

Isle of Anglesey County Council Scrutiny Report

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Committee: | Partnerships and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 10/12/2025 |
| Subject: | Waste Collection and Recycling Consultation |
| Scrutiny Chair: | Councillor Dylan Rees |

1. Who will be the portfolio holder presenting / leading the report?

| Portfolio Holder | Role |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Councillor Ieuan Williams | Portfolio holder for Highways, Waste and Climate Change |
| Service Officer (Supporting) | Role |
| Huw Percy | Head of Service Highways, Waste & Property |

2. Why the Scrutiny Committee is being asked to consider the matter

The Council has a statutory obligation to achieve a 70% recycling rate, which is not currently being met. In order to increase the recycling rates and reach the statutory obligation, the Council must consider making changes to the waste collection and recycling arrangements.

There is a requirement to consult with those likely to be affected when any proposal to introduce a significant change to a service is considered, especially where the proposal is to reduce the service. Since any change to the collection service will impact every householder on Anglesey, a full consultation process will therefore be required.

The potential service changes may be highly emotive and the financial implications of introducing the potential changes, and indeed not introducing them, are considerable and beyond the financial delegation of officers. It is therefore imperative that the Committee consider whether the Council should consult, what is being consulted on, and the timing of the consultation.

3. Role of the Scrutiny Committee and recommendations

- ☐ For assurance
☒ For recommendation to the Executive
☐ For information

Recommendation(s):

- R1 Recommend the consultation process on potential changes to the recycling and waste collection service to help reach 70% statutory recycling targets to the Executive.
- R2 Recommend the questions to be asked as part of the consultation process to the Executive.
- R3 Recommend the timetable for the public consultation, starting on 7 January 2026 and lasting for 6 weeks to the Executive.

4. How does the recommendation(s) contribute to the objectives of the Council's Plan?

The proposed public consultation is directly aligned to the Council's Resources & Recycling Strategic Plan 2024-2029, Public Participation Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028, Strategic Communications Plan 2023 to 2028, and Strategic Equality Plan 2024 to 2028.

5. Key scrutiny themes

Key themes the Scrutiny Committee should concentrate on:

1. Requirement to consult on changes to waste collection and recycling
2. Proposed consultation questions
3. The timing of the consultation
4. Risks and challenges

6. Key points / summary

The Council has a statutory obligation to achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2024/25. Failure to meet recycling targets can result in a fine from Welsh Government. Based on the current recycling rate of around 65%, it is estimated that the Council will face annual fine of around £350k.

In June 2025, the Welsh Government published their Collections Blueprint 2025. The document outlines what they recommend for waste collection. The Council already meets most of the recommendations.

Support on how to increase recycling rates has been received from WRAP Cymru. Their main recommendation was to reduce the weekly residual waste capacity to 60l, in line with that recommended in the Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint 2025.

This could be achieved by collecting residual waste less frequently and/or reducing the size of the bin and WRAP Cymru estimate that this would increase the Council's recycling rate by at least 5%. The modelling so far favours moving to 4 weeks over purchasing new smaller bins because:

- Cost of new bins
- Sticking to 3 weeks likely to mean higher staffing requirements
- Overfilling smaller bins could make them harder to empty and easier to damage.

In addition, consideration is being given to making recycling easier by reconfiguring the trolley box to collect paper & cardboard together and providing households with additional containers to store extra recycling they may have.

These proposals are based on local trials and evidence from other local authorities in Wales that have a recycling rate of 70% or more.

The Council needs to decide as soon as possible if it wants to introduce service changes in order to increase its recycling rate and therefore needs to hear the opinions of Anglesey householders regarding potential service changes.

If, following consultation, the Council decides to introduce a service change, significant financial investment will be required for improvements. Welsh Government has stated that they would only fund applications where there is a credible plan to achieve 70% or more exists. Consulting with householders will therefore demonstrate that the Council is serious about meeting the 70% statutory recycling target. Not having a meaningful plan to achieve the 70% recycling target also increases the risk of being fined by Welsh Government for not reaching the statutory targets in any given year and impacts the costs of operating business as usual.

The proposed questions consider a range of potential changes to the service provided which are aimed at increasing recycle rates and by their nature includes the required status quo option. Additional and alternative questions have been considered, however those included in Appendix 1 are considered the most pertinent to the proposed service changes. Legal Services and the Communications Unit have assisted in formulating the draft consultation questions.

Delaying the consultation could lead to the process being impacted by pre-election restrictions. Any delay could reduce the prospect of receiving significant capital funding from Welsh Government to fund the costs of any service change e.g. upgrades to recycling infrastructure. This means that the Council would have to fund this or face the side effects on the delivery of the service.

It should be noted that due to the need to secure budget, consult, and complete works to develop the infrastructure, it is highly unlikely that any change to the collection regime can be introduced before 2029.

7. Impact assessments

7.1. Potential impacts on groups protected under the Equality Act 2010

The consultation will ensure that the views of those protected under the Equality Act 2010 are sought.

7.2. Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (strategic decisions)

Provision will be made in the consultation to allow anyone experiencing a socio-economic disadvantage to respond in a method that is cost free and convenient to them (e.g. electronic survey, local drop-in sessions etc).

7.3. Potential effects on opportunities to use Welsh and not treat the language less favourably than English

All consultation material will be available in both Welsh and English.

7.4. Potential impact on the Council's Net Zero Carbon target

Positive as this should increase recycling rates.

8. Financial implications

There are no significant costs of conducting the proposed public consultation. Officer time will be the main resource which is already funded.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Consultation Document

Appendix 2 – Draft Timetable

10. Report author and background papers

Meirion Edwards, Chief Waste Management Officer