



Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee

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### **Report – Inquiry into Meeting Landfill and Recycling Targets**

The Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) would like the opportunity to comment on the above report. LARAC represents the views of over 430 local authorities throughout the UK including 20 in Wales, whose waste and recycling professionals co-ordinate and operate waste management services for their authorities. As a national organisation LARAC would like these comments to be considered as representation of the feelings of all UK authorities.

LARAC recognises the massive contribution the Welsh Assembly Government has made to the promotion of Sustainable Waste Management in Wales and commends the Waste Policy Unit for the continued support of local authorities through both direct and indirect funding.

**Recommendation 1** – LARAC supports the Peer Review process and recognises the value of positive constructive guidance for all local authorities.

**Recommendation 2** – LARAC accepts the importance of robust strategies but is concerned at the level of resources diverted from project management in preparing these documents. In recognising the weaknesses in regards to forward financial planning within many of Wales' Municipal Waste Management Strategies it must be seen in a wider context. Working in a volatile market place with constantly changing legislative direction with a 3 year budget commitment is not conducive to forward planning. LARAC empathizes with its memberships unwillingness to commit to paper their recommendations for waste management facilities that will be needed beyond 2010 without guidance and direction from the Welsh Assembly Government.

**Recommendation 3** – LARAC is pleased that both the Committee and the Welsh Assembly Government recognises that there is not a 'one size fits all' solution. LARAC would also ask for additional financial support for local authorities that may be required to adapt recycling collection practices, if appropriate, following the completion of the HSE Review, given the Welsh Assembly Governments continued support and promotion of the Cleanstream® System.

**Recommendation 4** – LARAC would ask for promotion and support of all initiatives that encourage minimisation and reduction of waste at source. LARAC encourages its membership to embrace home composting, reusable nappies and junk mail initiatives given their position in the Waste Hierarchy.

**Recommendation 5** – LARAC does not favour the introduction of material specific targets as this has the potential to distort markets and exacerbate price fluctuations. This may also encourage a ‘buy in’ of non post-consumer waste and places additional pressure on Local Authorities to deal with Producer Responsibility.

**Planning and Regional Working** – LARAC feels that these recommendations should only be considered as a total package. LARAC would only support statutory regional waste plans along with the implementation of recommendations 9, 11, 12 and 13.

**Research and Development** - Whilst LARAC recognises the importance of research, development and project innovation it would ask that tried and tested methods of reducing, reusing and recycling continue to benefit from the support of Welsh Assembly Government and the Committee.

LARAC fully supports the findings and recommendations contained elsewhere within this document.

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For LARAC Policy Team.