 separate models across the council as follows:
- Island sites e.g. on Mull and Islay where landfill sites are operated directly by the council;
  - Helensburgh and Lomond area where waste is disposed of at sites outside of Argyll and Bute;
  - A 25 year (2001 – 2026) Waste PPP contract which covers the rest of Argyll and Bute.
- 1.3 Waste figures for all four administrative areas have been summarised within this report. Due to the way the reporting is carried out it is not possible to accurately break down the information on an area by area basis for all data.
- 1.4 National policy decisions, guidance and regulations e.g. relating to the Biodegradable Municipal Waste landfill ban will have a significant impact on future recycling, composting and recovery performance.
- 1.5 It is recommended that Members note and give consideration to the details as outlined in this report and the national policy drivers that will likely impact over the next few years.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 Argyll and Bute council is both a waste collection and waste disposal authority. Recycling, composting and recovery (i.e. other landfill diversion) statistics are reported quarterly within the council's performance system Pyramid. Statutory returns to SEPA e.g. licensed site tonnage, landfill tax and waste data flow vary from quarterly to annual.

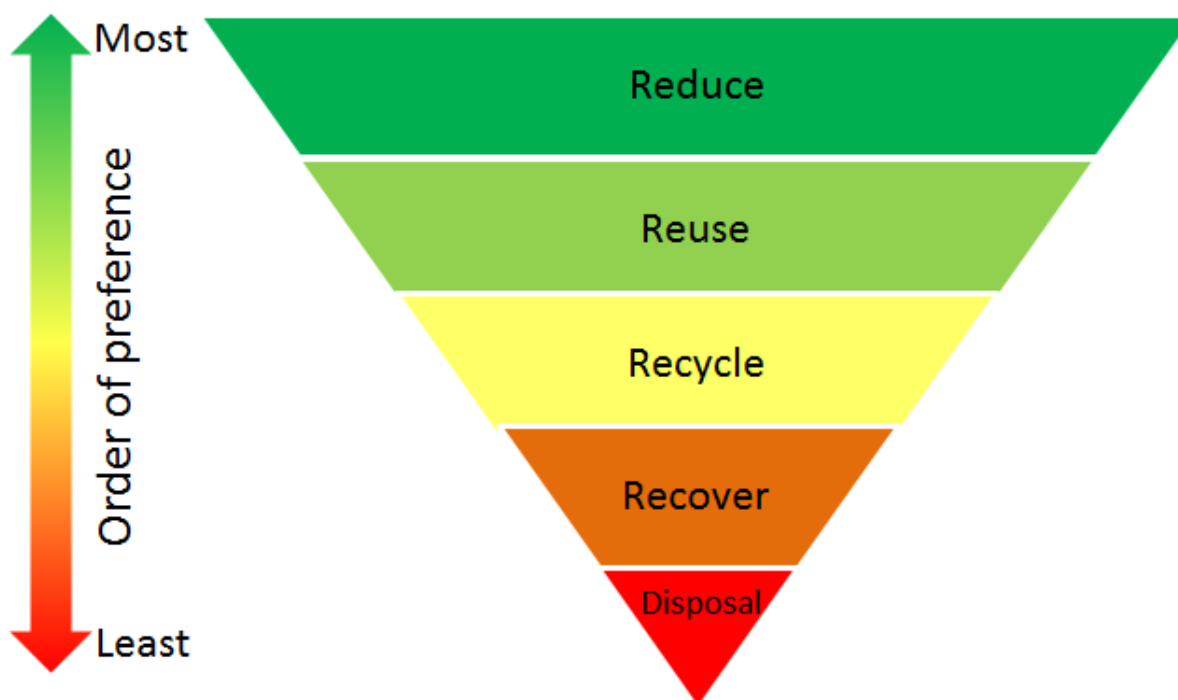
2.2 This report provides details on the council's recycling and landfill diversion performance along with national policy, targets and regulations which are likely to impact on future performance.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that Members note and give consideration to the details as outlined in this report and the national policy drivers that will likely impact over the next few years.

**4.0 DETAILS**

4.1 The Council's waste strategy was approved by the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee in September 2019. Whilst this strategy will emerge in line with government guidance, regulation legislation, and contractual requirements the Strategy is predicated on the reuse model shown below in Figure 1.



4.2 Argyll and Bute Council operate a performance management system 'Pyramid'. Quarterly recycling/composting, recovery and landfill percentages are included – split between the Islands landfill sites, Waste Management PPP and Helensburgh/Lomond areas. These details include:

- percentage of waste recycled and composted;
- percentage of waste recovered e.g. other landfill diversion;
- combined percentage of waste recycled, composted and recovered;
- percentage of waste to landfill;
- tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill.

**Percentages Summary of Landfill, Recycling, Composting and Recovery  
2018 and 2019**

		<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Argyll & Bute wide	% of waste recycled, composted and recovered	48.8%	48.4%
	% waste recycled and composted	35.5%	35.4%
	% waste recovered	13.3%	13.0%
	% waste landfilled	51.2%	51.6%
	Tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill	18,671	18,577

Waste PPP	% of waste recycled, composted and recovered	49.6%	46.6%
	% waste recycled and composted	31.8%	28.5%
	% waste recovered	17.8%	18.1%
	% waste landfilled	50.4%	53.4%
Helensburgh & Lomond	% of waste recycled, composted and recovered	50.2%	53.0%
	% waste recycled and composted	41.9%	45.3%
	% waste recovered	8.2%	7.8%
	% waste landfilled	49.8%	47.0%
Islands	% of waste recycled, composted and recovered	38.7%	44.4%
	% waste recycled and composted	38.7%	44.4%
	% waste recovered	0.0%	0.0%
	% waste landfilled	61.3%	55.6%

#### 4.3 Some points to note are as follows:

- The overall recycling, composting and recovery percentage figures are similar in 2019 to those in 2018. 2020 figures are expected to be lower due to recycling service suspension during Covid lockdown.
- Landfill costs in Landfill Tax alone is around £90 per tonne for every tonne disposed of in landfill. It is interesting to note that during Covid, our landfill charges increased significantly but our overall costs remained similar with savings being made on road haulage and gate fees for recycling material being transported to processors. However, it is important to note that the environmental impact of landfilling all material would be significant and the amended collection regime was put in place purely as a reaction to the covid pandemic.
- The council Waste PPP combined recycled, composted and recovery has decreased from 49.6% in 2018 to 46.6% in 2019. This is mainly due to changes in the glass collection following the previous service supplier going into administration. This service is now self-delivered by the council and most of the glass has been counted through the council site at Blackhill, Helensburgh for onward recycling. This has therefore increased the figures

relative to Helensburgh & Lomond.

- The recycling increase in Helensburgh and Lomond is explained above with regards to the glass recycling arrangements.
- The recovery in the Waste PPP area is carried out by Renewi through mechanical biological treatment plants based at their waste facilities near Oban, Dunoon and Lochgilphead.
- The recovery in the Helensburgh and Lomond area is mainly carried out by Barr Environmental at their Auchencarroch waste facility, near Alexandria.
- The percentage of waste recovered at Renewi and Barr facilities was similar to previous years.
- The overall percentage waste to landfill for 2019 was similar to 2018.
- The tonnage of biodegradable waste to landfill in 2019 i.e. 18,577 tonnes was also similar to 2018 i.e. 18,671.
- The island model figures show an increase in waste recycled and composted. There is no specific reason for this and the variance is mainly due to natural variation factors e.g. loads and items collected in one year but sent off site the next for onward recycling processing.
- Recycling and composting is mainly from recycling collections, bring sites and segregated wastes from recycling/civic amenity sites. Recovery is predominantly moisture process loss and/or compost like output from mixed waste treatment plants operated by the council's Waste PPP partner or other waste contractors.
- SEPA published annual recycling data for local authorities focuses mainly on recycling and composting from households.

### **Landfill Ban**

- 4.4 The Waste (Scotland) Regulations were introduced by the Scottish Government in 2012 and they included a landfill ban of biodegradable waste from 2021.
- 4.5 The landfill ban planned for 2021 has since been rescheduled by The Scottish Government until 2025. This delay has been welcomed by the Council and gives more time for alternative solutions and funding to be sought. A Waste Strategy update report can be found at the September 2020 Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee.

### **Deposit Return Scheme**

- 4.6 The Scottish Government in 2019 set out a planned implementation date of April 2021 for a national deposit return scheme for drinks containers including PET

plastic, drinks cans and glass bottles. Since the Covid-19 outbreak the implementation date has been delayed until July 2022.

- 4.7 The deposit scheme may result in an overall Scotland wide increase in recycling. However, this may see a reduction in Council recycling performance if items such as glass drinks bottles are no longer handled by Council collections. Much will depend on how the scheme is implemented by The Scottish Government and Scheme Administrator in the coming years.

### **Local Recycling Facilities**

- 4.8 All Household Waste sites were closed in line with lockdown requirements to protect our staff and communities. As we moved into phase 3 of the route map, we carried out extensive planning including traffic management work for our waste sites to ensure when we opened our sites after nearly three months of closure there was limited risk to our communities from queuing on access roads as members of the public tried to get rid of their waste. This included a phased introduction of certain types of waste to ensure we limited numbers attending to a manageable level.
- 4.9 Information on civic amenity centres and local recycling facilities can be found at the link below. This also sets out the materials which can be disposed of at each facility. The local recycling facilities continue to be open throughout lockdown.  
<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/recycling>

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Steady progress has been made on recycling, composting and recovery performance. National Policy drivers such as the ban on biodegradable waste to landfill will have significant implications for future waste treatment and landfill diversion performance.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

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| 6.1 | Policy    | National policies and regulations will likely impact on future landfill diversion performance. The councils policy is to reduce landfill.  |
| 6.2 | Financial | The 2025 ban on biodegradable waste to landfill will have financial implications. A Waste Strategy update report can be found in the September 2020 Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee. |
| 6.3 | Legal     | The landfill ban (now delayed until 2025) is a legal requirement under the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Complying with the ban will  |

also likely result in changes to the Waste PPP contract which is due to expire in 2026.

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| 6.4 | HR                | None   |
| 6.5 | Equalities        | None   |
| 6.6 | Risk              | Risks to the council on the landfill ban are mainly financial. A national deposit scheme for drinks containers will hopefully have an overall environmental benefit, although it may impact negatively on council recycling rates. |
| 6.7 | Customer Services | None at present.   |

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