



Summary of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan

Committee	Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee
Committee Date	20th February 2018
Significant Decision	No
Responsible Officers	Andy Pritchard
Main Consultees	n/a
Purpose of Report	The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the 25 year Environment Plan recently published by Government.
Recommendations	<i>It is recommended that the Committee:</i> Note the report.
Resource Implications	None.

1. Introduction

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan was published on the 11th January. It sets out the government's vision on a broad range of environmental issues:

- Sustainable land management
- Protecting nature and enhancing landscapes
- Strengthening links between the environment and health & wellbeing
- Resource efficiency, pollution and waste
- Protecting seas, oceans and the global environment.

On Waste, the plan states that:

"We are committed to supporting comprehensive and frequent waste and recycling collections which protect local amenity and ensure that products are recycled as much as possible, returning high quality materials back to the economy."

Waste related actions include:

- Publishing a new Resources and Waste strategy later in 2018 aimed at making the UK a world leader in resource efficiency. It will set out the approach to reducing waste, promoting markets for secondary materials, incentivising producers to design better products and how we can better manage materials at the end of life by targeting environmental impacts.
- Looking across the whole lifecycle, launching a call for evidence in 2018 seeking views on how the tax system or charges could reduce the amount of single use plastics waste.

2. Production

At the production stage, producers will be encouraged to take more responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products and rationalise the number of different types of plastic in use by:

- Government working with industry to rationalise packaging formats and materials formats to make sure that more plastics can be easily recycled and the quality of collected recycled plastics is improved.
- Reforming Producer Responsibility systems (including packaging waste regulations) to incentivise producers to take greater responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products. This will include exploring extending producer responsibility requirements to plastic products not currently covered by existing regimes to create a better market for recycled plastic.

3. Consumption

At the consumption stage, the amount of plastic in circulation will be reduced through reducing demand for single-use plastic by:

- Removing all consumer single use plastics from the central government estate offices.
- Extending uptake of the 5p plastic bag charge to small retailers, exploring whether compulsory options are needed if voluntary agreements prove ineffective.

- Supporting water companies, high street retailers, coffee shops and transport hubs to offer new refill points for people to top-up water bottles for free in every major city and town in England. The water industry plans to create a nationwide network of refill points, and an app to help people find the nearest place to refill their bottles with water free of charge.
- Working with retailers and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to explore introducing plastic-free supermarket aisles in which all the food is loose.

4. End of use

At the end of use stage, the government will make it easier for people to recycle by:

- Continuing to support the industry led on-pack recycling labelling system and encouraging all brands and retailers to use this systems to provide information to householders.
- Continuing to implement the Litter Strategy to reduce plastic litter and littering behaviour.
- Implementing voluntary and regulatory interventions that can cut the amount of commonly littered items, and improve recycling and packaging reuse. This includes considering advice from the Voluntary & Economic Incentives Working group (set up under the Litter Strategy), which is currently looking at measures to reduce littering and promote recycling of drinks containers.

5. End of Life

At the end of life/waste management stage, government will improve the rate of recycling. Through the Framework for Greater Consistency, WRAP is working with industry and local authorities to ensure that a consistent set of materials are collected by all local authorities. There is a desire to accelerate this shift to consistency in the materials collected.

- Working with the waste management industry and reprocessors to significantly increase the proportion of plastic packaging that is collected and recycled.

6. Food Waste

Recycling food waste is also a key priority. Government will work towards no food waste entering landfill by 2030. Many local authorities have introduced separate collection of food waste and government will work to support an increase in numbers so that the amount of food waste sent to landfill continues to decline. Action will also be taken to support the redistribution of unsold edible and nutritious surplus stock from food businesses to individuals in need. As a starting point, WRAP announced at the end of last year a new £0.5m fund for charities who redistribute surplus food from food businesses to those in need.

7. Litter

On Litter:

Actions include:

Continuing to implement the Government's Litter Strategy for England, including:

- Introducing new regulations to improve local authorities' enforcement powers, supported by new guidance on its proportionate use.

- Developing a national anti-littering campaign, led by the government and funded by the private sector.
- Distributing a £450,000 Litter Innovation Fund to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local research projects that could be replicated more widely.

8. Waste & Resources Strategy

To support the delivery of the plan, the government will set targets and measure and report on progress. The new Waste & Resources Strategy, to be published later in 2018, will provide greater focus on areas specific to the JWC. It is likely to cover areas we are already working on, but the timing of this will help to inform a review of our own Joint Strategy.