

Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Cabinet

- (a) notes the results of the public consultation and the proposed amendment to reduce the waste prevention target to 400kg per head per year by 2030;
- (b) delegates authority to the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality for making minor amendments to the Strategy;
- (c) approves the Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay.

1. Summary

This report summarises the consultation response to the draft Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay and proposes an amendment for inclusion in the final strategy.

2. Introduction

The draft Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay was published for consultation on 3 March 2021 for a 6-week public consultation. 214 responses were received and they are summarised here [Summary of responses](#). The detailed responses are summarised at Appendix 1. The Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee (DASWC) resolved that the Strategy be endorsed and recommended for final approval to the (DASWC) partner authorities at their meeting on 16 June 2021 ([Minutes Template \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)).

3. Government Consultations

The Government consulted on the Extended Producer Responsibility (E.P.R.), Deposit Return Scheme (D.R.S.) and Consistency in & Business Recycling proposals in the early summer. This Strategy has been developed with the Government's proposals in mind, but until Government has taken the responses into consideration and the final proposals are confirmed with draft legislation it is not possible to know with confidence how the Government legislation will affect this Strategy. As soon as the Government confirms its position this Strategy can be reviewed to see what changes if any are required. The County Council's responses can be found at

[Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging – DCC response](#)
[Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme in England, Wales & Northern Ireland – DCC response](#)

4. Proposed amendment to this Strategy

The majority of the respondents were supportive of the proposals in the Strategy, so no significant amendments are proposed. As can be seen in the response summary and Appendix 1, the major areas of concern include:

- To stretch proposed targets for reducing, reusing and recycling
- Working with businesses, manufacturers, retailers and government to reduce packaging waste (particularly plastic waste) throughout the supply chain
- To be cautious about electric vehicles in terms of their cost and carbon impacts
- Focus on economic, efficient and carbon friendly solutions
- Focus on education and community engagement
- To promote further reuse and repair in the community and at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

As above, some were keen on stretching the proposed targets for reducing, reusing and recycling. It is considered that the targets are already ambitious.

Recycling targets are in line with the EU Circular Economy Package which the UK government has pledged to comply with. These targets will be difficult to achieve depending to some extent on the final details of the E.P.R., D.R.S. and consistency proposals and how recycling develops as a consequence of these. The reuse target is limited to that achievable at the HWRCs due to the local authorities not having either the data from charity shops or other community reuse activities. The food waste reduction target is in line with the Courtauld agreement target.

However, the waste prevention target of waste collected per head per year by 2030 of 416kg could be reduced further since various initiatives either local ones or those to be initiated by the Government could help to reduce waste arisings. It is therefore proposed that this target be reduced to 400kg per head per year by 2030.

Many of the points made regarding packaging should be addressed in the Government's E.P.R. proposals whereby producers of packaging will pay for its recycling and disposal thereby incentivising producers to reduce their packaging and/or increase its recyclability. The proposed tax on plastic with less than a 30% recycled content should also drive down the production of virgin plastic products and encourage recycling.

The local authorities are bringing in electric vehicles where appropriate and in a timely manner e.g. as vehicles approach replacement, but they will certainly be considering the economic and environmental cost benefits as well as developing technologies as they approach this transition.

It is pleasing that the respondees are concerned that local authorities follow effective, efficient and carbon friendly policies. These are all concerns that the local authorities are equally determined to take account of.

Community engagement, education and promoting reuse and repair are all fundamental elements of the Strategy & will continue to be supported by all Devon Authorities and Torbay.

5. Financial Considerations

The waste revenue budget is designed to cover the costs of implementing the County Council's responsibilities under the Strategy. In addition, the Devon Authorities' Strategic Waste Committee's budget contributes to the overall aims and targets of the Strategy, as do each district authority's and Torbay's. There are no known additional savings or burdens to the current revenue budget.

There is no impact on the Medium Term Capital Programme.

6. Legal Considerations

The lawful implications/consequences of the recommendations have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report.

7. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The Strategy is focussed on reducing, reusing and recycling waste all of which will lead to reduced environmental impact. There is also a focus on reducing the carbon impact of the waste management services with the aim of contributing to the net zero carbon targets. Re-using and recycling valuable materials will help reduce the demand for virgin materials thereby preserving natural resources and contributing to the circular economy.

8. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

This may be achieved, for example, through completing a full Equality Impact Needs Assessment / Impact Assessment or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective.

In progressing this particular proposal, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Councillors and is also available

alongside this Report and on the Council's website at:
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/waste-management-strategy/>, which Councillors will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

9. Risk Management Considerations

This policy has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken/included to safeguard the Council's position.

10. Public Health Impact

The Strategy will have some positive benefits for public health in that promoting food waste reduction can lead to more healthy eating. In addition, the Devon Community Action Groups (Devon CAG) promote sustainable living within communities which helps with community cohesion as well as improved mental health and other social benefits for residents. The Devon Food Rescue project also promotes community benefits through the network of volunteers that operate the community fridges and the communities that they serve.

11. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for recommendations and next steps

The consultation response was generally supportive of the draft Strategy. An amendment has been made to the waste prevention target. The Strategy provides the basis for the management of local authority collected waste across Devon and Torbay to 2030. Its objectives are aimed at reducing waste, reducing the carbon impact of managing waste and conserving natural resources. By working together, the local authorities, their partners and the public will ensure a sustainable future for waste management in Devon and Torbay. The other DASWC authorities are also being asked to approve the Strategy at their next appropriate committee after which the Strategy will be published.

Meg Booth
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality: Councillor Roger Croad

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay - Final

Resource and Waste Management Strategy for Devon and Torbay – Consultation

Carbon Impact

Dealing with waste inevitably leads to the release of greenhouse gases. However, with little landfill of domestic waste occurring in Devon now this is much reduced. Nevertheless, there are impacts from transporting waste, creating energy from waste and even from recycling waste. The impacts are different depending on the material and the method of processing. The Devon and Torbay Carbon Plans are proposing a target of net zero carbon by 2050 and the management of waste plays an important part in this. See Strategy section 5.1 (Climate Change and Carbon Impact) and Appendix 4.

1. Do you agree that in order to contribute to net zero carbon for Devon and Torbay by 2050 at the latest the focus should be on:

	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Reducing, reusing and recycling more textiles, plastics, metals/Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment, food and paper/card?	98.6%	1.4%	0
b. Looking specifically at how to reduce the plastics in the residual waste stream?	95.2%	3.8%	1.0%
c. Considering options for utilising heat for the Energy Recovery Facilities which will need to be commercially viable?	83.1%	5.8%	11.1%
d. Reviewing carbon capture technology as it develops further?	82.4%	6.8%	10.7%

2. Please make any comments you have on your responses to Q1 a - d in the box provided.

The 84 comments focussed on

- The need to work with businesses to reduce packaging waste, particularly plastic
- The need to reduce, reuse, recycle and repair
- To reduce use of plastic and to recycle all sorts of plastic
- To reduce co2 at source, and plant trees rather than CC by engineering
- 2050 is too late
- ERF not the solution, needs to be efficient if we do use it and needs to be wound down eventually
- Government lead required

3. Do you agree the local authorities should increase the use of carbon friendly fuelled vehicles for transporting waste e.g. electric, hydrogen, over the period of the Strategy?

Yes	89%
No	7%
Don't know	4%

4. Please make any comments you have on Q3 in the box provided.

The 68 comments focussed on

- Creating another problem in terms of battery disposal, the use of rare metals and minerals in battery production and the need for whole life carbon analysis
- There was concern about the potential costs and the need for an economic solution only replacing as vehicles come to end of life
- Hydrogen, LPG and HVO were mooted as alternative fuels
- Need to reduce waste miles
- Need to lead the way, before 2050
- Question of whether electric vehicles would cope with rurality

5. Do you agree that local authorities should develop opportunities for local reprocessing with stakeholders by 2030?

Yes	74%
No	3%
Don't know	23%

6. Please make any comments you have on Q5 in the box provided.

The 61 comments focussed on:

- Unfortunately, a number of people did not understand the phrase local reprocessing and who the stakeholders might be
- Only to be developed if this is more economic and efficient and has a reduced carbon impact
- Can this be implemented sooner than 2030
- Essential to have community hubs in rural areas for jobs and to retain value locally

Reducing, reusing and recycling waste

The focus of this strategy is on reducing, reusing and recycling waste. The less waste there is to manage the less the carbon and environmental impact, and the lower the costs. The waste collected figure for Devon includes the district council collections and the waste brought to the County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres. The councils encourage and help residents to reduce their waste through community engagement using social media, leaflets, roadshows for example, but service design and consistency can also assist residents to use the correct bins. See Strategy sections 7.0 (Waste Prevention) and 9.1 (Recycling).

7. Do you agree with the target for reducing the waste collected per head to 416kg per year by 2030 (from 444kg/head in 2019/20 for Devon, and 433kg/head for Torbay);

Yes	67%
No	19%
Don't know	14%

8. Please make any comments you have on Q7 in the box provided.

The 98 comments focussed on:

- The overwhelming majority of responses suggested that this target was not low enough
- Need to focus on packaging, at manufacture and retail levels
- Make recycling easier, particularly providing good lids
- Reduced collections could result in fly tipping
- Focus on holiday accommodation and tourists

9. If you agree with the target for reducing the waste collected per head to 416kg per year by 2030 (from 444kg/head in 2019/20 for Devon and 433kg/head for Torbay), do you agree that this should be achieved through the following means?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Community engagement	89.5%	2.1%	8.4 %
Operational service policies e.g. reducing residual waste collection capacity?	52.2%	34.1%	13.7%
Other (please specify)	62.7%	4.5%	32.8 %

10. Please make any comments you have on Q9 in the box provided;

The 95 comments focussed on:

- Reducing packaging throughout the supply chain, working with businesses and government
- The potential for reduced collections resulting in fly tipping and vermin issues
- Education and community engagement are essential, including working in schools
- Enforcement and penalties are important measures to reduce waste
- A small number didn't understand what operational service policies means

11. Do you agree with the target to achieve a 20% reduction in food waste by 2025 from a 2015 baseline?

Food waste currently makes up 30% (Devon) and 23% (Torbay) of the residual (black bag/bin) rubbish, even with the majority of councils offering a food waste collection service. The councils will continue to work with residents to help them to reduce their food waste. See Strategy section 7.2.1 (Food Waste).

Yes	85%
No	10%
Don't know	4%

12. Please make any comments you have on Q11 in the box provided.

The 95 comments focussed on:

- The target needing to be higher
- Working with supermarkets, retailers and the whole supply chain to reduce promotions such as Bogofs which increase food waste
- Work with householders to educate on reducing food waste
- Promote composting and offer subsidised bins
- Encourage food redistribution

13. Do you agree with the target to increase the amount of waste reused (from 0.75% in 2019/20) to 2% by 2025 and 5% by 2030?

Reuse happens in many ways, for example via charity shops, on-line and between friends and family. Preventing items from becoming waste by reusing them reduces carbon impact, reduces the use of finite resources, and offers job and skills sharing opportunities in upcycling and repair, not to mention encouraging community cohesion. The councils have no measure of the majority of reuse that happens in communities but can influence reuse through the Household Waste Recycling Centre shops, community engagement and by offering support to repair cafes and other reuse activities. See Strategy section 8.0 (Reuse).

	Yes	No	Don't know
(a) 2% by 2025	85.4%	7%	7.5%
(b) 5% by 2030	88%	6%	6%

14. Please make any comments you have on Q13 in the box provided.

The 74 comments focussed on:

- The need for higher targets
- The need to promote reuse services, repair shops, community hubs
- More reuse at HWRCs and more accessible centres

15. Do you agree with the target to recycle at least 60% of household waste by 2025 and 65% by 2035?

Devon has a high recycling rate of 56.6% which includes the district councils. Torbay's is lower at 40.4%. The average recycling rate across England is 44.4% with the highest being 58.5% in Oxfordshire. Recycling rates have been relatively stagnant for some time despite the best efforts of local authorities. The EU Circular Economy Package target of 65% by 2035 is supported by the Government hence the proposed target at Q8 and the interim target at Q7. A key to higher recycling rates is consistency across authorities and expanding the range of materials collected where economically and operationally viable. See Strategy section 9.0 (Recycling).

	Yes	No	Don't know
60% by 2025	88.4%	6.3%	5.3%
65% by 2035	84.8%	8.2%	7.0%

16. Please make any comments you have on Q15 in the box provided.

The 82 comments focussed on:

- The need for the targets to be higher – up to 90%
- The need to reduce waste first
- To reduce the amount of plastic and recycle plastic film

17. Do you agree with the proposal to collect a consistent range of recyclable materials by 2023 in line with Government policy with the addition of a broader range by 2030?

The Government is proposing to make it mandatory for local councils to collect paper, card, food, metal, glass, and mixed plastics by 2023. The more consistent collections are the better the quality and quantity of recyclate and the more effective communications can be across Devon and Torbay. The Devon authorities will also consider which other materials they could all collect, and how else they could be more consistent across the county. See Strategy section 9.0 (Recycling).

Yes	96%
No	2%
Don't know	2%

18. Please make any comments you have on Q17 in the box provided.

The 69 comments focussed on:

- Aiming to achieve these targets sooner
- Including cardboard, textiles, cartons metals, plastic film
- Only if economic, markets are available and capacity allows
- More education and incentives

19. Do you have any further comments on any aspect of the Strategy?

The 73 comments were wide ranging but included:

- Good to have a strategy but doesn't go far enough
- Need to be bold, assertive
- More community engagement, schools work and education
- More working with supermarkets and reducing packaging at source
- Make things easy
- More on the go recycling
- Don't charge at HWRCs