



"Working for our members to be the voice of government on waste minimisation and recycling issues"

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Emma Taylor
Zero Waste Plan Consultation
Waste and Pollution Reduction Division
Scottish Government
1-J Dockside
Victoria Quay

12Nov09

Dear Ms Taylor,

Consultation Response – Zero Waste Scotland

I am writing to present the LARAC response to the Zero Waste Consultation, which is contained below, and I thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation.

The comments below are sent on behalf of the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC). LARAC is an association of 90% of the 440 local authorities across England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland whose waste management and recycling professionals' co-ordinate and operate waste management services. Membership is drawn from all types of authority including statutory Waste Collection (WCA), Waste Disposal (WDA) and Unitary. All Scottish Local Authorities are LARAC members.

Overall LARAC is supportive of the proposals but feels it lacks detail on how it is proposed the targets will be achieved. To become a Zero Waste society, a real cultural and behavioural change will be required, and there is a lack of clarity on how this will be instigated. There is also a lack of detail on how businesses will be persuaded to reduce their waste to landfill in line with the targets. LARAC also feels Government needs to play a stronger coordinating role in the provision of a national treatment infrastructure. The use of direct heat from waste treatment should receive stronger support through proactive planning measures. Overleaf are our detailed comments as requested in the consultation.

If you have any queries on this response or would like to discuss the matter further then please contact me on 01786 850326 or khelwig@dsl.pipex.com.

Yours faithfully,

Karin Helwig
LARAC Policy Support Officer



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Consultation Response – Zero Waste Scotland DRAFT

1. What further steps, if any, need to be taken to promote the waste hierarchy?

LARAC would like to see more extensive use of robust Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) methods in order to refine the choice of treatment option and justify deviation from the waste hierarchy where appropriate. It does support the hierarchy as a general guiding principle.

Targets for commercial and industrial waste as well as construction and demolition waste should be set, possibly industry-specific targets, and more clarity should be given on how it is envisaged that these targets will be achieved by the various sectors, including the municipal sector, with consideration of resources.

LARAC would welcome powers for Local Authorities to introduce variable charging if they choose, as a tool to encourage their residents to follow the waste hierarchy.

2. Waste Tonnage will continue to be the main measure of progress. However, should Government also use other ways of measuring progress?

Waste tonnage can still be used but separate targets for specific materials (with different generic weights) can continue to be used to drive diversion for specific wastes, as is already the case for e.g. biodegradable waste and WEEE, justified by the environmental effects specific to these waste streams. This is in line with the European Thematic Strategy which determines that 'hazardousness' should indeed be considered.

The availability of alternative treatment options may be considered, e.g. through extended requirements for Waste Management Plans.

Social and economic benefits will exist for many reuse and recycling projects, but the added value of these projects should be supported through partnership working with other sectors, and not just borne by the waste industry.

Carbon reduction and/or Life Cycle Analysis should certainly be considered in conjunction with tonnage in a more systematic way and work on method development to this effect should continue.



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3. Do you agree with the proposals on improving waste data?

LARAC generally welcomes the proposals for improving waste data. However whether or not measures are sufficient will depend on which businesses will receive SEPA's waste data requests. LARAC would propose that more data should be collected from non-LA waste collectors, and that more extensive use is made of Waste Management Plans for a wider range of businesses and industries.

When more data is collected, it is vital that it is then used as a basis for future policy development.

4. What should be the future role of the Area Waste Groups and Area Waste Plans?

There has been frustration over the lack of development in terms of infrastructure development and the fact that the Strategic Outline Cases and Business Outline Cases were shelved. LARAC deems that Waste Infrastructure development should be the main focus of area waste groups, and that plans should be developed in close partnership with all stakeholders including industry and the relevant planning authorities. Area Waste Groups may be appropriate forums to explore possibilities for the use of renewable heat and the direct use of biogas from EfW, MBT and AD plant. Whereas long-term planning is necessary, there is also a risk that Area Waste Plans, as binding documents, will restrict flexibility. There needs to be space for policy and strategy to be revised as circumstances change, whether due to economic developments, changes in waste composition or otherwise. Any Area Waste Group should therefore be able to negotiate with national policy makers.

5. Is there a need for a simplified delivery body programme?

Yes. Whereas the delivery bodies have all done excellent work, a clarification of duties and responsibilities is required. A single body with responsibility for the delivery of Zero Waste, with powers for strategy development, planning, coordination and stakeholder engagement, as well as support, awareness and publicity duties, could play a key role. Existing bodies and their specific duties could be integrated into such a body, so that their expertise could be fed back into policy and strategy.



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6. To date, development plans have not always identified sites and/or locational criteria for waste management plants. What can be done to ensure that development plans do so in the future?

There is still a lot of work to be done in terms of PR in order to combat NIMBY attitudes. Clearer identification of what infrastructure is required and should be communicated to planners. The importance of using renewable heat and biogas from waste plant should be strongly promoted to planners.

7. Should government set a target of reducing municipal waste by 1% per annum?
Should government set any specific targets on reducing household waste? If yes, what targets?

If Local Authorities are to achieve waste prevention targets they need to be given the tools to do so, and LARAC would support the powers for Local Authorities to introduce variable charging as one such measure. The situation with commercial waste needs to be clarified; at the moment targets for the reduction of MSW would not make sense. The prevention of household waste may be more effectively achieved by national campaigns than by targets for Local Authorities.

8. Should government set a target in relation to "preparing for reuse?"

LARAC is unclear who would be responsible for achieving such a target. It is of the opinion that reuse is best stimulated through support of reuse initiatives and through a change in attitude that makes the use of second-hand goods more socially acceptable, rather than through target setting.

9. What targets, if any, should Government set in relation to the prevention of commercial and industrial waste and construction and demolition waste?

LARAC is pleased to note intention for the prevention of these types of waste, as well as the increased data collection from these sectors. Specific suggestions for the prevention of such waste will be best made by those in the industry.

10. Have any potential waste prevention actions been missed? Are there any actions listed which are not pursuing, and why?

LARAC deems that sustainable consumption, including but not limited to:

- actions increasing the lifespan of products
- products designed for easy recycling
- increased social acceptability of reuse
- reducing the pressure to consume



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are vital for serious waste prevention. It notes that the recent recession is likely to have played a role in waste prevention and warns that this may be a temporary effect. A cultural / behavioural change is required to curb unsustainable consumption. The economics of growth must be placed in the context of environmentally unsustainable consumption.

11. On improving municipal recycling rates:

a) Do you agree with the key actions needed to improve municipal recycling rates? Yes/No. If no, what else should be done?

- LARAC would support powers for local authorities to introduce direct or variable charging if they choose, which has been a successful way to encourage recycling and waste prevention in other European countries.
- The restriction of the volume accepted for the collection of mixed (residual) waste has also been shown to be effective
- More on-street and in-store recycling facilities
- Penalties for not recycling properly should not be ruled out

The measures proposed are not new or revolutionary. LARAC believes that successful communications strategies are vital. However, without stronger incentives or enforcement it will be difficult to achieve the targets.

b) Should most (eg. 80%) of the recycling targets be met through collections of recyclate at kerbside and through recycling centres and points? Yes/No

The answer to this question needs to be based on waste analysis. The action plan mentions the need for waste analysis but does not yet give any detail on how the data will be used to determine the most effective ways to increase landfill diversion. For example, if street sweepings contain a lot of leaves, there may be opportunities for composting, but the importance of this will be determined by 1. the amount of street sweeping compared to the total amount of waste, and 2. the amount of leaves as part of total street sweepings. Such figures are vital to design effective strategies, to identify 'easy hits' and to calculate how the targets can best be met.

c) Do you consider that local authorities need more in-depth support to help improve municipal recycling performance. If yes, what should be done?

Yes. Local authorities will reach the stage where they have a comprehensive kerbside collection in place, done a reasonable amount of awareness raising, and find that their recycling levels are stuck at, say, 40-50%. The real challenge will then be to push the participation and capture rates up even further. Local Authorities may then need to seriously consider how to identify barriers to recycling in their communities, and how to break down these barriers. This may involve local in-depth



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research. If intensive campaigns such as doorknocking are required, or have been identified as successful, then resources should be made available for local authorities to carry out such campaigns.

d) Do you consider that there could be a greater role for incentives to improve recycling performance. Yes/No. If yes, what type of incentives?

Yes. The option to introduce variable charging could act as an incentive to recycling.

e) Should any changes be made to the categories of household waste where local authorities can charge for collection? Yes/No. If yes, what changes should be made?

The situation with regards to Schedule 2 wastes needs to be clarified. Also, it should be clarified whether it is legal for local authorities to charge for waste uplifts over and above the volume normally collected, i.e. whether it is legal to charge for the uplift of side waste.

12. What more should be done to encourage recycling in public places?

Partnership working with City Centre planners is necessary and recycling stations should be designed in along with other street furniture. Clear labelling on packaging, especially for food on-the-go, could be coordinated with labelling on recycling stations. Resources should be made available for the installation of recycling stations.

Recycling facilities should also be provided in large public areas, such as shopping malls, stations, hospitals, cinemas, leisure centres etc. and at events.

13. Should a campaign be run to remind companies of their duty of care?

Yes

14. Do you agree that these are the priority materials and sectors for which tailored programmes of work should be developed? If no, what should be included?

In addition to those mentioned, WEEE should also be a priority material.

15. Should Government set a target on reducing the amount of commercial and industrial waste sent to landfill by 150,000 tonnes a year? Should Government set targets by specific sectors, companies or materials? If yes, which sectors, companies or materials?

LARAC supports the setting of targets by specific sectors. It does not wish to comment on the level of reduction by 150,000 tonnes a year for C&I waste. Sectors may be able to utilise compliance schemes in order to meet such targets. Sectors producing waste similar in composition to



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household waste should be set targets similar to those for municipal waste. LARAC would also strongly support targets for C&D in particular. Over time, LARAC does not see why all sectors should not be given targets.

16. a. Should Government explore further the merits of different forms of producer responsibility, which might more directly support household recycling collections?

LARAC supports further use of the principle of producer responsibility. The packaging industry should financially support Local Authorities carrying out kerbside recycling collections for packaging materials. If small WEEE is to be collected at kerbside, WEEE producers should bear the cost of this. Research should be carried out into the possibilities of making manufacturers of poor quality (non-durable) garments that are highly subject to fashion, responsible for the resulting waste textiles.

It may be possible to use the Producer responsibility principle in relation to other producers of non-durable goods, such as toys and furniture.

- b. Should Government explore further whether extended producer responsibility as outlined in Article 8 of the revised Waste Framework Directive should be introduced? Yes/No. If yes, what materials?

Yes. LARAC feels the principle of producer responsibility should be fully explored. However, it will not be in the interest of recycling performance to have producers set up kerbside collection systems without due consultation with Local Authorities. A proportional contribution to the cost of existing collections may be more appropriate.

- c. Should Government or other bodies do more to extend the concept of voluntary producer responsibility? Yes/No. If yes, what?

Yes, LARAC supports the idea of voluntary producer responsibility. The newspaper, magazine and junkmail industries may be approached.

17. Do you agree that the cap should not extend to mixed waste treatment, such as Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT), Mechanical Heat Treatment (MHT) and Anaerobic Digestion taking mixed waste?

The 25% cap on EfW should indeed not extend to these treatments. However, most processes taking mixed waste will produce a digestate-type material that may not achieve end-of-waste criteria, once such criteria are developed. Where this material is then landfilled it should count towards the 5% cap on landfill (at this stage weight and volume will be reduced).



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18. Should the cap extend to single-stream municipal wastes going to energy from waste plants?

Yes/No.

LARAC would like to see each single-stream material going down the optimal treatment route.

Where AD from source-separated green waste results in PAS100 quality material, it should not be restricted by a cap.

Although as a treatment for wood, it would generally prefer recycling to EfW, it may be that in certain circumstances EfW is the environmentally preferable option. The use of energy from renewable sources (such as wood) will increasingly required as part of an energy strategy, and it does not make sense to restrict this by making it subject to caps.

LARAC has a strong preference for source segregation of materials over mixed waste treatment techniques.

19. a) Should Government support local authorities when they seek to procure or build infrastructure to treat residual waste? Yes/No.

Yes

b) If yes, what should Government do?

LARAC thinks the government does have a role to play to ensure there is enough treatment capacity, albeit mainly a co-ordinating and facilitating one. The Strategic Outline and Business cases were presented to work towards sufficient infrastructure. In light of the fact that at the moment infrastructure is still insufficient to divert the required amounts from landfill, and that it is not yet clear how this infrastructure will be provided, LARAC deems it premature for Government to state that it has no intention of providing funding.

20. Do you have any initial views on materials or streams or products which could be banned from landfill?

LARAC supports the introduction of landfill bans under certain conditions. These are:

1. That the ban applies to a material for which alternative recycling or disposal is available, with consideration of export restrictions and the proximity principle;
2. That such alternative recycling or disposal offers a real environmental benefit;
and
3. That such alternative recycling or disposal does not incur excessive cost.
4. that enough time is allowed for Local Authorities to adapt.



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21. a) What opportunities would arise in this area if Scotland had fiscal autonomy, with the power to set the rate of landfill tax in Scotland?

The landfill tax continues to be a very effective driver for landfill diversion and LARAC deems it important that it would remain so under fiscal autonomy. Transport of waste for the purpose of (partial) landfill tax evasion would work against the proximity principle and is considered undesirable, therefore any differentiation in Landfill Tax may need to be seen with restrictions on waste transport introduced at the same time, as might be the case if Scotland gained independence (see b.).

- b) What might the effects of a different constitutional arrangement for Scotland be in this area?

If a different constitutional arrangement was arrived at, waste transport between England and Scotland may come under export restrictions. This would have implications for infrastructure planning. In addition, a different regime of landfill bans in England and Scotland would have to be accompanied by restrictions of cross-border transport.



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