

Isle of Anglesey County Council Scrutiny Report

Committee:	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	15/09/2026
Subject:	Changes to recycling and waste collections
Chair of Scrutiny	Councillor Sonia Williams

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 and Property

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

Introducing significant changes to recycling and waste collection arrangements would affect every household and would require investment in excess of the level that can be authorised by Officers.

3. Role of the Scrutiny Committee and recommendations

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

Recommendation(s):

1. To continue to collect residual waste once every 3 weeks but by collecting new 180 litre black bins, in place of the current 240 litre bins, from 2029.
2. To create more space for recycling by 2029 by:
 - a. collecting cardboard and paper together in the top box of the trolley box
 - b. offering additional storage options for recycling additional cardboard, and / or hard plastic and cans.
3. Conduct a campaign to raise awareness and understanding of recycling and reusing.
4. To conduct research into extending the recycling materials collected to include soft plastic and other materials.
5. Proceed to develop and submit an outline business case for funding to Welsh Government.

4. How do the recommendations contribute to the objectives of the Council Plan?

The only way to close the gap between the statutory obligation and the current recycling rate is to reduce the volume of residual waste collected. This aligns with the objectives of the Council Plan 2023-28 in relation to Climate Change, the Resources and Recycling Strategic Plan 2024-2029, the Net Zero Strategic Plan, and the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act to create a globally responsible Wales.

5. Key scrutiny themes

The key themes for the Scrutiny Committee to focus on:

1. Consultation outcomes.
2. The method of achieving a 70% recycling rate.
3. The financial implications of not having a plan to achieve a recycling rate of 70%, including the need to fund improvement work totalling £10-12m, which is required to ensure that the recycling centres continue to operate, without grant funding from Welsh Government.

6. Key points / summary

Background:

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2023-28 and the Council's Resources and Recycling Strategic Plan both include a commitment to achieve a household waste recycling rate of 70%. Failure to meet recycling targets can result in a Welsh Government fine of £200 per tonne for every tonne below the target.
- 1.2 The Welsh Government published a Collections Blueprint in 2025, which recommends limiting residual waste collection to 60l per week. This is in line with WRAP Cymru's main recommendation on how the Council can achieve the target of 70%.
- 1.3 Anglesey's recycling rate for 2024/25 was 65% and it appears that the rate is slightly lower in 2025/26. If the Welsh Government decided to fine the Council for failing to achieve the target in 2024/25 and 2025/26, the fine would be around £800k. The previous Welsh Government stated that they considered Local Authority plans for achieving the target as a basis for deciding whether a fine was appropriate, and as a basis for offering grants to introduce changes to achieve the target. The current Minister has recently written to the Leader in similar terms regarding the Council's failure to meet the target in 2024/25.

1.4 A public consultation was held in January and February 2026 on 'Possible Changes to the Recycling and Waste Collection Service on Anglesey'. Over 4,000 responses were received from across the Island. The full report on the consultation outcomes can be found in Appendix 1, but a summary is provided below:

- 65% of responses from households of 3 people or less
- 4% of responses from households of 6 or more, who are entitled to a larger bin (currently 360l)
- 64% of responses completed by individuals between 35 and 64 years of age.
- 76% strongly agree/agree that achieving the recycling target on Anglesey is important.
- 60% strongly agree/agree that recycling at home is easy but 24% disagree/strongly disagree.
- 80% oppose/ strongly oppose changing black bin collections from every 3 weeks to every 4 weeks.
- 69% agree/ strongly agree that additional storage options would help them recycle more, with 23% stating that waste containers are too small
- Analysis of the use of trolley boxes and food recycling and black bins:

	Top box (paper)	Middle box (plastic, cans)	Bottom box (glass, cardboard)	Food bin	Black bin
No response	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Full before collection day	18%	51%	53%	15%	51%
Full	11%	30%	29%	23%	25%
Three quarters full	9%	10%	9%	14%	12%
Half full	16%	6%	5%	14%	8%
Quarter full or less	34%	1%	2%	6%	4%
Not used	11%	1%	1%	27%	0%

- 8% want to see more additional recycling materials (e.g. soft plastic) included in doorstep collections.

Reasons for the recommendations:

2.1 76% agree that achieving the recycling target of 70% is important. The only way to close the current gap of around 5% is to reduce the volume of residual waste collected. This aligns with the objectives of the Council Plan 2023-28 in relation to Climate Change, the Resources and Recycling Strategic Plan 2024-2029, the Net Zero Strategic Plan and the requirement under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act to create a Wales that is globally responsible.

- 2.2 There are two options to reduce the volume of residual waste sent to the Parc Adfer Energy from Waste facility, either less frequent collections, or limiting the volume collected. Waste Management Officers and the collection contractor are in favour of less frequent collections. Initial modelling confirms that residual waste collection staff can be moved to the recycling service if the collection frequency is reduced to every 4 weeks, and this also avoids the need to invest approx. £1.1M in new 180l bins and disposing of the old bins. However, because 80% are opposed to changing the frequency of black bin collections, the recommendation is to continue to collect black bins every 3 weeks but to provide smaller black bins. The old bins would be recycled either by repurposing them or shredding them to create new material, in the same way as other hard plastic.
- 2.3 If the volume of residual waste is reduced, it is essential to increase the space available for recycling. This aligns with 60% of the responses, which stated that they agreed that additional storage options would help them to recycle more. Providing additional containers for cardboard and paper and / or cans and plastic would provide additional storage space for households who want to receive them.
- 2.4 By providing more opportunities to recycle, the volume of waste that can be recycled, but which is placed in the black bin, could fall. Several Councils in Wales have confirmed that, from their experience, reducing the volume of black bins has led to residents recycling more and that residents adapt quickly to the change. Limiting the volume of residual waste also leads to an increase in food recycling, which is currently at a low level on Anglesey.
- 2.5 76% have stated that their black bin is full on or before collection day, but research indicates that 80% of household waste could be recycled. According to research into the composition of Anglesey's waste, the black bin contains 16% dry recycling, 27% food waste, 2% green waste and 7% materials that can be recycled through the recycling centres. This suggests that residents are not recycling everything they could.
- 2.6 80% stated that the middle box (cans and plastic) and / or bottom box (glass and cardboard) are full on or before collection day, and only 29% said that their top box (paper) is full on or before collection day. Collecting paper and cardboard together in the top box could make better use of the space available in the trolley box and make collecting easier for the collection contractor as they would not have to separate cardboard and glass. Collecting paper and cardboard together would not have a significant effect on the price the Council receives when selling them on.
- 2.7 As stated previously, research suggests that residents do not recycle everything they could. By raising awareness and understanding of recycling amongst residents, the volume of waste that can be recycled, but which is placed in the black bin, could be reduced. The 27% who stated that they do not use the food bin is an example of where

a campaign to raise awareness and understanding amongst residents could have an impact on the recycling rate.

- 2.8 8% want to see more materials (e.g. batteries, textiles and soft plastic) collected on the doorstep. The Welsh Government's Collections Blueprint 2025 identifies the need to consider the proposed requirement under the Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) for packaging to collect soft plastic on the doorstep from 2027 onwards. It is considered timely therefore to investigate how additional materials could be collected and processed when considering any other changes to the collection arrangements.

Note

- It is noted that this is a long-term decision and any changes to the waste collection and recycling service are not expected to be implemented for about 3 years after a decision is taken. The reason for this is that it would be necessary to complete an application for capital funding, create concept and detailed designs for upgrading infrastructure at recycling and waste centres, seek and secure planning permission, undertake construction work and receive license approval. Recycling/waste containers will also need to be purchased and distributed, and additional fleet vehicles will be required as the tonnage collected on the doorstep is expected to increase as the weekly volume of the black bin is reduced. Although it would be possible to start collecting cardboard and paper together sooner, WRAP Cymru recommends implementing all changes involved in the service change at the same time as it will reduce the risk of not being able to cope with the additional recycling (vehicles and processing) and it would facilitate the change for the customer by having one clear communication plan.
- In terms of contracts, it would be necessary to agree a variation to the collection contract with the contractor and consider any financial effects on the agreement with Parc Adfer, as that agreement includes a minimum price and reducing the volume of residual waste sent there could mean that the Council pays more for disposing of less waste. The current collection contract runs until 31/03/2029 but there is an option to extend that contract for up to an additional 8 years. Officers are of the opinion that it is essential to ensure that a robust and stable agreement is in place before, during and following the introduction of any changes to the collection arrangements. Trying to procure a new contract at the same time as introducing changes would pose a significant risk to the business continuity of the waste collection service.

2. Impact assessment

- a. Has an impact assessment (equality considerations, the socio-economic duty, Welsh language) been undertaken?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If not, please explain why:

7.2 Potential impacts on groups protected under the Equality Act 2010

A potential impact has been identified. Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. Where possible, attach a copy of the assessment. Please refer to the Guidance on Completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

Changing the layout of the trolley box may have a positive impact on individuals with disabilities as they will not be required to separate paper and cardboard. Smaller bins will be easier for individuals with disabilities or pregnant women to move. However, introducing an additional container may have a negative impact on these groups as the container could be heavy. To mitigate this impact, residents can subscribe to the assisted collection service if eligible.

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

Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. Please attach a copy where appropriate. Please refer to the Guidance on completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

No negative impact has been identified.

7.4 Potential impacts on opportunities to use Welsh and not treating the language less favourably than English

Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. Please attach a copy where appropriate. Please refer to the Guidance on completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

No negative impact on the Welsh language identified.

7.5 Potential impact on the Council's Net Zero Carbon target

Positive / Neutral / Negative and explain how

A positive impact is anticipated as the recycling rate is expected to increase significantly.

8 Financial implications

More detailed financial modelling work will be prepared at the Outline Business Case stage, but it is anticipated that a financial investment of around £24m will be required if the change is to be realised. As stated, confirming an intention to introduce the change demonstrates to

the Welsh Government that the Council is committed to achieving a recycling rate of 70% and would provide an opportunity to apply to for significant funding from the Welsh Government. Based on the budget announced by the previous Welsh Government, the Welsh Government would fund approximately £14.4m and the Council would fund approximately £9.6m of the £24m.

It is also anticipated that between £10m and £12m will need to be invested to keep the Council's waste processing centres operating effectively in future years. This investment is required to update components that have reached the end of their life and to respond to new legislative requirements. Proceeding with the recommendation would provide an opportunity to access significant grant funding towards this work of protecting business as usual. The grant is only available if the Council can demonstrate a clear pathway to achieving the 70% recycling target.

EPR income of £2.282m was received in 2025/26 and it is expected that the Council will continue to receive a similar level of EPR funding over the next 5 years. If so, substantial reserve funds would be used as match funding for any grant received from Welsh Government, or for the Council to invest in its waste sites should a grant not be received.

9 Appendices

1. Consultation Outcome Report
2. Impact Assessment

10 Report author and background papers

Lois Jones, Senior Waste Management Officer & Julie Jones, Service Business and Strategy Manager – Highways, Waste & Property

Council Plan 2023 – 2028 [Council-Plan-2023-to-2028.pdf](#)

Resources and Recycling Strategic Plan 2024 – 2029 [Resources-and-Waste-Strategic-Plan-2024-to-2029.pdf](#)

Report to the Executive, December 2025, on the Waste Collection and Recycling Consultation [Waste Collection and Recycling Consultation.pdf](#)

WRAP Cymru modelling report, October 2022 [Adroddiad Modelu WRAP Cymru Hydref 2022 \(Saesneg yn unig\).pdf](#)

Wales National Waste Composition Initial Results – September 2022 [Wales National Waste Composition Initial Result- Medi 2022 \(Saesneg yn unig\).pdf](#)

Isle of Anglesey Container Trial Evaluation Report – July 2024 [Isle of Anglesey Container Trial Evaluation Report- Gorffennaf 2024 \(Saesneg yn Unig\).pdf](#)

Review of Waste Management Infrastructure in Anglesey – October 2024 [Review of Waste Management Infrastructure in Anglesey- Hydref 2024 \(Saesneg yn unig\).pdf](#)

ISPA Application – January 2026 [Cais ISPA- Ionawr 2026 \(Saesneg yn unig\).pdf](#)

Anglesey residual waste bin composition infographic [ANGLESEY-Infographic ENGLISH 16x9.pdf](#)