

Consultation on consistency in household and business recycling collections in England

About you

1. What is your name?

Gurbaksh Badhan, Chair of the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers

2. What is your email address?

admin@nawdo.org.uk

3. Which best describes you?

Please tick only one option. If multiple categories apply to you please choose the one which **best describes you** and which you are representing in your response. (Required)

- ☐ Local Authority
- ☐ Waste management company
- ☒ Business representative organisation/trade body
- ☐ Product designer
- ☐ Manufacturer
- ☐ Distributor
- ☐ Retailer
- ☐ Reprocessor
- ☐ Community group
- ☐ Charity or social enterprise
- ☐ Independent consultancy
- ☐ Academic or researcher
- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Other (please provide details ...)

4. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is its name?

NAWDO – National Association of Waste Disposal Officers

5. Would you like your response to be confidential?

No

If you answered 'Yes' above, please give your reason:

Part 1 Measures to improve the quantity and quality of household recycling collected by local authorities

Consultation questions on dry recycling

Proposal 1

Q5 Setting aside the details of *how* it would be achieved, do you agree or disagree with the proposal that local authorities should be required to collect a set of core materials for recycling?

- ☐ Agree – local authorities **should** be required, to collect a core set of materials
- ☐ Disagree – local authorities **should not** be required, to collect a core set of materials
- ☐ Not sure/don't have an opinion

Q6 We think it should be possible for all local authorities to collect the core set of materials. Do you agree with this?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree – If you disagree please provide further information and evidence as to what circumstances it is not practicable to collect the full set of materials

Q7 What special considerations or challenges might local authorities face in implementing this requirement for existing flats and houses in multiple occupancy?

NAWDO considers provision of the necessary bin infrastructure within the space provided for waste containers within Flat/Multiple Occupancy Dwelling compounds. Given the additional service expectations set out in this consultation such as the core set of materials and food waste collections, there is a need to ensure that enough storage capacity is available and that any new developments account for this. This may necessitate a review of the existing guidance as set out in section H6 of Approved Document H - The Building Regulations – Drainage & Waste Disposal¹.

Q8 What other special considerations should be given to how this proposal could apply to flats? Please provide additional information on your answer.

NAWDO considers that due to the larger bins in bin stores, residents tend to be less discerning about what they put in the bins, which often leads to high contamination rates. Even if a core set of recyclables is set across England it doesn't necessarily mean that those in flats will improve their recycling behaviour. Targeted interventions and behaviour change work needs to be done to change the attitudes and behaviours of those living in flats towards recycling, this is likely to incur greater costs for urban Local Authorities and this additional funding would need to be accounted for in any future burdens calculations.

The Government needs to ensure that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and any

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf

guidance for developers deals with physical issues around bin stores. This also needs to include the ability of waste vehicles (RCVs, RRVs, etc) to access the facilities easily and safely. If vehicle access isn't considered in the design then smaller servicing fleet is needed leading to increased costs and inefficiencies. If this was also required to make sure that bin stores had enough space, were easily accessible for residents and more inviting, it might help increase recycling in flats and HMOs. Likewise, ensuring that developers allow enough space in flats for residents to be able to store their recycling within their home.

Q9 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 1? Please use this space to briefly explain your responses to questions above, e.g. why you agree/disagree with proposals.

NAWDO agrees that local authorities should be required to collect a core set of materials, this will help stop those who move from one county to another questioning why an item suddenly can/can't be recycled. Also helps reduce the scepticism around recycling which occurs when members of the public relocate, and an item is not collected for recycling in the new area. However, NAWDO does not feel that this will entirely eradicate contamination, there are items that are put in recycling bins that are not recycled in any part of the county (e.g. nappies and other organic material) and having a core set of recyclables will not stop those who choose not to recycle properly from continuing to contaminate their recycling.

Additionally, PTT is listed as a core material; this is a material stream that is not universally collected due to lack of markets for some of the polymers. If PTT is included in the core set of materials it should only be done so if there are guaranteed markets for recycling. This would be the same for any additional materials that may be considered such as cartons and flexibles. Whilst the intention to recycle as much as possible is laudable, the end result in terms of markets and subsequent onward use of the material has to be a key part of the process.

NAWDO would also strongly urge due consideration for any interaction of the consistency proposals with the proposed extended producer responsibility and plastics taxes proposals; and how these last two are likely to significantly change what materials are available and how they may be dealt with at the end of their life. Attention should also be paid to the tonnages of PTT present within the waste stream and whether or not this is a material that should be focused on as part of a core list of consistent materials.

It is not clear from the proposals how the additional treatment/recycling capacity required to deliver the proposed changes will be provided and funded.

Proposal 2

Q10 Do you believe that all of these core materials should be included or any excluded?

	This should be included in the core set	This should be excluded from the core set	Not sure/don't have an opinion/not applicable
Glass bottles and containers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paper and card	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Plastic bottles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic pots tubs and trays	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steel and aluminium tins and cans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11 What, if any, other products or materials do you believe should be included in the core set that all local authorities will be required to collect?

	This should be included in the core set from the start of Consistency	This should be included from the core set but phased in over time	This should be excluded from the core set	Not sure/don't have an opinion/not applicable
Food and drinks cartons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic bags and film	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other materials (please specify)		Textiles Foil Black plastics Small WEEE Aerosols		

Q12 If you think any of these or other items should or should not be included in the core set immediately please use the box below to briefly explain your view.

NAWDO considers food and drinks cartons are currently difficult to recycle, since the Chinese banned the import of waste plastics, the single processing plant in the UK has been unable to find recyclable markets for the plastic and aluminium elements of this multi-material packaging. Until all elements of this packaging are readily and easily recycled this product should be excluded from the core set of materials.

Q13 If you think these or other items should be considered for inclusion at a later stage, what changes would be needed to support their inclusion?

NAWDO considers plastic film could be included later but at present the MRFs struggle to separate this material and if it isn't removed from the feedstock, it can impact conveyor operations. Should collection services transition to kerbside separation as favoured by HMG, then there would be scope to include this material stream at this point. However, as with other plastic packaging, the plethora of polymers currently used to make film can be an inhibitor to recycling. It will, therefore, be vital that sustainable market demand is available before this material is included in the core set of materials. It should also be noted that whether or not you include film in the core material set, it is an integral part of many other forms of packaging i.e. tubs, pots and trays or cardboard presentation boxes. You will therefore get a significant percentage of film even if it is not a targeted material.

Q14 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 2?

NAWDO's view is consideration needs to be given to the implications of the EPR & DRS consultations on this core set of materials both in terms of any changes to packaging that results from the introduction of modulated fees or a deposit (subject to which EPR model is preferred) or to the removal of certain material streams (subject to whether a DRS is introduced and if so, which variation). The material streams make their way into the most convenient path and personal choices which consumer make, therefore the costs need to be covered in various full net cost scenarios under EPR as well as DRS.

Proposal 3

Q15 Do you agree that the core set should be regularly reviewed and, provided certain conditions are met, expanded?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure/don't have an opinion

Q16 Do you believe that the proposed conditions a) evidence supports the benefits, b) there are viable processing technologies for proposed materials, c) there are sustainable end markets, d) local authorities would not be adversely affected, including financially, above are needed in order to add a core material?

- ☒ Yes – but I would also add some (please specify which conditions you believe should be added ...)
☐ No – some/all should be removed (if some please specify below)
☐ No – some should be added and some should be removed (please specify which ...)
☐ Not sure/don't have an opinion

Q17 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 3?

NAWDO considers the core set of materials needs to reflect the primary packaging materials that producers are placing to market and therefore should these change there is a resultant necessity for Local Authority collections to adapt. However, the other consultations (EPR & Plastic Tax in the main and DRS to a lesser extent) should drive producers in the directions of using only readily recyclable materials in their packaging.

Consultation questions on separate food waste collection

Proposal 4

Q18 Which aspects of the proposal do you agree and disagree with?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure/don't have an opinion/not applicable
(i) at least a weekly collection of food waste	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(ii)	a separate collection of food waste (i.e. not mixed with garden waste)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii)	services to be changed only as and when contracts allow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv)	providing free caddy liners to householders for food waste collections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q19 Are there circumstances where it would not be practical to provide a separate food waste collection to kerbside properties or flats.

- ☐ **Yes** (if yes please provided further details below)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure/don't have an opinion

Q20 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 4 including on circumstances where it may not be practical to provide a separate food waste collection?

NAWDO considers there are two main circumstances where compulsory separate food waste collections may not be practical.

- 1) In high density urban areas of flats & Multiple occupancy dwellings where the space for the necessary bin infrastructure for residents to deposit there food waste may not be viable, let alone sufficiently simple and easy for residents to operate and want to participate in. Incorrect disposal of food waste into the wrong containers or dumped near these containers could well lead to an increased vermin problem.*
- 2) In areas of high rurality where the carbon/climate change benefits of collecting small quantities of food waste may be outweighed by the dis-benefits arising for the collection service itself, this is especially likely prior to any transition to a kerbside sort service for dry recyclables as multiple collections may well be required.*

NAWDO understands the Governments proposed preference is that food waste should be collected separately and then subsequently mixed with green waste, should the local processing be through an IVC facility or MBT. However, this may need to be kept under review should other technologies i.e. Dry AD begin to become established and offer superior benefits to current processing technologies, as the additional cost associated with mixing and/or transport may impact on their potential commerciality. Government should also consider the implications of transparency and communications to residents when being asked to separate and then remixed on vehicles or through treatment routes.

Whilst supporting the principle of separate food waste collections, NAWDO wishes to ensure that the Government is considering all costs associated with such a mandated service. Whilst there are costs associated to the provision of such a service, there are also likely to be costs associated to the ongoing viability of some of the disposal options that Authorities may have entered into, particularly, if these arrangements are part of long-term contracts. Technologies such as Energy Recovery and Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) have been pursued as better alternatives to landfill within the waste hierarchy but these facilities have been designed with the inclusion of food waste in order to operate efficiently. The removal of the organic fraction of residual waste (or a portion of it) may reduce the efficiency of these facilities leading

to increased disposal costs or contractual claims. This potentially significant impact, for those authorities affected, does not appear to have been considered within the modelling set out in the Impact Assessment. Government should also consider that mandating separate food waste collections there could also be unintended consequences from AD market leading to increased treatment costs due to supply and demand. This consequence does not appear to have been considered fully within the modelling set out in the Impact Assessment.

Proposal 5

Q21 If you are responding on behalf of a local authority, what kind of support would be helpful to support food waste collection? (tick as many as apply)

- ☐ I am not responding on behalf of a local authority
- ☐ **Specific financial support** (please specify)
- ☐ Procurement support, (e.g. free advice on renegotiating contracts; centralised purchasing of containers)
- ☐ **Communications support**, (e.g. free collateral that can be adapted and used locally)
- ☐ Technical support, (e.g. free advice from a consultant about round re-profiling)
- ☐ Other (please specify ...)

Q22 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 5?

NAWDO considers that mandating of weekly food waste collections will be a new burden for waste collection authorities and subject to existing arrangement potential for waste disposal authorities. It is imperative that these new burdens are appropriately funded from central sources and that Local Authorities, all of whom are under significant financial pressure as a result of the Revenue Support Grant reductions, are not left to cover these costs from existing budgets. It is equally important that local authorities are left with the autonomy to decide how to spend their budgets. Government should not expect Local Authorities to automatically utilise any of their budget that may become available as a result of any external 3rd party funding made available to them via the introduction of EPR to fund additional burdens such as this or free garden waste collections. The new burdens should be separately and fully funded allow Local Authorities to self-determine how to spend there budgets.

Without further evidence as to how the Impact assessment modelling was done, NAWDO is cautious about the £20m costs assigned to this initiative, fearing that it is has been severely underestimated. We also have concerns about the capture rates that will be achieved as the best performers are currently only collecting about 40% of the available food waste. This may well be linked to the frequency of residual waste collections and residents finding weekly & fortnightly collections sufficient to avoid using their food waste service. Whereas less frequent residual collections such as 3 or 4 weekly (whilst not a statistically robust sample) are beginning to demonstrate higher food waste capture rates. This option should not be ruled out by other policies within this consultation.

It is crucial that sustainable market demand exists for the by-products of processing food waste i.e. digestates & bio-liquors. There is limited value in claiming food waste as recycled if these by-products can not be used either due to their quality or other restrictions such as Nitrogen Free Zones etc. The processing of food waste to solely produce energy is not acceptable as this is no different from mass-burn or combustion energy recovery technologies which are not considered as "recycling" in terms of the waste hierarchy. Demonstration of these markets will be required in order to convince the public that this mandated service is beneficial and environmentally sustainable.

NAWDO notes with disappointment that this consultation majors on recycling achievement at the expense of Waste reuse and waste prevention, both of which sit above recycling in the Waste Hierarchy, but which are less measurable. It appears, whilst some of the initiatives are aimed at raising materials up the hierarchy from disposal/energy recovery to recycling, an opportunity has been clearly missed to strive for overall reduced waste arising due to an emphasis on chasing recycling targets. This may not be the most environmentally or economically sustainable approach in all cases. Regarding food waste, it would be better not to create it is the first place through improved production and consumer behaviours than to focus on recycling it.

Proposal 6

Q23 What are your views on this proposal?

NAWDO considers where such arrangement exists, this would be acceptable but with the expectation that over time, as these arrangement lapse, then future arrangements would be based on the anaerobic digestion of food waste as the more beneficial of the two treatment options in terms of energy recovery and quality of output. No further IVC treatment facilities should be brought in to operation.

Consultation questions on collecting garden waste

Proposal 7

Q24 Which aspects of the proposal do you agree or disagree with?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure/don't have an opinion/not applicable
(i) a free garden waste collection for all households with gardens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) A capacity to 240l (bin or other container eg sack)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) A fortnightly collection frequency (available at least through the growing season)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) ability to charge households for additional capacity/collections/containers over the set minimum capacity requirement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(v) this new requirement to start from 2023 (subject to funding and waste contracts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q25 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 7?

NAWDO does not support the proposal for a free fortnightly garden collection service waste. We see the proposal as a retrograde step in terms of producer responsibility, as it will require residents with no gardens to subsidise the collection costs related to the provision of this services to those who do have gardens via taxation either from their Council Tax or national taxation. Government should not expect Local Authorities to automatically utilise any of their budget that may become available as a result of any external 3rd party funding made available to them via the introduction of EPR to fund additional burdens such as this or free garden waste collections. The new burdens should be separately and fully funded allow Local Authorities to self-determine how to spend its own budgets in line with local prioritises.

It also indicates an element of target chasing by requiring a service to collect waste which could, possibly, should be treated through home composting processes. One of the overarching objectives of the Resources and Waste Strategy is to eliminate avoidable wastes of all kinds by 2050 and yet this proposal seems intent on increasing capture of a material stream rather than promoting the prevention of it in the first place via home composting. The proposal seems at odds with the waste hierarchy.

Removal of this source of income from collection authorities may have further reaching implications where any surpluses are used to subsidise other elements of their services or as a means of maintaining them. Some Local Authorities may also have budgeted for an incremental price management regime for their existing garden waste collections as part of their Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) savings. This would be a future income loss beyond that modelled and may put at risk elements of services that would not be covered by EPR funding and that are under pressure due to already stretched Local Authority budgets.

NAWDO has concerns about the assertion that charged garden waste services lead to an increase in residual waste due to the inclusion of garden waste in residual waste. Several members have carried out recent waste composition analysis and found that on average the garden waste proportion in their residual waste streams is about 3-4% (i.e. Hampshire's is 3.6%). NAWDO do not consider that a free fortnightly 240 litre bin collection will impact this significantly. Many collection authorities already offer multiple bins for green waste for residents with large gardens.

The proposed capacity of 240l per fortnight may not be suitable for the needs of all residents e.g. a smaller capacity 140 litre may be better suited to many residents who may be elderly or have small gardens. Whilst, the use of sacks (or multiple sacks) equivalent to this capacity for garden waste presents a potential health and safety issue for residents and waste collection operatives alike.

The consultation refers to the need to provide this service during the growing season, which isn't clearly defined. Within climate changes impacts already leading to milder winters and earlier springs, all year-round services are increasing popular and utilised. The cessation of the free service during these supposedly low growth months could lead to a return to using the residual bin as an alternative disposal option, which would undermine the intended impact of this proposed service.

To reiterate that NAWDO does not support the proposal for a free fortnightly garden collection service waste.

Consultation questions on separate collection to improve quality

Proposal 8

Q26 Do you agree the proposed approach to arrangements for separate collection of dry materials for recycling to ensure quality?

☒ Yes

☐ No (why ...?)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q27 What circumstances may prevent separate collection of paper, card, glass, metals and plastics? Please be as specific as possible and provide evidence.

NAWDO considers the following:

- *Flats and HMO's where there is unlikely to be the space for residents to have separate indoor recycling bins*
- *Bin stores may not be big enough to house separate recycling bins, there would be additional costs associated with increasing their capacity*
- *Households will have a large number of bins, one for residual, one for green waste and multiple for recycling. Properties with small/no gardens (although they will have one less bin) will struggle with room to fit all the bins.*
- *Health and Safety – it has been shown that lifting multiple bins is worse for crews, as they are lifting a large amount every day. Government should review the waste industry H&S guidelines.*
- *If split pod RCVs are required for collection, if one pod is filled more quickly than the others it will mean tipping a half full lorry. This will increase vehicle movements leading to increased emissions and wear on the road and changes to planning consents related to vehicle movements for waste sites. .*
- *If every household is putting out multiple bins for recycling, it will take up a lot of space on the kerbside.*
- *Many properties in high density urban locations like Southampton don't have access to the back of their property so have to bring bins through the house.*
- *The time taken to complete rounds will increase due to the increased number of bins.*
- *Infirm and elderly residents may struggle to move several bins from their house to the kerbside.*
- *Government's stated aim for the Resources and Waste strategy is to make recycling easier for residents. The aim of multi- or twin-stream sorting is to improve quality of recyclate presented; however it is likely to increase resident confusion over what goes in what bin and make it likely more complex for residents. Project Integra has a concern that multi-/twin-stream sorting will lower performance.*
- *Consideration would also need to be given around DRS and EPR interactions and the removal of certain material types from household waste as a result of these proposals; with less material coming through kerbside, does the remaining material warrant separate collection and therefore increased service costs. As part of this, kerbside sort could make 'scavenging' of high value items under DRS easier to do – creating unintended consequences for Local Authorities to deal with.*

Q28 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 8?

NAWDO has concerns about the proposed transition timelines as set out in the Impact Assessment i.e. for Direct Service organisations (DSOs) by 2023 and contracted collections by 2026/7. Unless significant transition funding is provided it is unlikely that DSOs would be able to transition in this timeframe because most operate on an annual vehicle replacement strategy that means they only replace 1 or 2 vehicles each year. Switching a complete fleet in the two-year window between the proposed laying down of the regulations/ publication of statutory guidance (2021) and the proposed date would be unaffordable to most WCAs not to mention the challenge to the vehicle providers of meeting this demand and the imbalance that would leave in the vehicle market place and increased costs due to supply and demand.

Many contracted WCAs may also still have term to run on their contracts not to mention where waste partnerships have entered in to long term infrastructure contracts which include the provision of MRFs i.e. Hampshire's contract with Veolia has been extended in order to deliver savings brought on by the reductions in central government funding and now terminates at the end of 2030. A requirement to switch prior to this point would most likely result in additional costs to Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth & Southampton City Council via contract claims for loss of income or change in legislation. Many other local authorities could be in a similar position.

Consultation questions on bin colour standardisation

Proposal 9

Q29 Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- ☐ Agree – bin colours **should** be standardised for all waste streams
- ☐ Agree in part – bin colours should be standardised for some waste streams but not all (specify which ...)
- ☐ Disagree – bin colours **should not** be standardised for any waste streams
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q30 There would be potential for significant costs from introducing standardised bins colours from a specific date. What views do you have on a phased approach or alternative ways to standardising the colours of containers for different materials?

- ☐ Phased approach 1 – as and when waste contracts are renewed
- ☐ Phased approach 2 – as and when old/unserviceable bins are replaced
- ☐ Other ways please specify...

Q31 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 9?

NAWDO considers the proposals as set out makes no link to the renewal of bin infrastructure that would be required were all Local Authorities to be required to migrate to a kerbside sort recycling collection system. This would be an opportunity to standardise containers (boxes) i.e. sizes or colours, but the point of transition will be different subject to pre-existing services, contracts and level of transition funding that may be available.

The standardisation of container colours for recycling (dry and organic recyclables) would mean that other containers such as residual waste ones may not need to be changed as long as no conflicts occur.

Coloured lids only could be a more cost-efficient option rather than replacing the whole receptacle. There is an opportunity for packaging labelling to be aligned with bin lid colours. Some properties are only able to accommodate sacks, which should be included in the colour standardisation.

However an alternative approach could be to use a numbering system to identify which container which material should be placed into. This could be delivered using stickers rather than changing the existing bin infrastructure to accommodate a coloured system. This would be more cost effective. .

Either way this requirement would need to be fully funded as part of the New Burdens funding.

There may also be an issue of the bin suppliers being able to furnish the required bins in a timely manner if a requirement for a 'step change' is introduced.

Consultation questions on service standards

Proposal 10

Q32 Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to publish statutory guidance?

- ☐ Agree – government **should** publish statutory guidance
- ☐ Disagree – government **should not** publish statutory guidance
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q33 We propose reviewing the guidance every few years, revising it as required and then allowing sufficient lead-in time to accommodate the changes. Do you agree or disagree with this timescale?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree – it should be **more often**
- ☐ Disagree – it should be **less often**
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q34 Subject to further analysis and consultation we propose to use the guidance to set a minimum service standard for residual waste collection of at least every alternative week Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree – it should be **more often**
- ☐ Disagree – it should be **less often**
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q35 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 10?

NAWDO considers household waste collection services have been determined locally and could therefore be said to have been determined by the residents receiving this service through their elected politicians. The proposals as set out would, to a large extent, undermine this local determination by local politicians and is therefore an erosion of local democracy. The proposals, in effect, could be construed to only leave the decision as to whether to provide an out-sourced or in-house service within the realm of local determination.

The proposal to support a minimum frequency for residual waste collection to fortnightly reduces the scope and ability for local authorities to take those measures that are aimed at maximising their recycling potential. It is recognised that food waste collections are only gaining up to a 40%

capture rate but this could potentially be increased by further reductions in residual waste collection frequency.

This limitation also prevents a local authority from locally determining how to spend its budget and limits local authorities from making any future savings from their waste budget as the nature of the service is centrally determined. Local authorities are still under significant funding pressures and continue to need to make cost savings across all their services such as reducing collection frequency.

An example of this is Conwy, in Wales, where evidence suggests a 11% increase in recycling and a saving of close to £400,000 as a result of switching from a three weekly to four weekly residual waste collection service. (<https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/recycling-boost-after-conwy-four-weekly-residual-switch/>)

The determination of residual waste collection frequency should be left to local authorities based on local circumstances.

NAWDO is concerned statutory minimum guidance could lead to gaps in future legislation new burdens and funding associated with statutory guidance criteria. Local authorities cannot be left in a position of cost pressures and need to be fully funded as part of additional burdens. If Government wish to determine local service standards this should be set in legislation and fully funded as part of additional burdens. Alternatively Government could consider applying the same criteria to statutory guidance as it would for legislation changes and new burdens.

Consultation questions on communicating about recycling

Proposal 11

We will continue our support for Recycle Now and the tools produced by WRAP to help local authorities to communicate effectively on recycling.

Q36 Do you have any comments to make about Proposal 11?

Whilst NAWDO supports the continuation of WRAP's communication programmes, if the intention is to move towards a standardised collection service with a consistent suite of materials then the most effective communications method would be via an ongoing producer funded national campaign across TV and radio as well as other media. This level of communication is not affordable to local authorities.

Currently there are a variety of different services to be communicated about. Any communications other than at a local level will lead to confusion. The EPR proposals include funding for communications, and this would enable this on-going national campaign to be launched and maintained.

Q37 What information do householders and members of the public need to help them recycle better?

NAWDO supports the need for householders to receive clear and consistent messaging. There needs to be an easy way for householders to translate the information on packaging to the bin infrastructure at their residence be this colour coded or some other easily recognisable alpha-numeric system i.e. colour on label means place in coloured bin or number on label means places in bin/container of the same number

Consumer behaviour would be assisted by more consistent packaging being used to deliver products to market. Multi-material packaging such as cartons & pouches add to residents' confusion due to their lower recyclability, as do the multiple polymers that different producers use to package similar products. This would enhance the ability to provide clear and consistent messaging to residents and business consumers.

NAWDO is aware that several retailers at present provide misleading or incorrect recycling information on their products. For example, by printing that napkins and serviettes are fully recyclable or stating of complex composite on-the-go type packaging, highly likely to be contaminated with food waste as well, that it should be placed in a recycling bin. This must be stopped.

Increased use of social media, influencers and optimised behavioural insights driven communications should also be utilised in conjunction with the more traditional method of leafleting and stickers, which can lead to information fatigue.

Proposal 12

Q38 Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- ☐ **Agree** – government **should** work with local authorities and other stakeholders on this
- ☐ Disagree – government **should not** work with local authorities and other stakeholders on this
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q39 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 12?

NAWDO considers whilst transparency is, in principle, a good concept, it has historically been the case that many local authorities have used their service contractors etc to market their recyclables. This is a competitive environment with contractors seeking to maximise the value of the commodities they are selling, as such there has been a strong element of commercial confidentiality as each contractor seeks to shield their arrangements from their competitors to seek market advantage - this approach works against transparency. This may or may not be an issue going forward dependent on where the ownership of material resides which is part of the EPR model considerations. To achieve transparency, it might therefore be necessary for government to mandate it to help achieve compliance from the Waste Management industry.

Consultation questions on end markets

Proposal 13

Q40 Please use this space to briefly explain any comments you have on the issues discussed in this section.

NAWDO has concerns regarding the robustness or viability of markets for plastic pots, tubs and trays which will hopefully ease over time as the requirement for recycled content kicks in. However, there are challenges about who goes first i.e. should local authorities start collecting the standard set of materials ahead of or at the same time as the requirement for recycled content or should the later come first. Will there be sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased quantities of material that will be captured and what will this material be used for. The recycled content is only for 30% of a new plastic packaging product and whilst there will be

some process loses there is still a gap (assuming the requisite quality can be achieved) between the demand by producers for recycled plastic and the amount available.

The other concern is that should the processing/ recycling capacity be delivered to enable the UK to keep collected recycled material on-shore, or at least the bulk of it, will this not just delay the inevitable as there isn't enough manufacturing to use the processed recycled product, which will need to have achieved end-of-waste status in order to be exported to the manufacturing hubs such as China.

Consultation questions on non-binding performance indicators

Proposal 14

We propose developing a set of non-binding performance indicators for local authorities to use to monitor waste management and recycling and to highlight where services can be improved to delivery higher recycling and minimise waste. In addition to the headline household recycling rate for the local authority we would propose 4 additional indicators covering the yields of dry recycling, food waste for recycling, garden waste for recycling, and residual waste. We would also work with local authorities to develop these and other indicators to reflect areas such as quality or contamination levels and service delivery.

Q41 Do you agree or disagree that introducing non-binding performance indicators for waste management and recycling is a good idea?

☒ Agree

☐ Disagree (why ...?)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q42 Do you agree or disagree that the proposed indicators are appropriate?

☐ Agree

☒ Disagree (please expand ...)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q43 Do you have any comments to make about Proposal 14 or examples of indicators currently in use that may be of assistance?

NAWDO welcomes the opportunity to work with Government to develop indicators to reflect areas such as quality or contamination levels. NAWDO does not support free collection of garden waste. Therefore, we do not agree that this specific measurement should form part of the non-binding set of performance measures.

Consultation questions on alternatives to weight-based metrics

Proposal 15

We will look at metrics that can sit alongside weight-based metrics and will work with stakeholders to develop these as set out in the Resources and Waste Strategy.

Q44 Do you agree that alternatives to weight-based metrics should be developed to understand recycling performance?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree (why ...?)
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q45 Do you agree that these alternatives should sit alongside current weight-based metrics

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree (why ...?)
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q46 What environmental, economic or social metrics should we consider developing as alternatives to weight-based metrics?

As referred to earlier the use of weight-based targets leads to the encouragement of recycling (free garden waste collections) over waste prevention which is contrary to the Waste Hierarchy.

Weight based targets have also created a paradox between the producers and collectors or packaging waste in that in order to reduce their obligations producers have reduced the weight of their packaging over time (light weighting) for example 1 litre plastic milk bottles have reduced from 34g in 1994 to 23g in 2019, a weight reduction of 33% (source: Enercon Industries Ltd), this weight reduction makes it hard for post-consumer waste collectors to achieve national performance targets as the resultant weight of recyclable material in the waste chain is reduced. This is reflected in, and in part the cause of, the stagnation of recycling performance at a national and local level.

NAWDO supports the development of a Life Cycle Assessment tool that would enable each material to be assessed for the most environmentally beneficial treatment be that re-use, recycling (mechanical or chemical) or recovery. This could be a purely carbon based tool or could also consider wider issues such as water/nitrogen/hydrogen. This would encourage pure recycling as opposed to downcycling i.e. plastic packaging converted into garden furniture/fence post or glass used for aggregate as opposed to re-melt.

NAWDO recognises that there are several different models in existence. However, these all have subtle variations that can result in significantly different outputs. A single standardised model is needed to enable a consistent, but rigorous, assessment of the best environmental option.

Consultation questions on joint working

Proposal 16

We want to support and enable greater collaboration and partnership working between authorities where this would accelerate the move to consistent collections and improve recycling and delivery of services.

Q47 In what way could greater partnership working between authorities will lead to improved **waste management and higher levels of recycling?**

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree (why ...?)
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q48 What are the key barriers to greater partnership working?

NAWDO considers that two tier local government with split collection and disposal responsibilities can represent challenges for example leads to multiple administrations, each carrying a cost burden for local tax payers. It often leads to collection, and occasionally disposal, on an uneconomic scale and to circumstances where residents down one side of a street receive a different service than those on the other side but fall in a different district or borough.

Local authorities are political organisations, and this has led to the diversity of collection services in operation as these services have been determined by local politicians. Frequently, political philosophy outweighs local economic drivers and leads to this collection diversity. The cost effectiveness of out-sourced services versus in-house services is regularly a debated issue. However, many local authorities favour having access to a flexibly deployable work force and with that direct control over their service, expenditure and possible cost savings. Likewise, alternate weekly residual collections have been demonstrated to deliver higher recycling performance rates at a cheaper cost to weekly residual collections with little, if any, loss of resident satisfaction. There are still some local authorities which retain a weekly collection service for residual waste.

It is highly unlikely that, without a top-down approach, there will be greater collaboration and joint-working that moves the existing system towards the most sustainable economic and environmental outcome for residents and businesses.

Q49 How might government help overcome these barriers?

Government needs to move towards prescribing joint waste authorities either on a county scale or sub-regional scale, which would lead to scaled collection services and waste infrastructure.

Q50 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 16?

Waste services, at present, are not always operated at the optimum economic scale either in the household or commercial realm. Waste is also a universal service that could be treated as a utility along side water, gas, electricity and phone services. These services have all been privatised.

A move to a system of franchised (i.e. rail services) "Pay as you Throw" (PAYT) services operated on a regionalised basis (i.e. water industry) would create a more sustainable solution that plays in to the polluter pays principle from both ends of the supply chain i.e. producers could be responsible via EPR for recyclable materials whilst householders (and businesses) would be deemed producers of residual waste (with food or garden waste being included in this) and would be charged based on the weight of material placed out for collection. This would drive positive recycling behaviours if this recycling element was free of charge, but one where contamination of non-recyclable materials could be easily removed as when using a kerbside sort system. Residents could also then select, based on their waste generation levels, the frequency of residual waste collection which has a preventative impact.

This also removes waste as a statutory local authority responsibility and could help consolidate the drivers which has led to the diverse system in existence today. It can also enable a more simplified and harmonised service to be put in place on a regional basis. However, this does not preclude a local authority, or partnership of authorities, from bidding for a franchise.

The franchise contract could be let for a duration (c. 15yrs) that enables the service providers to recoup their investment in the requisite infrastructure (vehicles, transfer stations, bulking and baling centres and disposal outlets etc).

Part 2 Measures to improve recycling by businesses and other organisations that produce municipal waste

Consultation questions on measures to increase recycling from business and other organisations that produce municipal waste

Proposal 17

Q51 Do you agree or disagree that businesses, public bodies and other organisations that produce municipal waste should be required to separate dry recyclable material from residual waste so that it can be collected and recycled?

- ☒ Agree
- ☐ Disagree (why ...?)
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q52 Which of the 3 options do you favour?

- ☐ Option 1 mixed dry recycling and separate glass recycling; no food waste collected for recycling
- ☐ Option 2 mixed dry recycling and separate food recycling; no glass recycling
- ☐ Option 3 mixed dry recycling, separate glass recycling, separate food recycling
- ☒ Something else (please expand ...)

The ideal segregation set up is one with a separate paper/cardboard stream since this material makes up 50-60% of commercial waste recycling. In addition to this a mixed light packaging (plastic, cans, cartons) stream, separate food waste and separate glass where this is generated in significant volumes (hospitality, events) and where this is not the case (offices, retails, services etc) glass can go in the mixed packaging stream. Dry mixed recycling is a poor performing option to manage commercial waste as evidenced in the high contamination and low performance levels reported by commercial waste MRFs and private collectors on WRAP's MRF reporting portal.

- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q53 We would expect businesses to be able to segregate waste for recycling in all circumstances but would be interested in views on where this may not be practicable for technical, environmental or economic reasons

- ☒ Yes – it should be practicable to segregate waste for recycling in all circumstances
- ☐ No – some exceptions are needed for particular circumstances (please provide examples below)
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q54 Should some businesses, public sector premises or other organisations be exempt from the requirement?

- ☐ Yes (which ones and why ...?)
- ☒ No
- ☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q55 Do you have any other comments to make about Proposal 17? For example, do you

think that there are alternatives to legislative measures that would be effective in increasing business recycling?

NAWDO supports the alternative option, the experience of our members currently providing such services i.e. Westminster City Council suggest that 60% of the material recycled from businesses is paper and card and that only in the hospitality and events sectors are there significant quantities of glass to warrant specific separation of glass from the other materials at the point of collection. Waste from businesses can be highly diverse, vary per business type and local circumstances should determine which streams are kept segregated.

The experience of NAWDO Members is that even the smallest and most space constrained businesses manage to recycle in a multi stream setup. The legislation should also apply to waste brokers, handlers such as facilities management, estate management, cleaners etc since most commercial waste producers do not handle their own waste in any way and rely on third parties to segregate it, handle it and present it for collection. Around 50% of commercial waste from office blocks, retailers, cleaning contractors and hospitality is handled through brokers who merely will find the most cost-effective deal for the client. It is essential brokers and other third parties handling commercial waste for the waste producer are covered by the same legislation as the waste producer otherwise the obligation chain will simply fail.

Proposal 18

Q56 Do you agree or disagree that businesses, public bodies or other organisations that produce sufficient quantities of food waste should be required to separate it from residual waste so that it can be collected and recycled?

☒ Agree

☐ Disagree (why ...?)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q57 Do you agree or disagree that there should be a minimum threshold, by weight, for businesses public bodies or other organisations to be required to separate food waste for collection?

☒ Agree

☐ Disagree (why ...?)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q58 Do you have any views on how we should define 'sufficient' in terms of businesses producing 'sufficient' quantities of food waste to be deemed in scope of the regulations?

NAWDO proposed that the definition of sufficient quantities should be set at 15kg (2 60L bags) of food waste or more per week.*

Q59 Do you have any views on how we should define 'food-producing' businesses?

NAWDO proposed that the definition of food-producing businesses should include:

- *All hospitality that provides food on-site,*
- *food retailers*
- *food processors*
- *markets*
- *food wholesale*

- *charitable organisations with mass catering provisions*
- *health care*
- *education*
- *on-site catering provision*
- *events and event venues with catering provision whether directly provided, third party provided (e.g. concessions) or contracted*

Q60 In addition to those businesses that produce below a threshold amount of food waste, should any other premises be exempt from the requirement?

- ☐ Yes (which ones and why ...?)
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q61 Do you have any other comments to make about proposal 18?

If businesses are required to recycle where will the enforcement function of this sit and how will this new burden be funded. It is evident that the Scottish recycling requirement on businesses is not effectively working and enforced via the SEPA set-up.

See: <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/scottish-businesses-warned-recycling-requirements/>

<https://www.mrw.co.uk/latest/exclusive-sepa-defends-enforcement-of-food-waste-law/10017549.article>

Proposal 19

If the proposals above are adopted, we would like to support businesses, public sector and other organisations to make the transition. In particular we would like to find ways to reduce the impact on small and micro businesses.

Q62 What are your views on the options proposed to reduced costs?

NAWDO would suggest provision of food waste reception points that allows multiple users to deposit small quantities of material for recycling for nominal fee either based on the weight of the material deposited or as a standard flat rate.

Q63 Are there other ways to reduce the cost burden that we have overlooked?

By reducing the corresponding residual waste bin size and collection frequency accordingly when recycling is introduced will not lead to extra costs.

NAWDO would like to request that the existing powers given to Local Authorities in terms of collecting waste from businesses should be revisited and to include a mandatory requirement to offer collections to, at a minimum, all SMEs. The core set of materials for Households and Businesses will be the same and Local Authorities are therefore already offering a service adjacent to many of these businesses, who otherwise may be missed by the wider commercial sector due to the minimal quantities of waste that they producer. Local Authorities should, in these circumstances be required to offer a service.

NAWDO is also concerned about how the participation of businesses with regard to this new required service will be monitored and enforced. Were Local Authorities to be provided with the powers requiring them to provide this service then, they might be in a position to undertake this.

Q64 Do you have any other views on how we can support businesses and other organisations to make the transition to improved recycling arrangements?

No comment

Business waste data

Proposal 20

Q65 Do you have any views on whether businesses and other organisations should be required to report data on their waste recycling performance?

☒ Agree

☐ Disagree (why ...?)

☐ Not sure/no opinion/not applicable

Q66 Do you have any other comment on Proposal 20?

Given that the achievement of the proposed recycling targets are dependent on the collection and processing of material from businesses which are classified as Municipal waste and deemed to be Household-like, it will be important to increase and improve the level of data available for recycling from these sources.

NAWDO would like to propose that SMEs have their waste management costs paid for out of business rates. This would fit with our proposal for additional powers regarding the provision of services to SMEs set out in Qu 63 and could easily fit within standard household services without the need for duplication by the private sector. Similar systems operate in many other countries and ensures working towards higher recycling rates.