

MAYOR OF LONDON

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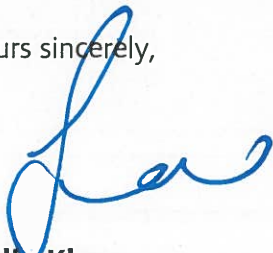
Thank you for sending me the London Assembly Environment Committee's 'Wasting London's Future' report.

Significantly cutting food waste and single use plastics, boosting household waste recycling performance, and taking a circular economy approach to avoid materials becoming waste in the first place all form a key part of the London Environment Strategy. This will help drive resource efficiency, cut waste costs and avoid the need for more incineration capacity. I welcome the report and am keen to continue working with the Environment Committee to effectively implement the key findings and recommendations where I am best placed to influence. Please accept this letter as a response to the recommendations in your latest report, which includes the key findings and recommendations across the Environment Committees' three waste investigation reports: 'Waste: The Circular Economy (September 2017)', 'Waste: Household Recycling' (December 2017) and 'Waste: Energy from Waste' (February 2018).

I have given a detailed response to the report's recommendations in the attached appendix. My overall approach to increasing recycling, cutting waste and maximising the circular economy are set out in the final London Environment Strategy. This includes setting a minimum household waste recycling service, requiring waste authorities to develop reduction and recycling plans, installing water fountains to help cut plastic bottle waste, and working with the London Waste and Recycling Board (LWARB) and partners to deliver behaviour change projects. In addition, I have set out a host of measures required of government and manufacturers to drive resource efficiency and increase recycling performance, including new funding for recycling services and measures to ensure packaging material is easily recyclable. I will also ensure that London continues to lead on circular economy activities by embedding circular economy policies and principles through the London Environment Strategy, as well as through my other strategic plans: the London Plan, Economic Development Strategy and the GLA Group Responsible Procurement policy.

I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Appendix 1: Detailed response to London Assembly recommendations from 'Wasting London's Future'

Preventing Waste

Recommendation 1: The Mayor should set specific targets for circular economy procurement within the GLA group.

I published an updated Responsible Procurement Policy in 2017. In the London Environment Strategy, I am committing to trialling and adopting circular economy approaches in procurement activities undertaken by all the Functional Bodies. I have dedicated a full chapter for GLA group operations to lead by example. Work has been undertaken in partnership with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to identify and target suitable high spend product categories including construction, IT, furniture, textiles and facilities management.

Recommendation 2: To promote the circular economy, the Mayor should ensure that the LWARB Route Map to the Circular Economy is widely promoted and adopted, including funding circular economy entrepreneurs.

The circular economy will be promoted through the GLA with LWARB being a key engagement partner in the Courtauld Commitment 2025. I will continue supporting reduction campaigns including Recycle for London, Love Food Hate Waste, and Trifocal to help Londoners and businesses to cut waste. I will also work with the government, large organisations and manufacturers to adopt circular economy approaches that design waste out of products and the supply chain, and designs for 100 per cent recyclability. I have embedded circular economy principles and policies across my strategic plans and will take the following actions in collaboration with LWARB:

- Work with partners to implement the 100 practical actions set out in London's Circular Economy Route Map, in order for London to make the change and accelerate growth in materials reuse, remanufacturing and recycling.
- Continue investment and support, through the Advance London programme, which is helping circular economy SMEs to grow, and traditional businesses to transition. This will be through venture capital investments, the provision of accelerators and incubators and tailored business support.

In addition, my Entrepreneur programme will continue to engage university students across London on low carbon circular economy market opportunities and work with them to develop new ideas for environmental goods and services that tackle the environmental challenges that cities are facing today.

Recommendation 3: The Mayor should lobby Government to further increase producer responsibility for packaging and to reduce plastic waste. This should include better signage on products so that plastics are kept in circulation for as long as possible or recycled as appropriate.

The London Environment Strategy sets out my proposals to call for government action on the following priorities:

- Setting minimum standards of design (including labelling) for reuse and recyclability, and strengthen Extended Producer Responsibility requirements for packaging materials, namely plastics. This will help drive out products not easily recycled, from the supply chain.

- Introducing tax relief on materials innovation that reduces waste and reliance on virgin materials, and boosts materials reuse and recycling.

I have met with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and raised my priorities for the government's upcoming waste strategy, and will continue to call for extended producer responsibility.

Recommendation 4: Partnerships between circular economy operatives, such as charity shops and municipal waste services, should be strengthened by Mayoral involvement. The Mayor should aim to improve connections so that residents can easily choose to participate in the circular economy when disposing of household waste.

The London Environment Strategy requires waste authorities to develop reduction and recycling plans, and I will work with LWARB to ensure that opportunities to allow residents to reduce and re-use materials are considered.

Increasing recycling

Recommendation 5: To ensure all homes have a consistent recycling service, the Mayor should include flats within the standard recycling provision offer, as stated in the draft Environment Strategy. This should include separate food waste collection.

I have set out proposals to ensure all homes have a consistent level of household recycling service across London. This will require all waste authorities, by 2020, to provide a minimum household recycling collection service to all properties, including to flats where practicable and cost effective. Waste authorities will need to collect the six main dry materials (paper, card, tins/cans, glass, plastic bottles and mixed rigid plastics (pots, tubs and trays)) and provide a separate weekly food waste collection to all properties receiving a kerbside collection. LWARB has partnered with Peabody to better understand the barriers to recycling and develop measures to help residents in flats to recycle more. LWARB has also set up a Flats Task Force and allocated £1m to help waste authorities to understand how to boost their recycling collection services to flats.

Recommendation 6: Recycling provision for new homes should be strengthened in the London Plan. To elevate the importance of recycling, the wording should read – “Dwellings must be designed with adequate and easily accessible storage space that supports the separate collection of dry recyclables”.

I am currently considering this suggestion, as set out in the London Assembly's response to the consultation on the draft London Plan. Following the consultation, I am considering 'early suggested changes' to propose to the panel of independent planning inspectors conducting the Examination in Public (EiP) of the draft Plan. Early suggested changes are only made in response to formal representations received through consultation, or are factual updates or points of clarification. Throughout debate at the EiP, I may propose further changes to the draft Plan.

Recommendation 7: The Mayor should publish a required trajectory for each borough's recycling rates, to ensure that future targets are met — and if these rates are not successfully met at the time of contract renewal, the Mayor should step in. In directing the services, the Mayor should ensure recommendations included in this report are taken up by the service provider.

The London Environment Strategy has set London-wide targets for the recycling of Local Authority Controlled Waste (LACW), requiring that London is recycling at least 50 per cent of LACW by 2025.

It has also introduced a requirement for waste authorities to develop and submit for my sign off, a Reduction and Recycling Plan by 2020. This plan will require waste authorities to define and lay out the specific actions it will take to make a bold and meaningful contribution to the London wide targets. In addition, the plans will also need to demonstrate how the authority would seek to achieve targets of:

- 45 per cent household recycling rate by 2025
- 50 per cent household recycling rate by 2030

The plans will also have requirements for regular reporting of performance making tracking against the London Environment Strategy targets possible. Early engagement with and support for authorities will also be provided by LWARB if required.

London's waste authorities are all vastly different, facing their own unique challenges and having different opportunities for service development and growth. It is right that they have the responsibility for setting their own targets. Through the Reduction and Recycling Plan process, I can ensure that waste authorities are being both challenged and supported in making their fair contribution to London's overall target.

Recommendation 8: The Mayor should explore the funding options that he and others could provide to ensure the implementation of a consistent harmonised recycling service that would maximise recycling in London. However, the Committee recognises that this may take several years due to the length of borough waste contracts. Utilising break clauses in contracts that allow for early improvements (such as the segregation of food waste) should be actively explored by boroughs, with support from the Mayor's team as necessary.

Significant cost savings could be made by boroughs by combining collection services. For example, South London Waste Partnership is expecting savings of over £200m from bringing together their contracts in a more efficient and cost-effective way. It means that the same services are now offered to all who live in the partnership's four boroughs of Sutton, Merton, Kingston-upon-Thames and Croydon. However, further funding will be required, and I have already written to the government calling on them to invest in local collection systems to ensure that the increase in the household waste recycling rate is achieved. A one-off contribution of Landfill Tax receipts of £100m, combined with existing resources, could enable London boroughs to meet the Mayor's local authority collected waste recycling target of 50 per cent by 2025.

I will continue to engage with waste authorities through my formal role in reviewing new contracts, and will also continue to support boroughs in making service improvements within contract cycles where this is feasible and affordable.

Reducing waste

Recommendation 9: When providing recycling and food waste collections, boroughs should consider reducing the frequency of residual waste collections.

Waste authorities are required to develop reduction and recycling plans by 2020 at the latest. These plans will need to set local targets and demonstrate how local authorities will help their residents to cut waste and increase recycling performance; making an effective contribution to my reduction and recycling targets. It will be for boroughs to demonstrate, through these plans, that the service configurations that they implement have the demonstrable capability of achieving the targets set.

Recommendation 10: The Mayor should facilitate the use and, if necessary, the construction of Anaerobic Digestion facilities, to ensure food waste never ends up in landfill or incineration.

Food waste is a critical issue within my London Environment Strategy. In the first instance, reduction is my priority, which is why I have increased the overall target for London to a 50 per cent per capita reduction in food waste by 2030.

For unavoidable food waste, our evidence strongly supports Anaerobic Digestion (AD) as a significantly better environmental and cost option than either incineration or landfill. My targets for no biodegradable or recyclable waste to go to landfill by 2026, along with my requirement for the separate collection of food waste, will help drive the development of new AD capacity by putting more material on to the market and hence supporting the funding and development of new AD capacity.

Recommendation 11: The Mayor should lobby the Government to make it easier for boroughs to fine serial offenders who fail to comply with recycling regulations including landlords.

I do not have powers to fine serial recycling offenders, but local authorities have the powers under Section 45 (1) of the EPA 1990. I will support a review of these powers should London boroughs consider that strengthening them would be effective in driving higher recycling performance.

Energy from waste and benefits of waste disposal

Recommendation 12: The Mayor should set targets to reduce the total amount of biodegradable and recyclable waste sent to landfill and incineration by 2026 — and set targets to further reduce the amount by later dates.

I have set targets for London to:

- send no recyclable or biodegradable waste to landfill by 2026, and to be a zero-waste city by 2050;
- be 100 per cent net waste self-sufficient by 2026 (through the London Plan); and
- reduce food waste and associated packaging waste by 50 per cent per person by 2030.

Recommendation 13: The Mayor should strongly support the construction and use of facilities within London's borders for the most sustainable management of its own waste.

I want to retain the economic value of waste within London and ensure that London can manage net 100 per cent of its waste within the city by 2026. In my London Plan, I set out how waste sites in London will be identified and safeguarded. I have set proposals to ensure that waste authorities, in developing their waste contracts and services, will identify how to maximise the use of local waste facilities and identified sites for waste.

Recommendation 14: The Mayor should aim for London to become a zero-waste export city, conducting research on the feasibility of this, and then set a policy to achieve as close to zero as feasible, subject to overall environmental objectives.

London should manage as much of the capital's waste within its boundaries as practicable, enabling London and Londoners to receive environmental and economic benefits from its management. I acknowledge that waste contracts do not recognise administrative boundaries and that waste flows across borders. Consequently, the aim of waste policies in the London Plan is to

achieve net self-sufficiency for household and commercial waste by 2026. If achieved, this would mean enough sites are identified within London to deal with the equivalent of 100 per cent of the waste apportioned to the boroughs.