

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Zero Waste Management Sub Committee

DATE: 27th June 2012

DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard

TITLE OF REPORT: Overview of the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012
and policy change on Recycling Rates

REPORT NUMBER:

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide a summary of the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012, to identify the elements most likely to impact on Aberdeen City Council and to address a recent change in the method of measuring recycling rates.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Sub-Committee:-

1. Notes the contents of the report
2. Agrees that the Aberdeen City recycling and composting targets are measured according to tonnage rather than the Scottish Government's previously proposed Carbon Metric

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None from this report although there will be significant financial implications arising from the regulations, primarily relating to the need to introduce additional recycling and food waste collections, both for households and trade waste. These implications will be quantified as far as is possible in the development of the Outline Business Case for the Zero Waste Project.

The additional costs will be affected by further guidance and clarification by the Scottish Government but the statutory obligation to collect additional waste streams may affect the service's ability to adhere to the financial commitments made in the 5-year business plan. Once these impacts are clarified, they will be reported accordingly and integrated into development of future budgets.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Overview

Since the publication of the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Plan in June 2010, a considerable period of time was spent developing and consulting on the proposed the Zero Waste Regulations. The final draft was laid before Parliament on 15th March 2012 and the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 were adopted on 9th May 2012.

The Regulations have introduced a number of new statutory obligations on Local Authorities as well as a number of restrictions on operational waste management issues.

5.2 Zero Waste Plan (ZWP)

Scotland's ZWP was published by the Scottish Government on 9th June 2010 with an updated to Annex B published in February 2011.

The Plan outlined the Government's vision for sustainable waste management and how all sectors can play a part in reducing the amount of waste produced, reusing valuable resources and increasing recycling levels to help Scotland become a Zero Waste Society. It also set more aspirational recycling targets as well as a limit on the types and percentage of waste that can be landfilled:

The new ZWP targets:

Year	Recycling and Composting Target
2010	40%
2013	50%
2020 ¹	60%
2025 ²	70%

By 2025, not more than 5% of all wastes will be landfilled.

These targets are not statutory.

5.3 Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 – The Zero Waste Regulations

¹ Targets for 2010, 2013 and 2020 are for household waste only

² All wastes

Following the publication of the ZWP in June 2010, the Scottish Government consulted on draft regulations aimed at implementing a number of actions in the Plan and to drive the improvements necessary to achieve the new recycling targets. A number of changes were made following the consultation and these were set out in a Policy Statement, issued in October 2011. The final draft was laid before Parliament on 15th March 2012 and the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 were adopted on 9th May 2012.

The Regulations introduce a number of new statutory obligations on Councils regarding waste collection and treatment services. The key changes are outlined below:

- 1) a requirement for separate collection of key recyclable materials (paper, card, glass, metals, plastics) and food waste from all households and trade premises;
- 2) a ban on mixing separately collected recycling and organic wastes with other wastes;
- 3) a ban on landfilling separately collected key recyclable materials and food waste;
- 4) a restriction on the inputs to energy from waste (EfW) facilities - unsorted waste will not be able to go to Energy from Waste, it will require pre-sorting to remove additional recyclable materials
- 5) a ban on the landfilling of waste with a total organic content of over 5%, to reduce the biodegradability of waste to landfill.

The timescales for these new obligations are as follows:

Collections of the key recyclable materials from all households	1 st January 2014
Businesses to separate the key recyclables for collection	1 st January 2014
Provision of food waste collections to all households	1 st January 2016
Businesses producing over 50kg of food waste per week to arrange for separate collection of food waste	1 st January 2014
Businesses producing over 5Kg food waste to arrange for separate collection of food waste	1 st January 2016

As a result, Aberdeen City Council has a statutory obligation to extend food waste and recycling collections to all households within the timeframes stated. At present, approximately 75,000 properties have access to the kerbside recycling service and 54,000 receive the food and garden waste service. There is limited provision of convenient recycling facilities to flatted properties which often only includes paper and cardboard, particularly in tenemental areas. It will also be necessary to extend the range of materials collected through the trade waste recycling service as at present only paper,

cardboard and glass recycling collections are offered to commercial customers.

5.4 Implications for Aberdeen City Council

There are significant implications for Aberdeen City Council from the regulations however these are mostly accounted for in the existing Aberdeen City Waste Strategy and have been built into the Zero Waste Management Project. As a result, there is no requirement to undertake a review of either the Strategy or the Zero Waste Management Project. The main implications are:

- The timescales for separate collections are challenging, especially for the provision of separate collection services to businesses.
- The statutory requirement for separate collections for all households will result in the requirement for more vehicles and crews to service recycling and food waste containers that are likely to have lower levels of participation than elsewhere in the city. This will increase the unit cost of collection and require further investment in vehicles.
- The requirement to pre-treat mixed (black bin) waste to remove low quality and potentially contaminated recyclables will add capital and revenue cost to residual treatment services that will not be offset by additional revenue generated from the sale of recyclables.
- The regulations reinforce the necessity for new infrastructure in the local area with procurement, planning and financing issues to address.

5.5 Recycling Rate Measure

Regarding the recycling targets, there has been an important shift in focus from the Scottish Government. The ZWP stated that the household waste recycling and composting targets for 2013 and 2020, and the “all waste” target for 2025, should be measured by a Carbon Metric rather than tonnage.

After a considerable development and consultation period, it has been decided that the Carbon Metric will not be introduced in the manner originally planned. The targets from the ZWP as applied to local authorities, as noted in section 5.2 above, will be measured by tonnage and not carbon equivalent.

This keeps Scotland in line with the reporting mechanism for the EU Waste Framework Directive’s statutory recycling and composting target of 50% by 2020. The Scottish Government is now proposing to introduce a new set of

targets based on national carbon reduction which will include all elements of the waste hierarchy. The Scottish Government intends to introduce these new targets in 2015, although may do so as early as 2013 depending on progress.

The implication for Aberdeen City Council is that the Zero Waste Management Sub-Committee previously agreed that the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy recycling and composting targets should be measured in accordance with the proposed carbon metric. The Council will now be assessed on its tonnage performance and in order to avoid conflict in policymaking, it is recommended that the sub-committee agrees to set Aberdeen City's recycling and composting rates in terms of tonnage. This will keep the Council's own targets and internal reporting in-line with SEPA, Audit Scotland, the EU Waste Framework Directive and the Scottish Government.

The Waste and Recycling Service will continue to consider the carbon implications of service changes and contribute to the Council's Carbon Management Programme.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scottish Government (2010) Scotland's Zero Waste Plan
Scottish Government (2012) Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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