

Appendix 1 – National Policy Review 2024-2025

Household Waste Management Strategy Update

1. Overview

This annual Household Waste Management Strategy Policy Review considers the changes and updates to national policy and legislation that have emerged since the last review, and specifically, the impacts of Environment Act 2021 on Wiltshire Council’s waste service, including Simpler Recycling, the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), and Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR). This review details the council’s response to requirements under Environment Act 2021 and provides an update on government consultations relevant to the Waste Service.

2. National policy and legislation

2.1 Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 functions as the UK’s primary framework for environmental protection and aims to improve air and water quality, protect wildlife, increase recycling, and reduce waste. **Figure 1** gives an overview of changes related to the Waste Service and the timeframe for implementation.

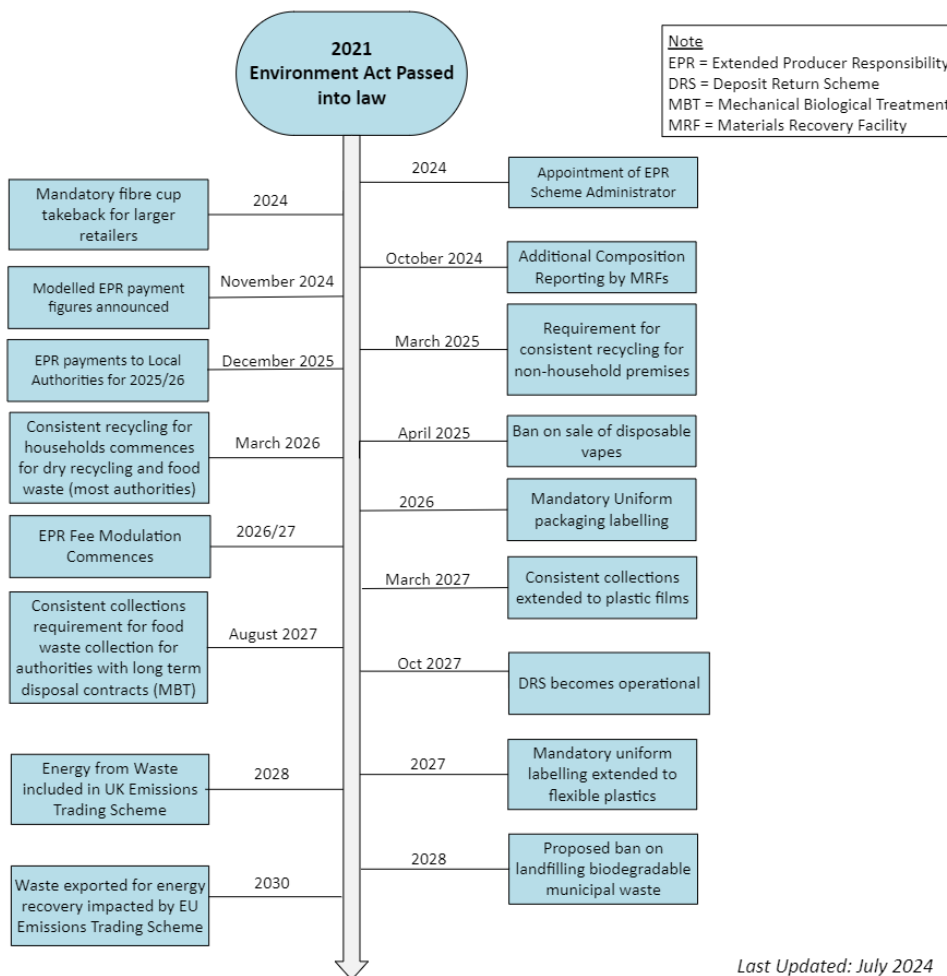


Figure 1. Estimated timescales for the Environment Act 2021.

The key waste-related policy initiatives contained in Environment Act 2021 are the DRS, EPR, and Simpler Recycling schemes. DEFRA carried out public consultations on these elements in May/June 2021. **Table 1** provides an update on the outcome of these consultations and details the anticipated impacts and outcomes.

Table 1. Key waste-related policy initiatives contained in the Environment Act.

Policy scheme	Commencement	Anticipated impacts and outcomes
<p>Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)</p> <p>Introduction of DRS for drinks containers.</p>	<p>Expected commencement by October 2027 (<i>note delayed from October 2025</i>). <i>UPDATE:</i> The new Government has indicated plans to bring implementation forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers to be charged a deposit on all drinks containers (with the exception of glass) at point of sale. • National DRS network of retailer collection points and reverse vending machines to be implemented where consumers can redeem their deposits. • Reduced local authority costs associated with collection and disposal of litter. • Significant risk of reduced income to the council from sale of recyclable drinks containers such as plastic bottles and cans, that will fall in scope of DRS – currently this potential lost income is valued at an estimated £1m per annum.
<p>Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR)</p> <p>All producers of packaging to be made accountable for covering the full cost of the recovery and recycling of their products.</p>	<p>Commenced April 2024 (<i>although financial impact yet to be published</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All producers of packaging to pay scheme fees based on volume of packaging they place onto the market. In time, modulated fees are to be introduced with higher fees applying to “difficult to recycle” packaging, such as black plastic trays, food pouches, polystyrene packing, etc. • Expected to incentivise greater use of more easily recyclable packaging and promote use of packaging that is designed to be recycled. • Changes in the composition and reduction in non-recyclable waste collected and disposed of by the council. • Opportunities to collect and recycle more packaging waste as sustainable markets are created. • Expectation to expand kerbside collections to include plastic film and flexible plastics, from 2026/27, although this relies on rapid development of recycling capacity and technology. • Opportunity to receive funding from the EPR compliance scheme to cover collection and recycling/disposal costs in respect of in-scope packaging materials.

<p>Simpler Recycling</p> <p>People across England will be able to recycle the same materials, whether at home, work or school.</p> <p>Separate weekly collections of food waste to become mandatory.</p>	<p>Changes to be phased from 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire Council has received an allocation of £4.9m capital New Burdens funding to support the introduction of new food waste collections. DEFRA have allocated this capital funding for extra collection vehicles and household food waste containers. • Further New Burdens funding due to be allocated for transition and ongoing revenue expense of food waste collections. • A larger fleet of waste collection vehicles will be required. • Changes in the residual waste composition and volumes arising have contractual implications for the council's landfill diversion contracts, which could lead to compensation payments to facility providers. New Burdens funding has not been allocated for waste disposal, or to assist with the negative implications on existing local authority contracts. • New kerbside collections for plastic films need to be put in place, with no guarantee that recycling facilities will be available to successfully process this material at scale. • Increased requirements for sampling of recycling at the Material Recycling Facilities that sort kerbside-collected recyclables. To include more frequent samples and greater number of material categories (eg identifying the proportion of each material that is packaging)
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2.2 Emerging national policy changes and consultations

There are several potential policy changes being consulted on by government which would affect the council's Household Waste Management Strategy. These include:

<p>DEFRA Call for evidence to support the near elimination of biodegradable waste disposal in landfill from 2028</p>	<p>Closed July 2023. Defra sought views on proposals to ban the deposit of biodegradable waste in landfills from 2028.</p> <p>This Call for Evidence does not set out new requirements but will inform future policy.</p> <p>Industry has called for the implementation of this alongside the incorporation of energy from waste (EfW) facilities into the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), to avoid waste being displaced from EfW into landfill.</p> <p>To date, no outcome has been published.</p> <p>Near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>DEFRA Consultation on potential amendments to the Persistent Organic</p>	<p>Closed April 2023. DEFRA intends to move forward with changes to POPs regulation when parliamentary time allows.</p>

<p>Pollutants (POPs) Regulation.</p>	<p>This will result in lower limits for existing POPs which could affect materials not currently regarded as POPs waste, and also new POPs which may affect wastes such as carpets, mattresses, and non-clothing textiles.</p> <p>An Environment Agency (EA) review is also ongoing to determine the appropriate level of dust extraction required for shredding POPs waste. If evidence confirms that local dust suppression is adequate to prevent release of POPs into the environment, the EA may update guidance to remove the need for full abatement systems.</p> <p>Amendments to the persistent organic pollutants (POPs) regulation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>Consultation on preventing charges for DIY waste at household waste recycling centres (HWRCs)</p>	<p>Amendment to 2012 Controlled Waste Regulations to make clear where construction waste should be treated as DIY waste and to prevent local authorities charging for the disposal of household DIY waste from small-scale domestic projects at HWRCs. Legislation updated in December 2023 and will come into force pending parliamentary procedure. Read more here Summary of responses and government response - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).</p> <p>The same consultation concluded there was insufficient evidence to require the prevention of local authorities from using HRC booking systems but reserved the right to review this position.</p>
<p>UK Emissions Trading Scheme</p>	<p>Live consultation closing August 2024. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero is consulting on the approach to incorporate Energy from Waste facilities into the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) from 2028. It is anticipated that this will result in significant additional disposal costs for waste sent to EfW.</p> <p>UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>An EU ETS is also under development, with mandatory participation for EfW expected by 2030.</p>
<p>Digital waste tracking</p>	<p>In October 2023, Defra announced that a new mandatory digital Waste Tracking system will be introduced from April 2025. This system is intended to capture end to end waste movements, in place of EA Waste Returns. It is ultimately intended to replace WasteDataFlow, which is currently used to capture local authority waste returns.</p> <p>Mandatory digital waste tracking - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>

<p>Reform of Carrier, Broker, Dealer system</p>	<p>In October 2023, Defra published its response to a 2022 consultation on reforming the carrier, broker and dealer (CBD) system which covers transport of waste.</p> <p>The changes will bring waste transporters into the environmental permitting system, enabling more robust enforcement via the Environment Agency and requiring oversight by a technically competent person.</p> <p>Government response and summary of responses - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>Plastic Packaging Tax Reform Consultation</p>	<p>Closed October 2023. HM Revenue and Customs consulted on a proposed method of reforming the Plastic Packaging Tax, which currently requires minimum 30% recycled content, or payment of the tax. The proposed reform focused on switching to a mass balance approach, enabling packaging manufacturers to make use of an average 30% recycled materials, which is hoped to incentivise chemical recycling of flexible plastics.</p> <p>Plastic Packaging Tax - chemical recycling and adoption of a mass balance approach - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>

3. Waste Transformation Programme

To ensure compliance with Environment Act 2021, plan for the anticipated impacts on our existing contracts, as well as deliver other key waste projects, the Waste Transformation Programme has been developed.

The Waste Transformation Programme will oversee the 4-year delivery of a complex and wide-ranging programme to ensure multiple waste collection, waste treatment and disposal contracts are procured and commissioned. **Figure 2** gives an overview of the programme structure.

More detail on the actions the Waste Service is taking as part of the Waste Transformation Programme is detailed in the Action Plan **Appendix 4**.

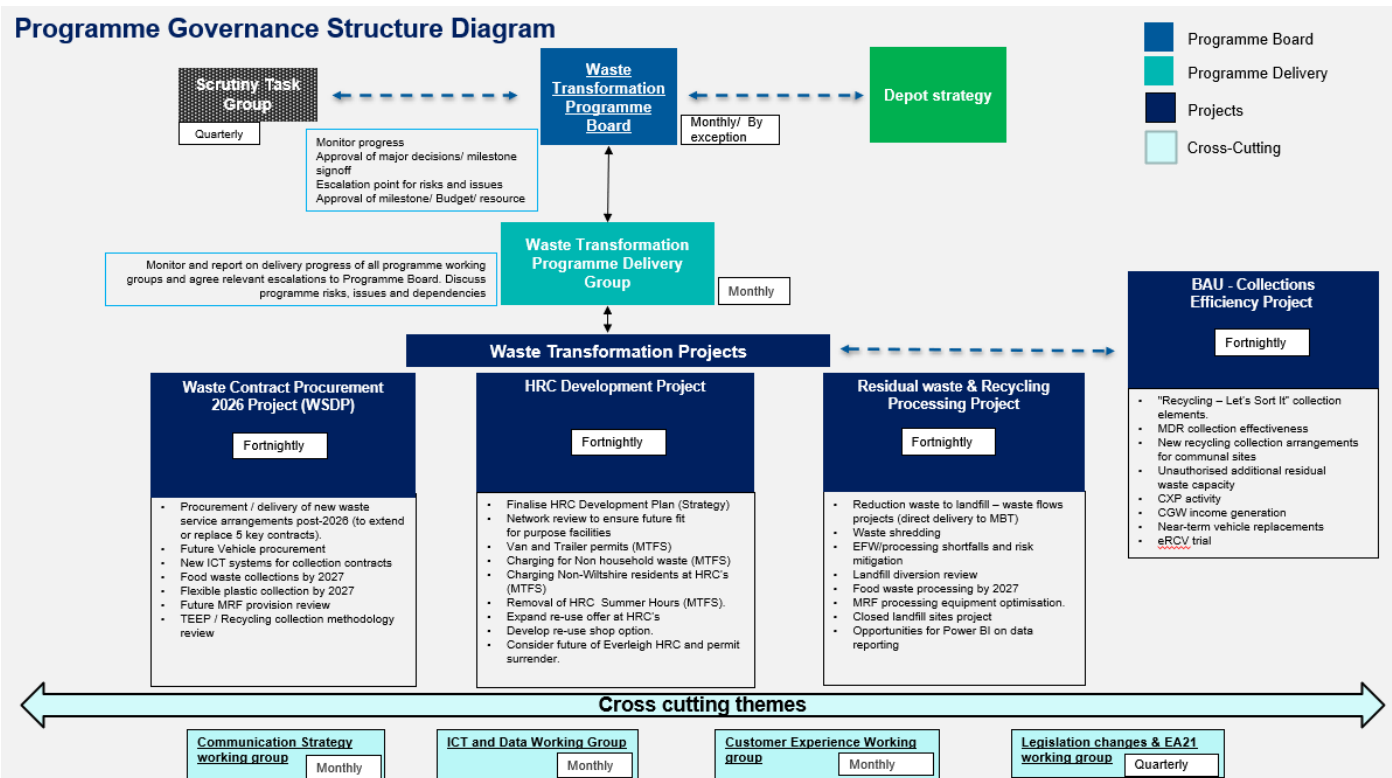


Figure 2. Waste Transformation Programme Structure