

WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides an update on the Council's Waste Strategy covering:

- Changes to the introduction dates for the Biodegradable Municipal Waste Landfill Ban and the Deposit Return Scheme.
- Engagement with Scottish Government Officials.
- The impact of Covid-19 on the Waste Strategy and the Waste Strategy Action Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- Endorse the content of the report including the appended updated Waste Strategy Action Plan;
- Note that a future report will be taken to Committee in December with the result of negotiations with the Scottish Government.

3.0 DETAIL

Landfill Ban

3.1 The landfill ban is a measure introduced under the Waste Regulations (Scotland) 2012. By ending landfill as a means of disposal and switching to disposal via Energy from Waste (EfW). The ban was planned to come into force across all of Scotland from January 2021. However, in November of 2019 the deadline for compliance with the ban was changed and a new date set by the Scottish Government of January 2025. The Scottish Government acknowledge that the waste market conditions had created a shortfall in national EfW capacity making 2021 compliance more difficult to achieve without the export of waste to England for disposal to landfill.

Scottish Deposit Return Scheme

- 3.2 The Scottish Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for single use beverage containers was due to be implemented on the 1st April 2021. A delay on the implementation of the DRS until 1st July 2022 was announced by the Scottish Government on the 16th March 2020.
- 3.3 The DRS will be operated by a Scheme Administrator that is to be appointed by the Scottish Ministers. The Scheme Administrator was expected to be appointed by March 2020. However, due to COVID-19 pandemic the appointment of the Scheme Administrator has been delayed.

Engagement with Scottish Ministers

- 3.4 The Council welcomed the delay in the implementation of the landfill ban. Noting that the new implementation date of 2025 provides some degree of certainty to a fluctuating market, but pointing out there remains several unanswered questions on future landfill tax rates and the possibility of changes in rural food waste exemptions.
- 3.5 A meeting with Scottish Government Officials to seek support to enable timeous compliance with the ban has been arranged for the 26th of September. A report on the outcome of negotiations will be brought to committee in December. Officers will cover the following topics with Officials:
- The disproportionate impact of the Landfill ban on waste disposal in Argyll and Bute as a result of our rural/Island Geography and poor access to the Energy from Waste market.
 - Argyll and Bute Council is the only authority with a Waste PPP agreement. Moving to compliance with the ban while the PPP agreement is still in place (2026) will add significant legal costs from contract variation and will prevent ABC exploring opportunities to take part in larger strategic waste partnerships with adjacent authorities.
 - Greater clarity is required from the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform and her team on her intentions regarding the review of the rural food waste derogation. Removal of the derogation would result in a costly variation of the PPP and would have a significant impact on the BMW ban solutions we are considering due to changes in composition and volume of the waste we would process.
 - As per the agreement in principle reached in September 2019, seek confirmation that the Cabinet Secretary and her team are still willing to work with officers in collaboration with other Local Authority partners to develop joint solutions that provide significant economies of scale.

Covid 19 and Action Plan

3.6 The Covid pandemic has had 2 impacts for the progress of the waste strategy:

- Significant changes were made through changes to refuse through the introduction to temporary 2 weekly collections and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) were closed across Scotland due to travel restrictions etc. These changes were introduced to reduce the logistical challenge to service delivery whilst also providing an increase to the volume of waste material collected from residential properties, providing alternative capacity whilst the HWRCs were closed. This has had a temporary impact on the amount of material that is recycled and there is likelihood for the need to run a significant campaign to publicise recycling to get levels of recycling to return to the levels they were previously at.
- Key staff involved in progressing the Waste Strategy were effectively seconded into the food distribution team to provide project management and logistical input to the food parcel project. This involvement has ended and the key officer has resumed their substantive role.

3.7 With the normalisation of services and staff back working in their substantive roles Officers are now able to progress the Waste Strategy to achieve Landfill ban compliance. The key steps needed to achieve ban compliance can be found detailed in the Waste Strategy Action plan appended to this report (see Appendix 1). The Action plan was originally submitted to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee in September 2019; it has been amended to reflect both the changes in Scottish Government Policy and the delay resulting from the impact of Covid-19.

3.8 Members are asked to note that further work is being carried out around the cost model. However, it is anticipated that post the current PPP contract, which comes to an end of its 25 year life in September 2026, it is likely that the cost pressure will be reduced from that previously advised. This is based on current estimates of processing, transfer and disposal costs. This is a more positive position than earlier modelling had suggested, updates will be provided to Members as more detailed modelling and cost certainty is available. That said the waste market tends to be quite volatile with prices fluctuating, at times quite significantly. There is further uncertainty as national policy develops. At this moment in time, whilst modelling is being developed, we are unable to provide a fixed financial position for the reasons detailed above.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 In conclusion, the safe collection and disposal of waste is a statutory requirement. The costs of the council meeting its obligations are already high due to the unique geography of Argyll and Bute and the PPP agreement with Renewi. However, there will be significant further challenges as a result of changes such as the landfill ban and the introduction of the DRS. Changes in the implementation dates

of both the landfill ban and the DRS will impact on the compliant solutions being developed by officers.

- 4.2 Ongoing investment and support from Central Government will continue to play a critical role in ensuring that compliant solutions are put in place timeously and within available resources.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – This work stream is predicated on the Waste Strategy, which details the council's policy in regarding Waste.
- 5.2 Financial – Compliance with the 2025 Landfill ban represents a significant financial risk to the Council that will require practical and financial support from the Scottish Government to provide a long term financially sustainable solution.
- 5.3 Legal - The council is required to comply with the national ban on Biodegradable Municipal Waste.
- 5.4 HR – When the PPP contract comes to an end this will result in the TUPE of staff operating the current Renewi sites to the council.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics - None
- 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - None
- 5.5.3 Islands – Islands impact assessment of the impact of the Landfill ban by the Scottish Government has been requested.
- 5.6 Risk- Significant risk of increased costs as a result of compliance with the Landfill ban
- 5.7 Customer Service - None

Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services:

Kirsty Flanagan

Policy Leads:

Roads and Infrastructure; Councillor Robin Currie- Waste Project sitting within the remit of Roads and Infrastructure

Major Projects; Councillor Gary Mulvaney- Major project with financial implications

For further information contact:

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Appendix 1: Waste Strategy Action Plan

Appendix 1 – Waste Strategy Action Plan

Action	Detail	Owner	Key Date	Progress
Waste Strategy Consultation Close	Consultation closed, compiling and analysis of consultation data, Complete July 2019	Waste Strategy PM	July 2019	Completed
Waste Strategy ED&I Report inc consultation response	Report to the ED&I committee summarising the results of the recent public consultation and the potential costs of Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban compliance, Complete September 2019	Waste Strategy PM	September 2019	Completed
Scottish Government Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban transition Announcement	Announcement by Scottish Ministers of a Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban transition period allowing for continued landfilling till 2025, Expected Mid-September 2019	Scottish Government	Septemeber 2019	Completed
Waste Strategy Finance Model Report to P&R	Report to P&R detailing the predicted financial impact of the Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban. Target for competition October 2019.	Waste Strategy PM	October 2019	Completed
5 authority Landfill Ban Engagement meeting	Meeting to discuss joint approaches for landfill ban compliance.	Waste Strategy PM	September 2020	On track
Scottish Government Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban Engagement meeting	Meeting between Local Authorities and the SG to discuss measures to support compliance with the ban. Meeting 29th September 2020.	HoS	September 2020	On track
Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Comms Plan	Report to DMT detailing the communications plan and associated costs to make the improvements. Target for completion September 2020.	Waste Strategy PM	September 2020	On track
Report to SEPA on proposed PPP area In-Vessel Composting solution testing	Programme of testing of the proposed In-Vessel Composting process, concluding with a report back to board on SEPA results September 2020.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	September 2020	On track
Highland/Island Authority joint meeting	Meeting between Local Authorities and the SG to discuss measures to support compliance with the ban. Target date for meeting October 2020.	Exec Director/ HoS	October 2020	On track
Report to Scottish Government on solution with finance ask	Report to the Scottish Government on success of IVC also detailing the needed level of support from the Scottish Government to achieve compliance. Target for completion October 2020.	Exec Director/ HoS	October 2020	On track
Options report on proposals for a joint transfer waste transfer station with West Dunbartonshire covering Helensburgh and Lomond	Report to DMT detailing costs to develop and operate a Waste Transfer facility. Target for completion November 2020.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	November 2020	On track
Launch of improved Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Comms	Launch of new and improved Waste communications and educational materials to support efforts to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle waste. Target for completion December 2020.	Waste Strategy PM	December 2020.	On track
Options Report on Rural Food Waste Derogation	Report to DMT detailing costs to develop and operate a Waste Transfer facility. Target for completion January 2021.	Waste Strategy PM/Amenity Operations Manager/ Performance Manager Waste	January 2021	On track
Report to Council on recommended Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban compliant options	Report to Council on the recommended solution for the Biodegradable Municipal Waste ban. Target for completion March 2021.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	March 2021	On track
Helensburgh and Lomond Contract in place	Contract for Helensburgh and Lomond bulky waste in place covering till 2025, target for completion April 2021.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	April 2021.	On track
Waste Communications Review	Review of the impact of the recently improved waste communications and educational materials, this is likely to be surveys potentially focus groups. Target for completion May 2021.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	May 2021.	On track
Conversion of PPP sites to IVC or Total Transfer Solution	Conversion of the existing Mechanical Biological treatment facilities at Lingerton, Dalinlongart and Moleigh into In-Vessel composting facilities. Target for completion before January 2025.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager/ Waste Strategy PM	January 2025	On track
Island Waste Transfer Site Improvements	Works on Islay to convert existing facilities to Waste Transfer sheds. Target for completion before January 2025.	Fleet, Waste & Transport Manager	January 2025	On track

