

LONDON ASSEMBLY

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Leonie Cooper AM
Chair of the Environment Committee

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

8 February 2024

Dear Sadiq,

I am writing as Chair of the London Assembly Environment Committee, which has recently conducted an investigation into waste and recycling in London. The Committee held a meeting on Wednesday 15 November 2023, including guests from the Greater London Authority (GLA), ReLondon, Chartered Institute of Wastes Management (CIWM), Western Riverside Waste Authority (WRWA), Biocollectors, and the London Borough of Islington.

The Committee discussed a range of issues in the meeting, including the implications of the new 'Simpler Recycling' approach introduced by the Government. One of the challenges identified in the meeting is that increases in food waste collections may mean that there is not sufficient capacity in Anaerobic Digestors to process the food waste that may be collected.

Phil Roche, Commercial Director at Biocollectors, told the Committee that the current capacity of Anaerobic Digestors in London is 500,000 tonnes, but it is expected that capacity for 1 million tonnes will be needed by 2026 when the new national regulations come in. It may therefore take some time for the additional capacity to be constructed.¹

¹ London Assembly Environment Committee, [Minutes](#), 15 November 2023, p.30

The Committee of course recognises that the most important thing is to prevent food waste in the first place, and to continue to educate and engage Londoners about ways to ensure edible food is not wasted. However, beyond this, it is likely that additional capacity is still needed. I am therefore writing to ask what work is being undertaken in London to prepare for this additional capacity required over the shorter term. I would be grateful for your responses to the following questions:

Are you, or your Deputy Mayor responsible for Planning, aware of any plans to introduce new Anaerobic Digestors (beyond the Cory Riverside site) or expand current ones in London?

Has there been any recent assessment in London (by the GLA or any of its partners) of the Anaerobic Digester capacity that may be needed? If so, could you share this assessment with the Committee?

Has there been any recent assessment of strategies that could be put in place to phase out Anaerobic Diegestor capacity if, and when, overall food waste declines?

I would be grateful if you could send this information by 8 March 2024. We would expect to publish your reply.

Please see attached a draft transcript of the Committee meeting.

Please contact Jack Booth, Committee Officer, jack.booth@london.gov.uk, if you have any questions about the meeting.

Once again, thank you for your time.

Yours,



Leonie Cooper AM
Chair of the Environment Committee