

## **Submission from Ayrshire Waste Management Project Group**

I am writing to you in response to the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee Call for Views regarding the Scottish Government's Policy Statement on the Zero Waste (Scotland) Regulations and the aforementioned Regulations (once laid).

The Zero Waste Plan, published on 9 June 2010, set out the strategic direction for waste policy for Scotland and proposed 22 actions to be taken to deliver it. The Policy Statement covers three of those actions relating to the introduction of regulatory measures to:

- require source segregation and separate collection of specified waste materials;
- restrict input to landfill (effectively banning materials which could be re-used or recycled or which could be used to produce energy); and
- restrict inputs to thermal treatment facilities (effectively banning materials which could be re-used or recycled).

In connection with the emerging Zero Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2011, the three Ayrshire Councils are committed to delivering the following objectives from the Scottish Government's vision for a Zero Waste Society:

- Understanding and maximising the value of resources;
- Sustainable Economic Growth;
- Minimising the impact on the environment;
- Eliminating unnecessary use of primary resources.

The Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Project Group is a partnership between East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council, and South Ayrshire Council to deliver a long term residual waste treatment facility for Ayrshire's residual Municipal Solid Waste.

The three Ayrshire Councils remain committed to the delivery of the joint long term residual waste treatment project, and therefore require ongoing commitment from the Scottish Government to regulatory certainty and the Zero Waste Fund, in order to ensure that the project is both deliverable and affordable.

To this end the three Ayrshire Councils are developing an Outline Business Case (OBC) to assist the respective Councils in making a long-term business decision regarding the delivery and investment in municipal residual waste treatment infrastructure within Ayrshire.

The published Policy Statement and Business Regulatory Impact Assessment consultation paper have addressed the following concerns for the Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Project Group:

- Requisite criteria for the term “technically, environmentally, or economically practicable” and the mechanism by which this will be measured for the roll out food waste collection;
- Key milestones in the delivery of the Zero Waste (Scotland) Regulations;
- Timescales for the proposed landfill bans;
- Minimum quality standards for recyclates; and
- Status of Landfill Allowance Scheme.
- The compelling imperative that will enable greater efficiency to deliver greater resource efficiency in order to translate the Zero Waste Plan from an aspirational policy into operational feasibility.

The Policy Statement and Business Regulatory Impact Assessment consultation paper has not advised of any proposed changes to the following:

- Carbon metric and Zero Waste Plan targets;
- The intention to enshrine the Zero Waste Plan targets (based on the carbon metric) in future Single Outcome Agreements;
- Approach to Landfill Tax under the Scotland Bill; and
- Current designation of Refuse Derived Fuel or Solid Recovered Fuel (RDF/SRF) as a waste.

In relation to presenting recycling information to the public, the three Ayrshire Councils wish to request further clarification on the maximum number of pages such a Report would be expected to deliver. The three Ayrshire Councils position would be that such a Report, intended for the public should not be more than one page. Indeed information that is available to the public generally comes in the forms of labels and Certificates for e.g. Energy Performance Certificates. The three Ayrshire Councils would therefore recommend that the word Report is changed to Certificate in order to facilitate this kind of information transfer to the public.

The Scottish Government recognise in their Policy Statement that there will be a requirement for some form of residual waste treatment, but the measures being taken forward through the Zero Waste Regulations will significantly reduce both the volume and type of materials that will require residual waste treatment. It is the intention of the Zero Waste Plan and Regulations to:

- maximise the amounts of material available for recycling;
- minimise the need for residual waste management capacity; and
- ensure that only those materials that can't be recycled require some form of residual treatment/management.

The Associate Parliamentary Sustainable Resource Group published a report entitled 'Rubbish to Resource: Financing New Waste Infrastructure' on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011<sup>1</sup>.

This report advises that the UK needs to invest in waste management infrastructure immediately in order to manage its waste in a sustainable and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/apsrg/rubbish-resource-financing-new-waste-infrastructure>

effective manner. Going beyond the 2020 EU Landfill Diversion target, to meet the revised Waste Framework Directive target and the 60% recycling rate for Commercial and Industrial waste, £8 billion of investment in waste infrastructure is needed by 2020. In total, £15 billion must be invested in the waste sector overall by 2030. Despite the Government's recognition of this in its Review of Waste Policy, significant barriers must be overcome to realise this investment. These barriers include a reduction in public sector spending, restricted private sector finance, inherent waste infrastructure project risks and regulatory and policy uncertainty.

In addition, the lack of an operational track record at scale for less established technologies places greater risk on the ability of facilities to generate predictable and consistent revenue streams. Furthermore, the UK Government's ongoing reviews of energy incentives and the protracted planning process for waste facilities create instability which further increases the perceived risk that financiers associate with the building of waste infrastructure.

This report focuses on barriers around three central themes, namely policy certainty, investor confidence and risk mitigation. The Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Project Group share the same concerns.

Given Scotland's recycling performance in relation to household waste, the Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Project Group support Option 3 outlined in the BRIA, which accompanied the publication of the Policy Statement, as a mechanism to deliver the requisite market confidence to invest in waste infrastructure; assist the Scottish Government's Low Carbon Economic Strategy; and overcome the aforementioned barriers, through:

- source segregate and separately collect key dry recyclable materials (textiles, paper, glass, card, paper and plastic) from 2013 and a ban on these materials to landfill or Energy from Waste, EfW from 2015;
- moving introduction of source segregation of food waste for small businesses (involved in the preparation and sale of food) to 2015 (previously 2013);
- separate collection of food waste from businesses involved in food production, retail and preparation from 2013;
- providing local authorities with a longer roll out period for offering food waste collection to households- initiate roll out in 2013 and complete roll out by 2015 (previously roll out completed by 2013);
- a ban on the mixing of any waste collected separately for recycling from 2015;
- a ban on the landfilling of biodegradable wastes with an upper limit of 3% by weight of biodegradable content from 2020 (previously 2017), thus providing more time to establish recycling services prior to decisions on infrastructure to deal with Scotland's remaining residual waste;
- restricting the ban on biodegradable waste to landfill to municipal waste, thus ensuring that certain industrial wastes with no alternative disposal or recovery routes can be maintained until other more cost effective options become available.

The proposed new regulations will be instrumental in bringing about the paradigm shift in the perception of waste as a potential resource required to achieve the objectives of the Zero Waste Plan. The three Ayrshire Councils currently provide a dry recyclable collection service to all householders and some businesses in the district but do not currently provide separate food waste collections. The majority of any additional expenditure required is therefore considered to be required for separate food waste collection and treatment services.

Until the Zero Waste (Scotland) Regulations are ratified, it is not possible at this stage to provide accurate information on the full extent of additional resources that may be required.

In order to deliver a joint residual waste facility which is: technically viable; complies with the Scottish Government's Zero Waste policy; affordable to the three Ayrshire Councils; and adaptable to future waste composition, Council Officers are willing to meet with you or your officials, prior to any announcement on the way ahead on waste policy.

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Chair  
Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Project Group