



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Councillor Geoff Jung
Chair
Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Committee

Your ref: PHCC&E Consultation
Our ref: PO2021/16509/GP

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19 August 2021

Dear Geoff,

Thank you for your letter of 25 June about your response to the consultation on Consistency in Household and Business Recycling in England. I apologise for the delay in responding. Defra is currently dealing with high volumes of correspondence.

The points you raise will be considered in the analysis of the Consistency in Household and Business Recycling. We are currently analysing responses to this consultation and intend to publish our Government response in due course.

Regarding garden waste collection from households, we are considering a range of options for the collection of this material and any associated environmental benefits. Our consultation option of proposing a free minimum garden waste collection service is intended to help householders to recycle more and to support composting. There is evidence to suggest that where a free minimum service exists this encourages householder participation and reduces the risk of garden waste ending up in residual waste bins and going to landfill where it emits methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. We will be reviewing this evidence further as we produce our final Impact Assessment and Government response to the consultation.

We do not consider the consultation option of providing a free minimum garden waste collection service to householders to break the 'polluter pays' principle. Household gardens provide an environmental benefit, with plants and trees removing carbon from the air and supporting healthy ecosystems, rather than acting as a source of pollution. Access to garden waste collection services helps encourage good environmental management of household gardens, benefitting the natural environment.

In terms of potential costs incurred by our proposals, any new financial burdens on local authorities will be assessed and the net additional cost covered by the Government. These include net additional capital costs and transitional costs. We are working to assess costs to local authorities and will engage with local authorities on the cost estimates, as well as the appropriate timing for funding to be provided to authorities, to enable sufficient lead-in time ahead of introduction of recycling consistency reforms.

Regarding the frequency of waste collections and statutory guidance, we are considering whether a recommended minimum service standard of alternate weekly collection for residual waste might be appropriate, subject to assessment of affordability and value for money. We will continue to consider responses to our proposals on statutory guidance outlined in the consultation and will consult on this guidance in 2022.

The development of these reforms is ongoing, and we recognise the key role of local authorities in helping to achieve the successful implementation of these reforms. We will continue to engage with local authorities as we rollout the collection and packaging reforms.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact me about this important issue. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance with this or any other matters in the future.



REBECCA POW MP