



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru **The National Assembly for Wales**

Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd **The Environment and Sustainability Committee**

Dydd Iau, 17 Gorffennaf 2014
Thursday, 17 July 2014

Cynnwys **Contents**

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan y Sefydliad Siartredig Rheoli
Gwastraff
Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from the Chartered Institute of Wastes
Management

Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan Bwyllgor Ymgynghorol Ailgylchu
Awdurdodau Lleol a Craff am Wastraff Cymru
Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from the Local Authority Recycling Advisory
Committee and Waste Awareness Wales

Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan WRAP Cymru a Eunomia
Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from WRAP Cymru and Eunomia

Papurau i'w Nodi
Papers to Note

Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o'r Cyfarfod
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the Meeting

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Mick Antoniow	Llafur Labour
Russell George	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Llyr Gruffydd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Julie James	Llafur Labour
Alun Ffred Jones	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Eluned Parrott	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru (yn dirprwyo ar ran William Powell) Welsh Liberal Democrats (substitute for William Powell)
Antoinette Sandbach	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Joyce Watson	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Rebecca Colley-Jones	Cadeirydd, Sefydliad Siartredig Rheoli Gwastraff Cymru Chair, Chartered Institute of Wastes Management Cymru
Dan Finch	Rheolwr Ymgyrchoedd Cenedlaethol, Craff am Wastraff Cymru National Campaigns Manager, Waste Awareness Wales
Marcus Gover	Cyfarwyddwr Cymru, WRAP Cymru Director for Wales, WRAP Cymru
Dr Dominic Hogg	Cadeirydd, Eunomia Chairman, Eunomia
Steve Lee	Prif Weithredwr, Sefydliad Siartredig Rheoli Gwastraff Chief Executive, Chartered Institute of Wastes Management
Lee Marshall	Prif Weithredwr, Pwyllgor Ymgynghorol Ailgylchu Awdurdodau Lleol Chief Executive, Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee
Craig Mitchell	Pennaeth Cymorth Gwastraff, Craff am Wastraff Cymru Head of Waste Support, Waste Awareness Wales

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Chloe Corbyn	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Alun Davidson	Clerc Clerk

Adam Vaughan

Dirprwy Glerc
Deputy Clerk*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:30.
The meeting began at 09:30.***Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Bore da a chroeso i Bwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd y Cynulliad. Croesawaf yr Aelodau i gyd. Dechreuaf gyda'r rheolau arferol. Os bydd larwm tân, dilynwch y tywyswyr a staff allan. Diffoddwch eich ffonau symudol. Rydym yn gorff dwyieithog, felly mae croeso i chi gyfrannu yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

Alun Ffred Jones: Good morning and welcome to the Assembly's Environment and Sustainability Committee. I welcome all Members. I will start with the usual rules. If there is a fire alarm, please follow the ushers and staff out. Please switch off your mobile phones. We are a bilingual organisation, so you are welcome to contribute in Welsh or English.

[2] A oes unrhyw Aelod eisiau datgan buddiant dan Reol Sefydlog 2.6? Gwelaf nad oes. Rydym wedi derbyn ymddiheuriadau gan Gwyn Price a William Powell, a chroesawaf Eluned Parrott, sy'n dirprwyo y bore yma. Bydd Russell George yn cyrraedd yn hwyrach, efallai.

Does any Member wish to declare an interest under Standing Order 2.6? I see that no-one does. We have received apologies from Gwyn Price and William Powell, and I welcome Eluned Parrott, who is his substitute this morning. Russell George may join us later.

09:31

**Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan y Sefydliad Siartredig
Rheoli Gwastraff****Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from the Chartered Institute of
Wastes Management**

[3] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae'n werth dweud cyn dechrau'r sesiwn hon y byddwn yn trefnu sesiwn gyda'r Gweinidog ar gyfer tymor yr hydref. Rydych wedi cael papur briffio ar gyfer y bore yma. Fel y dywedwyd eisoes, ni fydd neb o Bryson Recycling yn rhoi tystiolaeth drwy linc fideo o Belffast y bore yma, felly bydd gwaith y prynhawn yn cael ei wneud y bore yma, gobeithio, cyn torri.

Alun Ffred Jones: It is worth noting before we begin this session that we will be arranging a session with the Minister for the autumn term. You have received a briefing paper for this morning's session. As has been said, no-one from Bryson Recycling will be providing evidence by video link from Belfast this morning, so this afternoon's work will be concluded this morning, hopefully, before we break for lunch.

[4] Croesawaf y tystion.

I welcome the witnesses.

[5] We are very pleased to have you before us to present your evidence. Perhaps I could ask you to introduce yourselves to begin with. I do not know whether you wish to make any opening remarks before we start our questioning.

[6] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Hi. My name is Rebecca Colley-Jones. I am here representing the Welsh centre of the Chartered Institute of Wastes Management. I am the current chair.

[7] **Mr Lee:** Good morning. My name is Steve Lee. I am the chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Wastes Management. If it is okay with you, I will abbreviate that to CIWM for brevity in the future. I have one plea: I am sorry, but I am really deaf this morning, so if I look at you and appear to be struggling, I am struggling, so I do apologise for that.

[8] **Alun Ffred Jones:** You can use the headphones to enhance the sound.

[9] **Mr Lee:** I might resort to that. Those of you who suffer like I do know that, sometimes, although headphones are supposed to help, they make things worse. Let us see how we get on.

[10] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Welcome. Do you wish to make any opening remarks?

[11] **Mr Lee:** I think that we are quite happy for you to pitch straight in with your questions.

[12] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Who will kick off this session this morning?

[13] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Gofynnaf fy nghwestiwn yn Gymraeg. I gychwyn, rydym yn gwybod bod gan Lywodraeth Cymru dargedau o safbwynt lefelau ailgylchu sy'n reit uchelgeisiol, neu'n ymddangos yn uchelgeisiol erbyn hyn, beth bynnag. A ydych yn hyderus eu bod yn gyraeddadwy?

Llyr Gruffydd: I will ask my question in Welsh. To begin, we know that the Welsh Government has targets in terms of recycling levels that are quite ambitious, or which seem to be ambitious by now, anyway. Are you confident that they are achievable?

[14] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Ydym, yn fyr. Rydym yn credu eu bod yn gyraeddadwy, ac rydym yn meddwl ei bod yn bosibl eu cyrraedd, hefyd.

Ms Colley-Jones: Briefly, yes. We believe that they are achievable, and we believe that they can be achieved.

[15] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Yr argraff rwyf i yn ei chael yw, er bod nifer o awdurdodau wedi cyrraedd y targed yn y cyfnod diwethaf, mae sôn am y *low-hanging fruit*, sef eu bod wedi gwneud yr enillion sydyn, cyflym posibl, ond bydd gwthio ymlaen o hynny yn dipyn mwy o her. A ydych yn hyderus bod y strategaethau yn eu lle i gyflawni hynny? Fy marn i, ac yn sicr barn rhai o'r bobl sydd wedi rhoi tystiolaeth i ni, yw bod hynny tu hwnt i gyrraedd erbyn hyn.

Llyr Gruffydd: The impression that I get is that, although a number of authorities have reached the targets in the latest period, there is mention of it being the low-hanging fruit that has been targeted, namely that they have made the quick gains, but that pushing ahead from that might be more challenging. Are you confident that the strategies are in place to achieve that? My opinion, and certainly the opinion of some who have given evidence to us, is that they are now beyond reach.

[16] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Credaf ei bod yn bosibl eu cyrraedd, ond mae ffordd o wneud y *comms* yn well, a bydd gan Steve lawer i'w ddweud am hynny.

Ms Colley-Jones: I believe that they are achievable, but the 'comms' can be done more effectively, and Steve will have a lot to say about that.

[17] **Mr Lee:** I heard that eventually; I beg your pardon. Your question is whether or not we think the target is realistic and achievable. That is a really important question. We think that the target is good. In general, targets are good if they are challenging but achievable, and if they are justified and supported. The 70% target in Wales has not been chosen on a whim. It has been chosen very carefully by the Welsh Government. It is also now the target that has been proposed by the outgoing European Commissioner, Janez Potočnik, in his communication to the European Parliament. It has also said that 70% should be achievable

across Europe. That does not just include the leaders in north-west Europe, as it includes all of the European member states. The Commission and the Welsh Government have done their sums, if you like, to try to prove that 70% should be achievable. Both of them agree that 70% is, at the minute, a bit of a kick point. Beyond that, the effort and cost of gaining extra recycling beyond 70% starts to become rather punishing and even questionable in environmental cost terms. Saving the last piece of paper on the planet by recycling would cost a ridiculous amount, so it is not worth it.

[18] Is 70% a good target? Yes it is. What are the consequences of Wales not quite hitting the 70% target? Do not let me make too light of this—it might be that Wales might have to come to terms with being just one of the best in the world, rather than the best in the world. The target is good. Is it challenging? Yes, it is clearly challenging. Good progress has been made to date, but there are hard yards in front of us. Is it achievable? Yes it is, but Rebecca is absolutely right: it gets harder and harder. However, it should be achievable if we have common standards across Europe and if we have fair reporting. At the minute, we are looking at league tables across Europe and saying, ‘Well, they are doing better than they are, but at least they are doing better than they are’. Data are collected on such different footings that it is dangerous, misleading or even foolish to try to make direct comparisons between member state performance. We are really pleased as a professional institution that that has been picked up at a European level by outgoing Commissioner Potočnik, as this is something for which we have been calling for a long time. To roll all of that up, every percentage point that you make beyond 52% to 55% gets harder and harder. Of course it does. The 70% should just about be achievable, but it is going to take a lot of support and a lot of commitment by the Government, local government and people, all working together. The consequence of not quite hitting 70% is fantastic performance.

[19] **Llyr Gruffydd:** I would just like to ask about the balance that needs to be struck between quantity and quality. We are hearing evidence that we might be collecting more, but potentially not as much of it is usable, in a sense. Are we striking that balance, and how is that working?

[20] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think that we are. It is important to collect that quantity because getting people engaged is what is critical. If they are engaged, the quality can be improved. However, in terms of engaging people, you get only one shot at winning their hearts and minds to be able to get them to participate. Quality is obviously an important issue. If we look at the waste framework directive and the debate that is going on in terms of co-mingled versus segregated, we see that the issue is quality. As long as that quality is achieved, either through segregated systems or through high-quality materials recycling facilities, it is not an issue. However, this is about engaging people in the first place.

[21] **Mr Lee:** I will congratulate you on putting your finger on the issue in our industry at the minute, which is the potential tension between quality and quantity. To start off with, all recycling nations throughout Europe and throughout the world have gone for quantity. They have gone for percentage-by-weight targets. They are quick and easy to measure, but they do not necessarily incentivise everybody to do the right things or the best things. We are an industry that is in transition. Suddenly, quality is king, but we cannot put the quantity targets to one side either. Another thing that we are really pleased to see coming out of Europe and from Commissioner Potočnik is a determination to move away from very raw weight percentage-based targets and towards real life-cycle costing, to try to make sure that we are targeting the right materials for the right environmental and economic reasons. That transition is not going to happen overnight. It will take years. We will have that move between quantity and quality for at least that period. For the time being, I would not question the 70% target in Wales. I think it is a good one. Do I think that we will have the same target in 20 years’ time? No, I do not think that we will—I think that we will have much more refined targets.

[22] **Julie Morgan:** You say that we will have much more refined targets. Could you expand on what you mean by that?

[23] **Mr Lee:** A good example is that a lot of local authorities have targeted garden waste—the so-called green waste. It is very heavy, it tends to come in pretty fixed quality, it is not mixed with other materials and it is relatively easy to manage. So, it is pretty good for your recycling performance in percentage terms. In overall environmental terms, probably the best thing you can do with garden waste, if you have a decent garden, is to compost it at home, rather than to give it to your local authority. Aluminium is absolutely up at the other end of the spectrum. In overall environment terms, recycling aluminium uses a twentieth of the energy used to extract, refine and manufacture it from bauxite. So, if you want to make sure that you are doing the best thing for the environment, you need to target the right materials, and that might not reward you in percentage-by-weight terms.

[24] **Julie Morgan:** I am always quite shocked in the countryside to see green waste outside garden doors when there is plenty of space. Do you think that we should take some action on that?

[25] **Ms Colley-Jones:** That it is a debate that goes on. There are a lot of people that do not like the idea of composting in their gardens. If you removed the service that is there, you put in danger that going back into the mainstream disposal. Given that people have issues with things like rats and things like that, there is a kind of perception that composting is not always what they want to be doing in their garden. I think removing it would be a step too far, but there is potential to do something like that.

[26] **Mr Lee:** May I chime in with my favourite topic? It is all about communication. It is all about telling people that they have choices and that people should be encouraged to compost at home if they can, if they just need a little bit of advice and support.

[27] **Julie Morgan:** How much education do you feel goes on about composting at home, for example?

[28] **Mr Lee:** Not very much. It is variable between local authorities. I live in England, in Leicester, where they are very good on encouraging home composting. Other local authorities very much leave it up to individual householder and consumer choice. I think that there is a lot of room for improved and shared best practice on communication, and helping people to home compost is just one aspect of it.

[29] **Julie Morgan:** This is my last question. Does the focus on targets mean that there is less of an emphasis on preventing waste and reusing?

[30] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Yes, to a certain degree. Not totally, but to a certain degree, it kind of takes the eye off reusing. I think that there is a lot of work that could be done in improving the number of reuse facilities that are used to the maximum efficiency, because there are a lot of social enterprises and other enterprises out there that are able to look at developing the reuse market. There is a social need out there for reuse. It seems a little criminal sometimes that not as much reuse is captured as could be, and there is a need again for further communications to try to get people to understand the benefits of reuse, beyond resource efficiency level, but actually as part of encouraging their own communities and supporting them.

[31] **Mr Lee:** I have already described this industry as one that is in an important transition, and I think that this is an important example of that. Reuse and prevention is actually surprisingly difficult to measure and report on. It is difficult to see the direct benefit of your communication and other encouragement. You just have to keep it up and hope that it

is doing good work. Prevention really is important, and where it is starting to already show a difference is in the area of food waste. This is a very important issue here in Wales. We know, through important work done by WRAP, that the average family in this country wastes something like £400 to £600 a year on perfectly good, edible food. Why would you do that in economically constrained times? The more effective we are in helping people not to waste good food, the less food there will be for a food waste collection service.

09:45

[32] So, you could be very successful in prevention, and you could find that, actually, you have reduced the amount of material that you have for high-quality separation collection and management of food waste. The two are intricately linked. Let us not get lost in the detail of this: communication is king. We are going to move increasingly towards prevention, and that is why I said that we might see the industry and governments starting to move away from raw percentage-by-weight-based targets. It does not make your current 70% target a bad thing to aspire to.

[33] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Could you comment on the Welsh Government's sustainable waste management grant? Clearly, local authorities have taken different decisions on how they want to do their recycling. So, do you think that it has been effectively used?

[34] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Yes, I think that we have a very interesting portfolio of different methodologies. I think that what we are seeing increasingly is that those methodologies have led to some really good examples of best practice. If you had not had that diversity at the beginning, then you would not have that fantastic portfolio of different methodologies. What we are seeing increasingly is that local authorities are looking at what other local authorities are doing, and they are adopting best practice. In my area of north Wales, Anglesey has adopted the same vehicles as Conwy, because it sees that that there are efficiencies to be made with collections. Gwynedd has also adopted Conwy's box system, because it sees that there are efficiencies. Gwynedd, for example, knows that if it wants to go to three-weekly collections it has to get its house in order in terms of collecting its recycling and having the best and most efficient systems in place. Had we not had that diversity in the beginning, then that would not have happened. It has been a trial bed; it has allowed local authorities to be able to develop systems that are suitable for their areas, because they know their areas better than anyone does centrally. So, they have been allowed to adopt things. Some of the things that they have done have, perhaps, been down the wrong track, but other things that they have done have been real showstoppers that have been really, really good.

[35] **Mr Lee:** From my perspective, I get to see responses to targets from right across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. The grant in Wales tends to set you apart from the other nations, and it has clearly made a difference to performance right across Wales. There is still some variability here in Wales, but far less than we see elsewhere in the British Isles. So, is the grant a good thing? At the moment, I would say that it is a good thing and it is doing good work.

[36] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Okay. About that variability, do you think that the Welsh Government should focus on kerbside sorting methods? That perhaps goes back to your point regarding quality, because there is a concern that, having persuaded people to adopt, for example, twin-stream and co-mingled systems, if you then ask them to switch to kerbside sorting, they might get—. I think you described it as having one chance to get people on board, but you are then asking them to switch systems.

[37] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think that what you are seeing is a gradual drift to kerbside sorting. I do not think that there should be a prescriptive approach to making people go down the kerbside sorting route. If you look at the economics of it, if indeed kerbside sorting

provides better quality materials, then that will be reflected in the markets that people are able to enjoy for that quality of materials. It will attract an income, as opposed to a cost. While collection methods for co-mingled may be cheaper at present, that economic benefit from the quality of materials will ultimately mean that they may change their collection methods. I think, at this stage, if we look at the difference between the two methods, there is not enough evidence to say that one system is necessarily better than the other. I think that if you look at the history of recycling in Wales, a lot of the changes have been driven by economics. So, landfill tax has been one of the biggest drivers; it has diverted waste away from landfill. I think, in the future, it will be the markets for those materials that will drive it. What that means is that it becomes the choice of the different local authorities to go down the route that becomes the most economically and environmentally sustainable.

[38] **Antoinette Sandbach:** May I ask whether you are seeing, for example, local authorities engaging with architects to ensure—. I have a very different recycling experience in Cardiff and north Wales. I live in Conwy so I deal with those boxes, but if I had been asked to put that in a limited space in a flat, I would be having a very different recycling experience from that in Conwy, where I have plenty of room for my boxes and it is very easy for me to do it. So, are people engaging in urban areas where, for example, design needs to be integrated into housing to encourage recycling?

[39] **Ms Colley-Jones:** It is always a little bit of an add-on. When people build housing stock, quite often, the waste management or recycling opportunities are thought of way too late in the design process, if they are thought of at all. I do not want to compare with other European countries, but, quite often, in multi storeys, et cetera, they have the chutes and they have the methodology in place, so what we are talking about really is retrofitting recycling options into current housing stock, which is why you need to have that ability to be diverse and not be too prescriptive, otherwise you would end up with problems. The whole point is that recycling needs to be easy and it needs to be something that people can engage with and easily do without making a supreme effort. Once you try getting people to make supreme efforts, they are just not going to do it. So, I think it is needs to be about having a good bring-back system, having good civic amenity sites, and having the opportunities wherever you go to do the right thing as opposed to the wrong thing. That is the message. What you want to do is engage with people; you do not want to alienate them by saying, 'You must do it like this'. There are lots and lots of case studies and there are lots of examples of how it is done well; I do not think that we need to reinvent the wheel. That is why, I think—. Local authorities know what their housing stock is and they know what the issues are with transportation and logistics, and that is why there is definite merit in them being able to make those kind of decisions based on what their residents want.

[40] **Mr Lee:** I will give you an example. As we make the transition between having been the waste removal and disposal industry to being the resource management industry, making new partnerships has become more and more important, even just over the last five years. Five years ago, I had never met a designer, never mind discussed life-cycle use or end-of-life ease of deconstruction. We have started to make all sorts of links with designers now for everything from furniture and electronics through to buildings—not just the environment cost of making the building or the environment cost of living in or using the building, but the cost of deconstructing the building and putting it back to work after you have finished with it. So, we have all sorts of new relationships with designers.

[41] With architects, it is a relationship and a conversation that we had never had in the past and, four years ago, we gave a wooden spoon award for the worst possible design that we could find. We were left breathless with some of the so-called entrants. Obviously, they were not self-promoting; people did not put themselves forward and, strangely, the winner did not turn up to receive the award. [*Laughter.*] We were just amazed that the architect had clearly not thought about the resource use and the ease of managing waste and resources from what

they had designed when they put it forward. So, getting into other people's thinking and making them think about resources, rather than just the product itself and its appearance, is becoming increasingly important to us. You will find us having all sorts of relationships in the future that I never dreamt of. I never dreamt that I would discuss the design and manufacture of an electric toothbrush with anybody; suddenly I do.

[42] **Alun Ffred Jones:** That is an interesting thought. Julie James is next.

[43] **Julie James:** Just going back to that market for non-co-mingled waste streams and so on, do you think that there is a role for the Government or a lead local authority in negotiating those prices? We have had some evidence that local authorities get very different deals from even the same materials recovery facility, so I wondered whether you could both comment on whether we as a committee could recommend to the Government a scheme for pooling resource or negotiating a larger scale contract, et cetera?

[44] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think that there is definitely an opportunity there. I think that local authorities have an awful lot of things to deal with. I think that if they had a kind of brokerage scheme, a national brokerage scheme, that enabled them to be able to take advantage—. On their own, quite often, the quantities are not the quantities that people are interested in attracting, but, as a whole, it is a fantastic amount, and I think having something centrally that local authorities could tap into to be able to get the best prices—not being fixed to one or the other and being able to play the field a little bit, but not having to gather the information to play the field—would be invaluable in stimulating markets for those good quality materials. It would also give a better insight, as Steve was mentioning earlier, into what materials we should be collecting and where those markets are. It would potentially stimulate local authorities to collect a wider variety of materials, which they are going to have to do if they want to get to 70%.

[45] **Mr Lee:** The short answer from me is, 'yes, please'; it is a good idea. We like what we see in terms of the growth of partnership working between authorities in Wales, right throughout the British Isles. If you want a good example to look into of where local authorities have worked together to get access to the secondary materials market, look at Hertfordshire where there are 10 relatively small local authorities all working together for joint access to the secondary materials markets. That is a good example; have a look at it.

[46] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Llyr, you are next.

[47] **Llyr Gruffydd:** I am just wondering what evidence there is that moving from a weekly collection of black bags to a fortnightly or three-weekly collection actually does drive up recycling rates. Is there a danger, coming back to the quality question, that imposing that kind of pressure on people to reduce the black bin waste actually means that they put more stuff into recycling that should probably not be there?

[48] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think that if you look at why Wales is achieving the recycling rates that it is, in my opinion, it is probably based on the weekly food waste collection and also on the alternate weekly collections. I do not see it as an issue; it is a bit of a shove and people need a little bit of a shove sometimes to do the right thing because, if it is too easy not to do it, then they will not do it. That is just human nature. I think that the statutory targets within local authorities have been a good thing because they have kept people focused and driven about the direction in which they need to go. I think if you went back to weekly collections, for example, you would be giving completely the wrong message. I like the direction of three-weekly collections and the fact that things are going in that direction, because, again, you are providing a reason for people to have to look at things—not only for the householders because you are also making sure that the local authorities have to start tidying up their act on their collection systems. Their collection systems have to be as

effective as possible, otherwise they will not be able to deliver a service.

[49] **Llyr Gruffydd:** What about the effect of that on the quality of what is being recycled? Potentially, people will put into their recycling boxes stuff that they should not because they think that it will reduce the waste in the other bin.

[50] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think that there is a role for local authorities to make sure that the communications that they have going out there are efficient and that they are engaging and giving feedback as to why things should and should not go into recycling and that they are letting people know the end markets. Quite often, people will say, 'Why bother? I don't know where it ends up. It probably just ends up going somewhere abroad' or something like that. If people know why you are doing things and what has happened to it and the positive result of what has happened, they will do the right thing. If they do not understand that by putting in the thing that they want to put in they are contaminating it then you could end up with an issue. So, it is a communications thing. It is about having the right markets for a larger number of materials so that that contamination is not an issue but is something that can be used and you can get the most resources possible out of the system.

[51] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Finally from me, the new regulations on materials facilities are coming into place in October, I understand, which will increase the transparency of reject rates. I presume that you welcome that because it will probably drive an improvement in the quality of the stuff that is being collected.

10:00

[52] **Mr Lee:** Yes, as the chartered institute, we would welcome that right across the countries. Transparency is really important. I will keep telling you: quality is king. We have to know what is real recycling and what is rejected. You need that flow of information back from the processor through to the local authority and to the people who have presented it to them, because, frankly, you want them to perform better. The more information we have moving up and down the responsibility chain, the better it is. It will be difficult—let us not pretend that it is an easy task—getting people to sample and analyse such fantastically non-heterogeneous material. By gum, it is changeable. Everything you can imagine is in waste—everything. So, taking representative samples, analysing it and giving reliable and timely reports back is going to be quite a challenge, but, yes, come on, this is an industry and this is a movement that needs information.

[53] **Ms Colley-Jones:** To add briefly to that, the materials recycling facilities, such as Shotton, which are doing a fantastic job with very little contamination and very little wastage do not think that the sampling is as high as it could be, because they want to show—. It gives them an opportunity to demonstrate that their practice is excellent and an exemplar. They would like all materials recycling facilities to be as good as them, which perhaps is a little ambitious. However, at the same time, it does allow those people who have put the energy, the money, and everything else into having these high quality materials recycling facilities, to have a benefit from having done so.

[54] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Eluned is next.

[55] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you. I wanted to talk about communication, particularly engaging with people who perhaps are not behaving in the way we would wish them to. Clearly, the nudge strategy you are advocating, which is progressively leading people down a path towards better behaviour in terms of recycling, works for the majority, but there will be those laggards for who that is not working. In terms of the approaches you have seen local authorities use to encourage people, either via the stick of fines and those kinds of measures, or, indeed, any carrots that you are aware of, which of those methods actually work in

tackling behaviours in that hard-to-reach group, if you like?

[56] **Ms Colley-Jones:** I think it has to be a combination. You have a fantastic example of how communication has worked in Blaenau Gwent. You had a very low performing local authority that went out on a massive campaign, doorstepping, and you saw the result in a 17% increase in recycling within a year. You cannot underestimate the power of those communications. There is no one method that works, because it depends on how people are feeling on the day that they get their leaflet through the door. It depends on whether it is sustained and that they are not going to miss that it is there. It needs to appeal to people directly. It needs to make them believe that, in doing this, they are achieving something that is beyond just putting things in a box or a bag, that it has a direct impact on the economy in Wales, that it is part of their civic duty, to a certain extent, to help stimulate that growth, that it is safeguarding their jobs, safeguarding the economy, and all of those things. I think if people feel part of it— You only have to take the plastic or single-use bag levy as a good example. People in Wales go to England and are quite happy to say, ‘I don’t need a bag. We don’t have those’. They are proud of the fact that we have the single-use bag charge. A lot of people are; they think that we have shown the way for England and Scotland. Ireland adopted it an awful lot earlier, of course. I think that that pride in being the best is something that we should nurture. The communications we have should be about building on that positive message that is already there. They know that we are achieving good things. They know we have some way to go. It is about getting that message through to people at every level, carrying on the work that is being done in schools, and carrying on the work that has been done in businesses, so people see that it is not just their households, but it is also their business and that it is important in every aspect of their life. It is a question of positive nudges and also making it a little bit more expensive to do the wrong thing. It does work.

[57] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Joyce Watson is next.

[58] **Joyce Watson:** I want to finish the session on a brighter note. I went to see a schools roadshow, funded by Carmarthenshire County Council. It was about teaching pupils in a primary school setting. The whole show went on for an hour and I was fascinated as to how they were going to engage young people for an hour, but they did. They did just what you have said. What they were telling me is that, with the squeeze on budgets, there is a danger that the element of education might be reduced, if not completely finished. You said that information is the key; do you feel, as I do, that educating youngsters to see it as a way of life forever is an important part of this whole process?

[59] **Ms Colley-Jones:** Absolutely. I think that, actually, it does have an economic benefit. These materials that we are collecting have a value; they are not valueless. Getting rid of them has a cost, so education pays for itself in the form of getting those materials back into the system and getting them back in as raw materials for the growth of other industries. Understanding that connection between what they put out and what is made is vital. When people know that there is a purpose to what they do, they are much more likely to engage. That is why it is really important, and not just in schools; you have to engage with people my age, and every age, because they have, perhaps, grown up in a different system. They have grown up in system where you were encouraged to consume and throw away, so it is about getting over those barriers as well. It is interesting; I do a lot of training with businesses on resource efficiency. When they get it and the light bulb goes on as to why it is important, and when they realise that that this actually impacts on a business down the road that wants their plastic or wants their cardboard, and that they have a purpose for it, they totally get it. It is making that connection between what is seen as a waste disposal issue in terms of economic growth and a business opportunity, and that there is a purpose to it. So, I think that education in that aspect will pay for itself, if you take a slightly more long-term view. I see it as an opportunity.

[60] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Our session is coming to an end. Would you like to conclude with any remarks to leave with us?

[61] **Ms Colley-Jones:** We should not lose sight of the fact that Wales is doing an amazing job at what it does. We are seen as trailblazers and we are seen as the ones to look at for other nations, potentially. We have achieved an awful lot in a short time. We have gone from being the worst in the UK, and the UK has gone from being one of the worst in Europe, to actually being the highest performer. I think that the evidence is there in the recycling rates that we are achieving and continue to achieve in the reduction that is happening year on year in waste arisings. We should be very proud of having achieved all of those things.

[62] **Mr Lee:** May I add something, as the chief executive of CIWM? For heaven's sake, be proud of what you have achieved. It has not been easy and it has been a long way to come forwards. There is still a long way to go and we have an awful lot of beliefs and behaviours to change at work and at home. We will need to embrace new ways of working, new ways of designing things and new ways of delivering services. There is still variability across Wales in the way that local authorities deliver services, but there is a very steady drift towards sharing and borrowing—even stealing—best and better practice from each other. My guess is that, in 10 years' time, your local authorities will keep learning from each other and they will move towards what is efficient and effective for their local circumstances. It might not be exactly the same model everywhere, but you will see that continued move.

[63] **Alun Ffred Jones:** On that positive note, thank you for coming in and presenting your evidence. Diolch yn fawr iawn.

[64] **Mr Lee:** Thank you for speaking clearly.

10:10

**Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan Bwyllgor Ymgynghorol
Ailgylchu Awdurdodau Lleol a Craff am Wastraff Cymru
Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from the Local Authority Recycling
Advisory Committee and Waste Awareness Wales**

[65] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A gaf eich **Alun Ffred Jones:** May I welcome you? croesawu chi atom ni?

[66] May I welcome you to this evidence session? Perhaps you could introduce yourselves and tell us who you represent. If you want to make any opening remarks, you are welcome to do so, otherwise we will go straight into questions.

[67] **Mr Mitchell:** Thank you, Chair. My name is Craig Mitchell; I am head of waste support at the Welsh Local Government Association.

[68] **Mr Marshall:** Good morning. My name is Lee Marshall; I am the chief executive officer of LARAC, which is the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee.

[69] **Mr Finch:** Good morning. My name is Dan Finch; I am national campaigns manager for Waste Awareness Wales.

[70] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Thank you. Questions will be asked in Welsh or in English, of course, and the headphones are available for you.

[71] Pwy sydd am ddechrau? Llyr Who would like to begin? Llyr Gruffydd.

Gruffydd.

[72] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Diolch yn fawr. Sylwais yn peth o'r dystiolaeth rydym wedi ei derbyn bod Axion yn awgrymu efallai y gellid cyflwyno rhyw fath o system wobrwyo i gartrefi sy'n ailgylchu mwy drwy ostwng elfen o'r dreth gyngor sy'n mynd tuag at ailgylchu a gwastraff. A oes gennych chi farn ynglŷn â defnyddio rhyw fath o *incentive* tebyg i hynny?

Llyr Gruffydd: Thank you very much. I noted in some of the evidence that we have received that Axion suggests that some sort of reward system could be introduced for homes that recycle more by reducing the element of the council tax that goes towards recycling and waste. Do you have any opinion on such an incentive?

[73] **Mr Mitchell:** This is something that we have discussed with authorities, not necessarily in relation to council tax, but in terms of the potential for rewarding the community in some way in terms of facilities or by other means. Clearly, for most people, local environmental quality is the absolute imperative and recycling fits within that wider context. We did some work in a Communities First area in Monmouthshire and one of the issues that we explored was whether we could reward that community in some way if the recycling rate increased to a certain percentage. As that was time-limited pilot work, we were not able to explore that further, but it is something that we would be very keen to come back to in terms of our work with local authorities.

[74] The other area that some authorities have looked at is particularly around participation in food waste and whether there was some way of signifying who in the community was a particularly good recycler. There are all sorts of ideas out there—you could give people a golden bin, for example. [*Laughter.*] That might actually be slightly counterproductive, because frankly, I would not want to be picked out in that way, from that point of view. However, I think, as a lot of the discussions among this group have indicated, that as we get higher up in terms of the percentage targets, it will become increasingly difficult, so we have to become a lot more innovative in terms of how we approach that. Some authorities are raising issues around the fact that we may need more punitive powers, for example. That is the other side of the coin. However, from our point of view, at the moment the focus is primarily on encouraging and engaging with people positively, and helping them to understand what the role of recycling is, beyond just removing the waste from their property, and what it does for the wider Welsh economy.

[75] **Mr Marshall:** I think, from that side of things, we need to understand what level of reward would incentivise a change in behaviour. I think there is a lack of understanding from the public, generally, about the actual cost of waste management within the overall council tax. So, it could be that that level might not actually incentivise a behaviour change, anyway. The first thing to do is to understand what level may do that and then look at it in that sort of light. However, it is possible that a reduction in the council tax may be a blunt way of doing something like that.

10:15

[76] **Llyr Gruffydd:** The focus, I would imagine, is on quantity again, if you look at how much is being recycled. It is probably too far away to develop systems where you actually could look at the quality that is being recycled on a community level.

[77] **Mr Marshall:** It would be difficult, but not impossible. Potentially, that is where you would deal with the quality at the local authority level. As local authorities get more intelligent in the day-to-day collection, they will then start to go back to certain areas of the community—certain areas of the rounds, as it were—and start to deal with the quality issues in that respect. Local authorities do that now, and you will probably find that Waste

Awareness Wales has examples of where they are doing door-knocking on a street-by-street basis. On a very simple level, you can do an element of that now through the actual collectors. The collection crews have a good idea, when they go around, which areas are giving them good-quality material and where, perhaps, the quality is not at such a good level.

[78] **Julie Morgan:** Is there an analysis of the particular groups in society that are very good recyclers and those that find it more difficult?

[79] **Mr Mitchell:** Perhaps I could pick that up first. Historically, in Wales, we have undertaken an annual survey, called 'the three Rs tracker', which has tried to identify people's attitudes and behaviours in relation to waste. We found that there were various metrics within this survey, and there was one called 'the committed recycler', which essentially was someone who would go the extra mile to recycle. We found that, across the UK, Wales scored more highly on that metric, which was reflected in performance, but there was a disparity between what people said they were doing and what the actual behaviour on the doorstep appeared to be. So, as part of trying to understand that better, we actually went down the road of developing some waste segmentation—I hope that the committee has had access to that information—where we broke the Welsh population down by 10 different segments or groups, eventually. This was based upon Acorn data that, I think, other presenters have talked about in terms of targeting their local activity and campaigns, but it related it to what we knew about people's recycling behaviour, because, as part of the three Rs tracker, we had postcode data, so we could match that across to socioeconomic profiles. So, we are now using those segmentation data to target our campaigns more effectively.

[80] A good example of that is that we have just run a campaign in north Wales—in Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire—on food waste because clearly there is a drive to capture more food waste. We targeted certain segments within those communities: those segments that we felt were participating, but could do more if they had better information, or if they had more information about what happens to their food collection. So, there is information in the booklet about anaerobic digestion plants et cetera. In essence, we are trying to be more targeted in the messaging and to use the medium that people are comfortable with—some people like leaflets, some people respond better to door-knocking, and others respond better through social media. As I say, we are trying to use limited resources in a more targeted way, with messages that we think will resonate with people more effectively. Just to give a quick snapshot of the working in Gwynedd, in the communities that we targeted, participation after the intervention, the following week, went up 4.6%; the second week it went up 10%; and the tonnages in those areas have gone up 7%. We are waiting to see what happens in terms of feedback from the other authorities, but we think that getting the right messages to the right people in the right form is absolutely critical.

[81] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mick Antoniwi, do you wish to come in on this?

[82] **Mick Antoniwi:** Yes, just very quickly. The perception almost across the board is that people do not quite understand, or they do not believe, that the stuff is being properly recycled and they think that it is all about council bureaucracy. They do not understand the necessity for it and they think that it is a sort of dictatorial local government. Nothing seems to have changed in that perception and certainly not in the last couple of years. I do not think that I have heard a single person across my constituency saying anything favourable, and it just seems that the argument is not coming across, is not being put, particularly on the counter side when people see almost a total abuse of packaging and production and so on. What can be done or what needs to be done to change that?

[83] **Mr Mitchell:** Again, I mean, obviously, there is a great deal of effort in terms of packaging nationally through the Courtauld agreement. However, as you say, there are certain perceptions in place in terms of what people feel about packaging and what they feel about

waste. A lot of the work that we try to do with authorities is essentially myth-busting, so it is giving people the actual evidence in relation to some of the key questions that they are raising. So, I think that it is absolutely critical that authorities are listening to the public and the issues people are raising and that they have the information and evidence to be able to help people understand what the actual position is. One of the issues raised earlier was that there is a common perception that local authorities make a great deal of income from their recycling, when, through the benchmarking work that we do in the waste improvement programme, clearly, they do not. CIWM made the point this morning that different materials will raise vastly different income streams. So, a lot of our work is trying to deal with the barriers that people perceive.

[84] **Mick Antoniw:** Can you name one area, then, where you think that a local authority has successfully managed to turn around those perceptions?

[85] **Mr Mitchell:** I think that it would be very difficult to give evidence that that is the case. What we do, obviously, is to speak to authorities on a regular basis, and we get a sense of what the local debate is and what the local narrative is. I think that, where we have done some work to help to demonstrate what happens to food waste in terms of AD plants and the positive outcomes that are associated with that, and where we have done some work on promoting issues around the wider economic benefit, there is a certain degree of understanding of those issues, but it is a very complex issue in among a whole range of other very complex things that people have to deal with on a daily basis. So, I think that this is something that we have not got right and that we have to keep coming back to.

[86] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Julie, have you finished your questions?

[87] **Julie Morgan:** I had wanted to ask further questions about the socio-economic breakdown. Do you have an analysis of the socio-economic breakdown?

[88] **Mr Mitchell:** Yes. We did submit the segmentation profiles to the committee in advance of today. I had hoped that you would have had sight of them, but in essence there are 10 different profiles that detail different aspects. I know that Dan was involved in creating that—

[89] **Julie Morgan:** I just wondered whether you could say briefly—you know, sort of summarise—which groups—

[90] **Mr Finch:** As Craig mentioned, we worked with an organisation called CACI, which developed the Acorn segmentation, and we amalgamated that with the three Rs tracker survey results that Craig mentioned earlier on to break down the Welsh population into 10 different segments. In those segments, there was a range of different information. On one side, you had facts and figures, which had information such as general geo-demographic data, lifestyle data, information on type of housing, life stage, occupation and so on as well as information on recycling specifics, such as what proportion contaminate recycling and what proportion put recyclable items into general waste. On the other side, we also had information on inside information, which detailed what type of marketing methods we should use to communicate with residents. We started to develop this as a tool for local authorities so that they could better inform their marketing strategies, because sometimes what we were finding was that some authorities were using catch-all marketing tactics, without breaking down their strategies to really communicate with the different elements within their boroughs. So, that is what this segmentation tool provides.

[91] **Julie Morgan:** Is that happening now in most local authorities? Are they using it?

[92] **Mr Finch:** All local authorities have this, and some have used it in some of the

communications they do. In all of the work we undertake, we always use the segmentation, and the work that Craig highlighted earlier on is an example of that.

[93] **Mr Mitchell:** If I can just add to that, the segments are mapped on a ward level across Wales, so local authorities have details for each ward of how prevalent those different segments are so that, again, they can match that up with their round data and the understanding of people's participation. It is really just another tool for them to use in terms of the level of sophistication of their communications locally.

[94] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to ask you about the collections blueprint and whether that is a rational policy for the Welsh Government to be pursuing, because we have had quite a lot of evidence about local authorities retaining flexibility to reflect local circumstances in terms of their recycling.

[95] **Mr Marshall:** From our point of view, the evidence at the moment shows that all the different collection systems—there are only, basically, three collection systems—are delivering results that are good and results that are not so good. There has perhaps been too much focus for too long on the type of collection system, rather than the quality of the materials and the quantity of the materials that those collection systems get out at the back end, as it were. So, from that point of view, we do not believe that it is necessarily a standard that should be pursued. As you say, there needs to be an element of flexibility. It could be, for argument's sake, that for 20 out of the 22 authorities it is right, but you need to allow that flexibility if there are two for which it is not quite right. At present, the Welsh Government stance does not allow for that flexibility. So, I think that that is where the issue is. If it were that obvious to all the industry and all the local authorities, you would think that they would all be doing it that way.

[96] **Mr Mitchell:** Just to pick up that point, obviously, it is statutory guidance, so it is there to be taken account of, but it does not have to be prescriptively followed if there is good evidence locally as to why you would want to put in place a different system, particularly through the work of the collaborative change programme, which is us, the Welsh Government and WRAP, which goes into forensic detail at a local level of how the whole waste service works, so it is not just about the collection method on the doorstep, but about how the civic amenity site works, how bring banks work and how the infrastructure that sits behind it operates. So, really, when that work is done on a local level, it tests the local systems against that blueprint and just asks the questions. I think that that level of challenge is appropriate, because it means that what we get at the end of the process is a system in place in each local authority that we can be sure has robustness, is fit for purpose and is able to demonstrate a path towards meeting the targets that have been set.

[97] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Local authority evidence and the Wales Audit Office have suggested that a move to kerbside sorting from co-mingled sorting may actually lead to a reduction in recycling rates, because people have got used to one system, and to persuade them to adopt a second one—

[98] **Mr Marshall:** In terms of the evidence on collection system changes, perhaps it is not robust enough yet, because you will tend to find that, when a collection system is changed, there is normally a change in the amount or the types of materials as well, or in the frequency of collection. So, it can be quite misleading to say, 'Oh, we've changed from this system to this system, and there's been an increase'. It could be that the increase is because of the frequency and additional collection materials, rather than the actual way of doing it. So, I think that there probably needs to be some more investigation into the effects of collection system changes, taking into account what has happened when the system has changed.

[99] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Do local authority waste management sections go to speak to

the planning departments and ask, ‘What are you doing to encourage designs that provide facilities for keeping your recycling bins?’, so that it is built into the system for the projects that are coming forward for the future?

[100] **Mr Marshall:** The conversations are happening more now than they used to, but, from the planning side, there are restrictions on what they can ask of developers and what they can put into development. You tend to find, as you heard earlier on, that waste is something that is thought of, generally, at the end of everything and is a bit of a bolt-on. Also, you have the existing housing stock that is 100 or 200 years old and was designed when the waste systems were very different, obviously.

[101] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I accept that.

10:30

[102] **Mr Mitchell:** I was just going to quickly add that one of my former roles for four years was planning policy lead in the WLGA, and for that period, I could probably hold my hand up and say that I am not aware of having had many conversations about waste facilities in terms of the development of local plans and guidance for developers. However, I think that it is something that people are becoming far more aware of and more sensitive to. The difficulty is that, clearly, we have different systems in place, and those systems may change in the future. So, it makes it quite difficult to plan in terms of the infrastructure requirement. Just to pick up a point that was raised earlier this morning, I know that authorities that have a high number of flats, for example, are really struggling in engagement with the public around recycling, and also in having appropriate infrastructure that encourages recycling, rather than being able to put things out of sight and out of mind, really.

[103] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Is your question on this point, Joyce?

[104] **Joyce Watson:** Yes, it is on this point. You recognise that they need different systems. Have you seen any innovation in terms of helping people who live in houses of multiple occupation or flats, or people who have difficulty, because that is not always the case? Have you seen any innovation that we could use as an example in our recommendations?

[105] **Mr Mitchell:** Perhaps I can start. At the recent local authority recycling advisory committee conference in mid Wales—stealing your thunder—there was a presentation from Powys, which has put in place a system of assisted collection. So, it is something that authorities do think about and do provide. In terms of flats, there is less innovation in evidence out there, as people have tended to focus on, as has been mentioned previously, the low-hanging fruit, as flats are a difficult issue to crack. Where innovation has happened, for example, in London, in certain deck-access flats, people have been given very sturdy recycling bags that they can put outside their front door, and in this particular pilot scheme, the local authority will actually come around and pick up the recycling from people’s doors, outside the flats. That re-established that connection between the collection day and time and actually putting out the recycling, and it gave people ownership of the issue. The problem is, clearly, that the bags cost a lot of money and, in collection terms, it is a lot more expensive. So, there will always be a necessary trade-off in the cost benefit, and as the markets evolve for recycling and the materials, and as the income potentially increases, it becomes more cost-effective to chase that element of recycling.

[106] **Eluned Parrott:** One of the groups probably most difficult to target is the houses in multiple occupation in those city centres where you have large student populations or populations of young professionals who move from area to area, perhaps on a yearly basis, so they are difficult to target in terms of communication, but they are also experiencing some of

these practical difficulties in terms of the management of their waste and the homes they live in not being designed for it. Are you aware of any good schemes that have been operated by local authorities to improve recycling rates in these HMO populations?

[107] **Mr Mitchell:** We have done work with Cardiff and with Swansea, initially, and that was essentially bringing the university, the local authority and us together to try to understand what it was that we could do to influence student behaviour. For the universities, that is about implementing things like the hospitality and food agreement that WRAP manages. For the local authorities, it is understanding what information they can give to individuals in halls of residence before they move out into the community, which very often happens in the second year, so that they understand the services and are able to use them and make sure that they have the infrastructure there. They are also doing a lot of work through landlord fora to try to encourage landlords to engage in making sure that the facilities are in place.

[108] What Cardiff did in the past was to introduce a text messaging service, which was primarily open to all the public, but they saw real value, potentially, in working with students for that. The problem with it is that, with text messaging, you have to pay for every text that you send, and over time, people move on and you are sending texts to people who now live in Birmingham to tell them that tomorrow is their collection day in Cardiff. So, the aspect that we then explored was the potential for apps in relation to this, again, looking at the particular cohort, the prevalence of the use of smartphones and the availability of signal in urban areas. We did some work to try to understand whether there was potential to develop an app across Wales that all authorities could buy into. There were certain problems with that. However, we have been able to progress work with Swansea to bring in an app that pushes that information at very low cost, and Cardiff is actively thinking about that. In terms of campaign work with students, Dan, do you want to add something?

[109] **Mr Finch:** The point I was going to make is with regard to the segmentation model that we talked about earlier. There are two segments within it, which are called 'city prosperity' and 'urban socialites', which look at those particular groups. This is something that local authorities have to provide them with more information about how to communicate with those and the communication methods those groups are most likely to respond to. So, it is useful information for them to target these groups.

[110] **Eluned Parrott:** Do you have any data on how long-lasting the impact is of the communication drives that you have engaged in with these groups?

[111] **Mr Finch:** It varies among the different groups within the 10 segments of the segmentation model. In some of the work that we have undertaken, we have done some advertising—a food waste campaign, for example—that did, initially, have some very successful results. However, to maintain that, we would have had to continue to undertake advertising, for which we do not necessarily have the budget. However, I think it is important to utilise as many tools as you can to communicate with people in their preferred way in order to encourage long-term results.

[112] **Eluned Parrott:** Do you have any evidence about how effective the positive campaigns that you have been talking about have been in comparison to the effectiveness of a drive of enforcement action or punitive measures to try to prevent bad behaviour, if you like?

[113] **Mr Marshall:** The trouble is that it can be difficult to compare them, because they are often used in different ways to achieve different results. Of the London boroughs, I think Barnet was the first to introduce compulsory recycling. That was a general tool because its recycling rate was very low and it needed to raise that in order to achieve the various targets that it had. Often, communications might be about a specific service change or a specific material within a service. So, you may be doing food waste campaigns because you want to

have a drive on that. It does then become a bit more difficult in terms of comparing whether a carrot is more effective than a stick.

[114] **Russell George:** You talked about county councils communicating messages through social media and in-house magazines, but what could the Welsh Government do, through a national campaign, potentially, to deliver a message?

[115] **Mr Mitchell:** That is a very good point. In the past—well, the slightly dim and distant past—there were national campaigns, for which there was television advertising with the tag line, ‘It is our future, don’t throw it away’. Interestingly enough, it still shows up in tracker surveys that people remember that tag line, so it obviously was effective. Clearly, the emphasis there was on raising awareness rather than more detailed information and more detail on what behaviours we are looking to encourage. I know that the Welsh Government is actively considering its options in relation to a national campaign, and we have had some discussions with the 22 heads of waste about what would help them at a local level. Clearly, what they are looking for is a national re-statement of the importance of recycling and where it fits into the wider aims that we are seeking as a society in terms of economic growth and so on, and how the circular economy helps to reinforce that. The difficulty there is that that does not always resonate with people, because they might think, ‘The circular economy is great, but what matters is my job or my opportunity for work locally’. However, what the heads of waste said was, ‘We need, to a certain degree, a certain amount of noise at a national level to re-state the importance of this, and what we are able to do at a local level is to use some of that branding and some of that messaging to target the more localised messages beneath that’.

[116] **Russell George:** There will be a limit on what Welsh Government can do because there are 22 different ways of recycling across Wales. Is that a stumbling block?

[117] **Mr Mitchell:** From our point of view, clearly, we work with 22 authorities. Where we can, we try to work regionally, as I said, with the north Wales project, but we have also recently run a ‘full house’ campaign, which is all about thinking about recycling around the home, not just in the kitchen, which tends to be the focus. For this, we worked with Neath Port Talbot, Caerphilly and Wrexham, who had three very different recycling services. One of the issues that we obviously have to address is making sure that all the material that we do is localised and focused in that regard. It does present difficulties when you start talking about particular materials at a national level if they are not universally recycled. I think that that is something—. There will be a convergence in the system over a period of time, but it does constrain the types of messaging and the detail that you can go into.

[118] **Russell George:** It does. I suppose that it would have to be an overarching campaign, but it would have to work well with local authorities’ campaigns on a different level, I suppose, because, simply, the Welsh Government could not go into detail because of the different options among different authorities.

[119] **Mr Marshall:** Craig mentioned the convergence, and Wales is ahead of the rest of the UK in terms of the materials that residents have the opportunity to recycle. It is there or thereabouts. So, we talk about 22 systems, and, again, it does not necessarily matter what bin, box or lorry comes to collect it; residents in Wales generally can recycle the same materials wherever they live. So, there is the opportunity in Wales, in contrast to England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, to have that consistent message. I think part of the problem, and it was alluded to earlier on, is that residents and people—I include myself as a resident in this—do not realise where we fit in the chain, and we do not realise at the moment that we are part of the problem, but that we can also be part of the solution. People do not appreciate that they create waste when they buy something, not when they finish with the product. Packaging was mentioned earlier on. So, if you change your shopping habits, you can have an effect on what supermarkets package; it would require a lot of individuals to do that for the supermarkets to

realise it, but we have to start somewhere. So, from the Welsh Government point of view, if we can work together with local authorities to make people realise where they fit in this chain and what they can do, that would make a big difference then in terms of some of the services that we can provide.

[120] **Russell George:** One issue that I see in my own area is a chaotic week when there is a bank holiday. My own local authority does not collect on a bank holiday and the rest of the week then is staggered by one day, so what we see then is people being unsure and uncertain of what is going on all week and people putting their collections out on the wrong days, and then that also follows on to the following week. How much of an issue is that and what are your comments on that? Are there authorities that do collect on bank holidays, and how do the authorities that do change communicate those messages, because it is very difficult?

[121] **Mr Marshall:** Yes, there are different ways and it will depend on the agreements that local authorities have in place with the workforce and the decisions that they have made on that. Some do collect on bank holidays, some miss a week, and some shove everything a day late and collect on Saturday of that week. Whatever they do in that local area, they need to make sure that they are communicating that as widely and as simply as possible. Sometimes, from the sounds of it, it does not always follow through that they do that.

[122] **Russell George:** It is difficult, because it is a message that is being communicated for one week, is it not? Most of your messages you are delivering consistently all the time, but to get a message out to somebody at short notice is a lot more difficult.

[123] **Mr Mitchell:** As I say, people are using social media more; that does not work for everyone, but it is a useful way of approaching it. I think that there is a broader issue, which is around sharing of good practice within authorities, and I think that is a key issue that we are looking to promote through the waste improvement programme. That is the reason why we collect the benchmarking data and the finance data as a starting point for a debate about how services are delivered and begin that dialogue between authorities. The heads of waste meet on a regular basis, and, as part of that meeting, we have an afternoon session where we start to try to unpick some of the practice across different authorities so that people can talk in more detail about how they approach certain issues: why they treat bank holidays in certain ways, for example. One of the issues that we have discussed recently is around garden waste, which has come up today, and a number of authorities are looking at different options in relation to garden waste, for example. So, it is about understanding why, for example, Monmouthshire has started charging for garden waste. Why did they do it? What kind of impact did it have? What was the public reaction? What was the motivation and what were the broader issues? So, we are facilitating that debate so that the good practice gets driven into the 22 authorities, notwithstanding what the future holds for that structure.

10:45

[124] **Alun Ffred Jones:** If we look at the recycling performance of various local authorities in Wales, you have examples of those among the best and the worst that are next door to each other and are very similar authorities. What accounts for that difference?

[125] **Mr Marshall:** There are quite a few variables. It goes back to when the authorities started implementing their recycling in the first place. You will find that different authorities assigned different political importance to it so they started at different times. So, some authorities may have fairly mature schemes that have been going for 10 years, and some may only have been going for five. Just because they are next to each other—. They may have slightly different socio-economic groups and those sorts of things. Again, local authorities are political organisations, so there will be different drives at a corporate level that will assign a certain importance to those systems as well, which may mean that, in one authority, it is

regarded as being more important compared with a different authority.

[126] **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, it is nothing to do with the way they collect.

[127] **Mr Marshall:** Not particularly. As I said, I think that the evidence shows that there are high-performing authorities across all three different types of systems: co-mingled, source-separated and kerbside sort. As the systems all get more mature and, in fairness, in Wales, with the policy direction that Welsh Government has given, you can see that there have been step changes in recycling performance levels over the last two or three years from Welsh local authorities responding to that sort of policy direction.

[128] **Alun Ffred Jones:** If, therefore, the performance is just as good using the three different methods, why is the Government insistent on going down one path?

[129] **Mr Marshall:** Ultimately, that is, I suppose, a question for the Government to answer. The evidence that the Government has drawn has directed it towards that. I can understand to a point why it has come to that conclusion, but I think that it has been a more theoretical exercise and, when you look at the evidence on the ground and the real life experience of the local authorities, that starts to show that one size does not fit all and that it is more important to focus on the quality of the material and the quantity and getting it out rather than necessarily the manner in which you collect it.

[130] **Mr Mitchell:** I would just add two points to that. One is that, as I said, through the waste improvement programme, we do benchmarking work and I think that this was part of the WLGA's submission, where we try to look at the correlation between performance and different collection types. The only thing that I would say on that is that the sample is so small in Wales that it is very difficult to draw conclusions because there are probably other factors at play in each of those services that may influence things more widely than the collection method.

[131] The other issue is how you judge success because, clearly, we have a statutory recycling target that is driving performance, but the collections blueprint is probably predicated on a wider context, which is around driving the circular economy, and wider environmental impacts—the ecological footprint, for example. So, there is perhaps a broader context to the collections blueprint that the Welsh Government is putting forward, but, clearly, local authorities have to have a very clear focus on the statutory recycling target and being able to deal with that.

[132] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. We are coming to the end of our session. Does anyone have a pressing question? Joyce Watson, you have a pressing question.

[133] **Joyce Watson:** I know that some authorities are cutting the money that they are spending on educating young people and yet I have seen a really good example of that just the other day in Carmarthenshire. We are talking about futures here and trying to change behaviour. What is your opinion on investing in educating schoolchildren in particular, which is what I have seen, in how to secure the future, and do you think that it is good value for money?

[134] **Mr Mitchell:** Let us see if I can pick that up first. As part of Waste Awareness Wales, we used to partly fund the eco-schools project. The emphasis there was on trying to encourage the programme to look at issues around waste. I think that there were a number of difficulties with trying to evaluate the programme—I think that the Wales Audit Office alluded to that. It is a self-led programme, so we could not dictate to the schools, 'You must cover waste in terms of how you look at the particular issues'. There would probably be a certain amount of interest in waste issues, but we could not insist that it was done. Also, we

tried to understand what the impact was beyond the school gate, because, clearly, it is about how that influences behaviour at home in terms of what the children take back to the household, and also about evaluating the life series kind of approach—that is, what happens to those attitudes over time. We found that it was becoming disproportionate, in terms of the grant that we were giving, to expect that kind of information back. So, the line that we took was to focus on case studies, in terms of some very good examples of schools that had done some very good work on waste, and to promote that across the eco-schools programme. So, that is really the approach that we have taken to the evaluation: it is not really easy to do in quantitative terms, as opposed to taking the more qualitative approach to it.

[135] The other aspect of this is that, in the work that we do with authorities—again, the Full House campaign is a good example of that—we make sure that we develop resources that can be used in schools, in terms of particular lessons. We develop, for example, lesson plans and materials that teachers and local authority recycling officers going into schools can use to promote a particular campaign and to help people to understand what it is that we are trying to achieve. The Full House campaign lent itself to that, because we are talking about recycling in people’s bedrooms, bathrooms—what do you do with shampoo bottles; what do you do with Coke cans or soft drink cans?—and trying to understand the role of the household in recycling, because, very often, a lot of the emphasis falls on one individual in the household to do the recycling for the household. What we want to do is to understand how the household does collective recycling and what the different roles are in how we can encourage that. That is why we are interested in doing work with schools and getting feedback from pupils in terms of whether it is something that can resonate with them and whether there would be interest in it.

[136] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Our time has come to an end, I am afraid. I thank the three of you for coming in and giving your evidence. Obviously, you will be provided with a transcript of the evidence, so that you can check its accuracy. Diolch yn fawr iawn—thank you very much.

[137] We will take a break now and we will be back in 10 minutes.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:53 a 11:07.
The meeting adjourned between 10:53 and 11:07.*

Ymchwiliad i Ailgylchu yng Nghymru: Tystiolaeth gan WRAP Cymru a Eunomia

Inquiry into Recycling in Wales: Evidence from WRAP Cymru and Eunomia

[138] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A gaf i eich croesawu chi yma? **Alun Ffred Jones:** May I welcome you here?

[139] A warm welcome to the committee. Obviously, questions will be asked in Welsh or English. There are headsets there for you.

[140] A gaf i eich croesawu chi’ch dau yma i roi tystiolaeth gerbron y pwyllgor? A gaf i ofyn i chi gyflwyno eich hunain? Efallai y byddai’n werthfawr i chi esbonio beth ydy perthynas y corff yr ydych chi’n ei gynrychioli â Llywodraeth Cymru yn y maes hwn. **Mr Gover:** May I welcome you both here to provide evidence to the committee? May I ask you to introduce yourselves? It may be valuable for you to explain the relationship between your organisation and the Welsh Government in this area.

[141] **Mr Gover:** Bore da. Marcus Gover ydw i o WRAP Cymru. **Mr Gover:** Good morning. I am Marcus Gover from WRAP Cymru.

[142] We are very pleased to be here and thank you for asking us to come and give evidence to you. I should say that WRAP is very much an evidence organisation. We see our role as providing evidence and expertise to support Governments and public bodies to deliver their programmes, with WRAP Cymru supporting the Welsh Government to deliver its programme. We work with the Welsh Government on helping to grow the reprocessing sector, which is about more materials for more manufacturing businesses and for more jobs in Wales. We are also working with the hospitality sector, with food and drink businesses, to help it to reduce costs. We are working with householders, residents and Welsh families to help them to save money through Love Food Hate Waste, but, most importantly here, we help the Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association to deliver the collaborative change programme to support local authorities looking to implement the blueprint and meet the targets, but also to reap the benefits of it. Thank you very much.

[143] **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, you are fully funded by the Welsh Government.

[144] **Mr Gover:** We are fully funded by the Welsh Government.

[145] **Dr Hogg:** I am Dr Dominic Hogg. I am chairman of a consulting organisation called Eunomia Research and Consulting. We are an independent consulting organisation. We have had quite a long-standing involvement in Wales with the development of the waste strategy, going back to the first of the waste strategies in the early part of the last decade and, more recently, we have been supporting WRAP in helping to develop recycling programmes in Wales, and supporting the evidence base for the programme that the Government has developed.

[146] **Llyr Gruffydd:** I have a question for Dr Hogg to start. I see from your evidence that you suggest, or believe, that the reluctance to move to the Welsh Government's preferred consistent system throughout Wales is due to a lack of full understanding of the relative costs and benefits of local authorities' current systems versus the alternatives. Could you therefore suggest to me how we go about conveying that to local authorities, because there is a very practical concern as well in terms of the cost of moving from one to another, even if they were persuaded to do so?

[147] **Dr Hogg:** We have identified a number of barriers, as we see them. I am not sure that that is specifically a Welsh issue. On the issue around the cost, WRAP, in its own research, has sought to undertake a lot of work over time on the indicative costs of the different types of waste collection system. One of the problems historically, I suppose, has been to have people understand the whole-system costs. There have been several interesting things that have influenced those whole-system costs over time, but one of the key issues that people often do not understand, or perhaps overlook, is the fact that, obviously, with a kerbside-sort system, there is effectively a very limited requirement for the sorting of the material, and the sorting of the material has traditionally—although this has changed over time—implied a cost to the authority. However, with the kerbside-sort system, you have a system where the actual collection activity tends to be slightly more expensive, but the offsetting revenues from the materials, which are collected separately and therefore do not need further sorting, means that the net costs of the system can be lower than the equivalent co-mingled system. That, potentially, becomes more important as the value of commodities rises.

[148] In theory, what should happen with the sorting facilities is that the sorting facilities should be charging a fee to the authorities that is a processing fee minus the revenue that is achieved at the back of those facilities. So, those should also move with commodity prices. It is fair to say that one is often looking at comparisons of efficiently operating and costed services and, of course, it is the case that services are not always universally, in both cases, with both types of system, efficiently operated. There are issues about—and we listened to

your discussions earlier this morning—how there might be approaches that might generate more value from the sale of materials for Welsh authorities. I think that WRAP is currently looking at that as part of its collaborative change programme as a possible route forward on that.

[149] **Llyr Gruffydd:** The other suggestion you make is that there might be some sort of reaction to the Welsh Government being quite robust in directing local authorities down a certain avenue. Is that really a factor?

[150] **Dr Hogg:** In our experience, there is a degree of dogma. There are some clear facts about the differences between the systems, which we have tried to set out. If we put those in front of most people in the industry, they would not disagree with those facts. There is a degree of adherence to particular systems. People, sometimes, just do not want to change. We see that in various instances. If I can draw some parallels with what has gone on in other parts of the United Kingdom, in England, there is a view that local government should be allowed to choose the system that it wishes to adopt without the fettering of that discretion. Historically, that has led to a lot of problems in England, particularly with issues around how councils introduce fortnightly collections and so forth.

11:15

[151] I think that, even if one was not to specify a particular system, there is definitely a role for Government or another body in arguably specifying, if nothing else, the sort of Trinny-and-Susannah ‘what not to do’ of waste collection systems, because there are definitely configurations that can cause problems for households—and, classically, that was when local authorities went from weekly to fortnightly collections without having a commensurate improvement in the capacity of the recycling service, which caused problems for residents. I would also say that it also leads to problems in terms of costs.

[152] One of the things that is quite interesting at the moment in Wales is that you still have some of the co-mingled systems collecting weekly. In terms of the cost alone—let us forget the performance—you would say, and WRAP’s work on indicative costs would bear this out, that in terms of the cost of the service delivery you are talking about comparing typically weekly kerbside-sort systems with fortnightly co-mingled systems. The weekly co-mingled system, almost by definition, introduces additional costs into that service delivery, and there are several authorities still on that weekly co-mingled service.

[153] **Alun Ffred Jones:** You say in your evidence that source separation can yield significant financial and environmental benefits, and yet we have heard evidence time and again that there is no difference between the systems and that it is just how you operate them—that the performances are good or not so good, depending on the effort put in and not on the nature of the collection. What do you say to that? Are they wrong?

[154] **Dr Hogg:** I have just mentioned the fact that you have got higher cost and lower cost systems in operation here. We have had an example of shifting a weekly co-mingled service onto a kerbside-sort service where, as we say in the evidence, the savings identified are in the order of £1 million a year, or £30 per household. That is massive in the context of waste management. That is untypical, arguably, because you are moving from, as I have just described, the most expensive system to one that is hopefully relatively well optimised. We did provide some evidence in the paper around the sort of loss rates that we find in the different systems. Certainly, the work that Zero Waste Scotland has been looking at shows that you have the kerbside-sort systems, where you have loss rates of 1%, for example, for the best performing services and 2% on average, whereas on the co-mingled services, not only do you have the loss from what is collected through the sorting process, you have a further loss typically after the sorting process at the point of reprocessing. The interaction between those

two is really interesting because what is often the focus of the collection services in terms of what is reported as recycling is what the loss rate is at the sorting facilities. However, there is a trade-off in many cases that we see between the loss rate at the sorting facilities and the quality of the material that is subsequently delivered from the sorting facilities to the reprocessors.

[155] For example, if I wanted to, and I had a co-mingled service, I could pick out a small amount of extremely high-grade paper, but I would not get the whole lot of the paper that I had collected into that high-quality stream—

[156] **Alun Ffred Jones:** If I may just interrupt you—Mr Gover, do you agree with Mr Hogg?

[157] **Mr Gover:** What I would say first of all is that the blueprint is not just about kerbside sort versus single-stream co-mingled; it is a range of approaches based on research of what delivers an effective recycling service. Things like restricting residual, high-frequency good capacity for the recycling are very important as well. So, it is important to think about the whole blueprint when you are doing that, and it is about delivering the benefits—economic benefits as well as recycling benefits. In terms of the kerbside sort—the multi-stream versus the single stream—the other important thing is to think about the future at a high recycling rate of 70%, and, in that scenario, the evidence does suggest that that is going to be the cheaper system and the more effective system, when you reach 70%. It is based on evidence that was put together before the blueprint was published and consulted on.

[158] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Right. Julie is next.

[159] **Julie James:** I think, Dr Hogg, that you were just about to tell us that one of the issues is the amount of money that you can get for the high-quality source-segregated materials as opposed to the amount of money that you can get for co-mingled, or less. You were specifically mentioning paper, which we have also discussed as a committee.

[160] **Dr Hogg:** Generally, it is like any process. If you have a process of mixed materials, and the same actually applies—. For many years people have tried to compost black-bag waste and they are trying to argue that it could be used on soil and so forth. You look at the contaminants and you find that that is unlikely to be the case. So, what could you do? In theory, you could screen it again and again, and at some point you will probably get around 5% of the material that came into the process that actually looked quite decent, but it would be 5% of it. So, there is this trade-off between actually getting the material up to a higher quality and what is left behind. So, sometimes you could have facilities with relatively low loss rates, but they might be delivering more contamination in the material that is going to the reprocessors and, of course, the reprocessors do not necessarily want that. So, it comes back to how we are measuring recycling and the value that we are going to get from the material.

[161] Given the objective in Wales for a more overarching sustainable development package, and for this to be potentially an engine of economic growth and employment, there is another issue here in terms of the reprocessors. If I am located in Wales as a reprocessing entity and someone delivers material that has, for example, 15% or 20% contamination of stuff that I do not want, I have to try to deal with that at the front end of my process. What do I do with it? I have to take that stuff away, but what do I do with it? I have to get rid of it. Presumably I have to send it to landfill or an incineration plant. There might be some metal in it—I might be actually separating out some metal and I might be able to get it recycled. However, if that 10% or 15% has to be sent to landfill or an incinerator, you are typically talking about an additional cost to the reprocessor of perhaps £15 or £20 a tonne of the input materials—a cost. These reprocessors are competing in global markets. In the global marketplace it is not the case that everywhere where Welsh reprocessors will be competing

has a background disposal cost that has an £80 landfill tax on it. So, it costs £100 a tonne to get rid of the material. So, in a sense, you are funding the transfer from the export of the material to places where, arguably, you might say that they are accepting lower quality material. That is, of course, stopping—

[162] **Julie James:** May I ask you another question, to follow that up? It has been suggested to us that if the Welsh Government or a lead local authority started to negotiate the prices that local authority waste commanded at reprocessors, that would affect behaviour and the economics. What do you say to that?

[163] **Dr Hogg:** It depends on how it is done, I suppose, is the short answer. There is an argument that says, 'We play the market'. I am not sure that that would necessarily be the best thing for your overall system. You might actually want to be using this to generate good relationships with reprocessors. There needs to be consideration of what is going on on both sides to enable those. It helps to have good relations with reprocessors, and they can help to develop their businesses as well.

[164] **Julie James:** If you were guaranteeing a particularly high quality of recyclate to that reprocessor—

[165] **Mr Gover:** In a world where you are generating high volumes of high-quality material, getting the best prices for that is important. I was listening to Andrew Wilkinson at a conference recently talking about Conwy, where he was saying that he was getting £600,000 a year of income from the recyclates. That was significantly helping his local authority. He talked about getting the best value for our residents from their resources. That is the way to think about it. WRAP, in the past few weeks, published some guidance on how to get better value from materials that local authorities collect. A big part of that is really thinking about the risk. As a local authority, do you want to almost become a commodity broker, which, if you are selling materials yourself, you would be? Or do you want to have some help to do that? I think that there is space for some help to get better value from the recyclates that you are collecting, particularly if they are of high quality.

[166] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Have you finished, Julie?

[167] **Julie James:** Yes, thank you.

[168] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to pick up on materials, because we had aluminium quoted to us beforehand. I am an avid recycler; I really enjoy it, but I know what Mick Antoniwi said earlier. I also use one of these coffee machines that have these aluminium capsules. They do not easily fit in my recycling because I cannot put them anywhere. There is a company that will pick them up, but how do you encourage behaviour where people want to go further than the recycling stream that is being picked up by the local authority? Is there, for example, a way of using existing networks like village shops and post offices or things like that, where additional waste could be picked up on a sort of collect-plus basis?

[169] **Mr Gover:** There are schemes that will effectively take back those sorts of packaging, like postal schemes and so on. I know that Nestlé, which is one of the producers of one of the systems for that, is very keen to find recycling routes for it. It is quite determined; I do not think that it has succeeded yet in finding something that it is really happy with, but I have had meetings with the company where it has been determined to try to find a way to do that. It would argue that, by controlling the quantity of coffee, it is actually providing a good environmental outcome by not wasting the coffee in the first place—it is controlling the portion, the spillage and that sort of thing, which is an argument. When you look at packaging, packaging is there to protect what is in it as well, and that is very important.

[170] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I think that what I am saying is that there is a difficulty where you want to do the right thing. There are processes, but they are very difficult in rural areas. They tend to be much more—there are things like collect-plus—available in the urban areas. If you end up spending more money driving to drop off your recycling package, in the overall scheme of sustainability, you are not doing particularly well.

[171] **Mr Gover:** I think that this is where the manufacturers and the suppliers can take the lead in providing solutions for some of these products that they bring on to the market. That is why I was quite pleased to see Nestlé looking to provide a solution itself, or to make sure that a solution is there. As for the local authority, getting the main items collected is the first challenge and getting those up to the 70% mark.

[172] **Antoinette Sandbach:** What is WRAP doing to encourage—. I think that we heard from the first witnesses that they were trying to put into place partnerships that are trying to look at whole-life cycles and looking at encouraging end of use.

[173] **Mr Gover:** This is where initiatives like the Courtauld commitment comes in, working with retailers and brands to look at their packaging and their whole-life cycle approach to the packaging. Through that, there has been a reduction in packaging and better recycling as a result. They have a part to play as well as local authorities.

[174] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Are there any incentives in place to encourage the private sector to support local authorities in their recycling—

[175] **Mr Gover:** I think that we are seeing that. We are seeing leadership from the suppliers, looking to do that as part of their offer. Some of the retailers are certainly doing that through the Courtauld commitment.

[176] **Dr Hogg:** May I just add something? If you take a longer term view and think that if the value of materials really does increase significantly over time, then I think that the logical consequence of that is that the private sector starts to look much more closely at how it gets materials back. You are seeing that through the discussions at the moment around the circular economy. What you will also see, not just with your coffee capsule example, is much more streaming of materials, so that the quality and the characteristics are more sharply defined, and I think that you will see that across the economy. Forget just the household waste, as we have people developing interesting composite materials, with specialist alloys and niobium steels being used and so forth. You will lose the things like the niobium in the steel if you do not stream what you are taking back.

[177] So, I see that as a sort of long-term development. However, specifically on the coffee capsules, you may have seen an Italian gentleman, whose name I am forgetting, who won the Goldman green Nobel Prize in looking to go zero waste in Capannori in Italy. What they have started to do is interrogate, as it were, the residual waste bin and look at what is left; what is it that they still cannot recycle. So, they went to Nespresso and Nestlé, and said, ‘Look, we don’t want this stuff that we can’t recycle; what are you going to do about it?’

11:30

[178] So, they did start, and I think that Marcus is probably picking this up, to look at processes where they could enable, for example, the whole capsule to be put into the composting bin: so bioplastics and so forth. As I understand it, they now have around three different patented processes. Why I think that that is quite interesting is that I do think that we perhaps do not often enough, say, well—. In my company, the only thing that goes into our residual waste bin is chocolate wrappers—I did not figure that I could ban those from the company—and crisp wrappers. So, you start to think, ‘Is there no such thing as the easily

recyclable crisp wrapper or the easily recyclable chocolate wrapper?’ We have got to start going back to companies and saying, ‘Come on guys, we don’t want this anymore’.

[179] **Antoinette Sandbach:** It seems to me that, no matter how good the local authorities are, really we need to be looking at supermarket packaging waste and incentivising.

[180] **Dr Hogg:** With the example I gave, usually the difficulty in those multilayered things is partly to have a UV barrier—so, a barrier to ultraviolet light—and my understanding is that there are now plastics being developed that are single polymer but that do constitute a UV barrier. So, in principle, we might be at the point where we can have easily recyclable crisp packets and easily recyclable chocolate wrappers and I hope that we will come back to you one day and say that we are doing 100% recycling at Eunomia.

[181] **Mr Gover:** Plastic packaging is the area that stands out where more can be done and it is the focus of a lot of our work across the whole of the UK at WRAP, trying to increase from the 24% recycling of plastic packaging at the moment to first go to the packaging target of 42%, but then beyond that and to catch up with the other materials. So, more can be done to recycle more packaging. There is an industry road map bringing together recyclers, reprocessors, retailers and brands to try to work together to do it, which is having traction and I think will have success. When you go to the very complex packaging like the coffee pouches, you are going beyond the blueprint to the real future. I think that when you get to the blueprint and all of the advantages of that—I think that we have estimated that it could be £50 million or £60 million-worth of materials when the blueprint is running fully that you would be realising as Wales—then perhaps you could go on to those materials.

[182] **Dr Hogg:** Just suppose you put out a public procurement for coffee machines in Wales and you did it collectively and you said, ‘This is a really juicy contract for you all, but we want, as a condition of the contract, to procure this where those pouches are recyclable. Bid in two years’ time and tell us what your price is’.

[183] **Mr Gover:** Or even not using the pouches; you might decide that you do not want pouches at all, because there are other options.

[184] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Can we clear one thing up? Obviously, you believe that there is evidence to support your lead in terms of kerbside recycling and that that is the way forward, and yet we have evidence from local authorities in Wales that use other methods, which says that your evidence should be peer reviewed. In fact, they doubted the validity of your evidence.

[185] **Mr Gover:** First of all, let us be clear—[*Inaudible.*]—when we are saying that it is a better system, we are talking about the future and not now. When you are at the very high recycling rates of 70% that you are talking about, that is when we are saying that it is a much better approach. So, keep that in mind. However, in terms of peer reviewing, the research that went into the blueprint was taken through a steering group that included the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh Government, WRAP and a number of local authorities and was peer reviewed by that whole process. It was also put together by three leading consultancies in the field. So, I would say that it was very well and very rigorously approached and done and that it was given a peer review by that process.

[186] **Antoinette Sandbach:** That is not a peer review as a scientific review, though, is it?

[187] **Mr Gover:** Um—

[188] **Alun Ffred Jones:** What is the evidence in terms of European experience, then?

[189] **Mr Gover:** In terms of—?

[190] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The experience in Europe, presumably, they—

[191] **Mr Gover:** The research started a literature review, which looked at experience and the reviews that had been done across the UK and across Europe and tried to bring it all together. It then did some modelling of about six different types of local authority to try to work out what system would give the best results. It is not just about kerbside sort versus single-stream and co-mingled—it is about the whole package of measures. Again, I want to emphasise that that is important.

[192] **Dr Hogg:** I have been involved in a lot of work in Europe over the years, trying to understand. Many years ago we were trying to understand how we could move forward from where we were. Indeed, we hosted a number of visits to various places from DEFRA, Scotland and Wales to try to help people to understand what could be done. In other countries, you will find very little of anything that looks like the kerbside-sort systems. That has always been a mystery to me, particularly if I go back to work that I was doing back in 2001 when, if I modelled the same types of system as is used in terms of a kerbside sort here and I put in Polish labour costs, I would find that I could run negative-cost recycling. So, it is strange to me that that does not happen more often. What has actually happened in most of Europe is that you will find that there are much stronger links between the collection system and the producer responsibility directives. So, for example, you have organisations sometimes that are in complete control of the collection of all of the packaging fractions.

[193] In other situations you will have an organisation that is not necessarily delivering it and it is still delivered by the local authorities, but where the producer responsibility organisation has a very strong input. Typically you might find, in the high-performing systems, a separate collection of glass. It is not always done at the kerbside. Sometimes it is only done in dense bring systems. You will have a separate collection for paper and card and you will have a light container fraction, which will be the cans and the plastics together and the cartons. So, it is different generally to what we are doing here. In all of the newer member states you will find a very heavy reliance just on road container bring systems and very little kerbside collection at all. I can tell you, having recently reviewed all of the data that are reported to Eurostat—and Steve Lee from CIWM referred to this earlier—that you are definitely comparing apples with pears. I am sure that we would find that some of the recycling rates that are reported by some countries, if we delved into them a little more deeply than has been done thus far, would not be what they are reported to be. So, there are a lot of different systems out there. There is very little that looks like kerbside sort, but, equally, I would say that there is very little single-stream co-mingling. It tends to be paper and card, glass, and light containers.

[194] **Mr Gover:** One thing to consider, I guess, is that in a system where you are aiming for 70% recycling, to use an approach that has rejects of around 10%, which the current single-stream system has, is going to be very difficult. You really need to have a much more high-performing system than 10% rejects or more, which might be the case when you go to reprocessors now. So, thinking about that future, when you have such a high-performing system here, the current systems will not really be quite effective.

[195] **Dr Hogg:** I will just add, if I may, that probably the highest performing systems at the moment, on a region-wide basis or an area comparable in size to Wales, although not necessarily in terms of all of the geography and demographics, would be the Flemish region of Belgium. It is doing 70% separate collection of household waste already and it does not do any non-bottle plastics. So, you are doing non-bottle plastics. It took the view several years ago, on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis, that the benefits did not justify the costs of going for the non-bottle plastics. So, it is doing what you need to do already without collecting some

of the things that many of your authorities already are.

[196] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Why did it do that?

[197] **Dr Hogg:** It would be interesting to see whether it would come out with the same answer if it re-did the analysis today, because things have moved on quite considerably in terms of the quality of the sorting technologies and, indeed, the available markets for some of the materials. WRAP has done, and it continues to do, a lot of work on developing the markets for those non-bottle plastics. There are people in Belgium that I know very well that would like them to be collecting all of those non-bottle plastics as well and do not understand why the yoghurt pots are still left in the residual stream.

[198] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Are there any questions from Members? Joyce did you have a question?

[199] **Joyce Watson:** Only on education. I have asked everybody else, so I might as well ask you the same question. We need a sea change in thinking and attitude and changing attitudes is very often the hardest thing of all to do. I saw a very good attempt at that in a school education programme with an interactive, eco-schools approach. Yet, I hear that councils and other bodies are reducing the money that is spent on that form of education. I do not know whether you have looked at or examined the value of educating the future generations and what your statement or opinions might be on that.

[200] **Mr Gover:** I will try to stick to evidence, rather than opinion, because I think that that is my role here—

[201] **Joyce Watson:** Well, okay, evidence.

[202] **Mr Gover:** In terms of barriers to recycling, there are four that we normally talk about, which are the situational, things like the infrastructure and the system; the behavioural, how organised the household is; the knowledge of what to do; and also the attitude. The attitude is very important. If people do not believe that recycling is really happening properly then that puts them off. Some of the headlines in the tabloids can get very negative very quickly.

[203] With schools, we have run school programmes in the past. We found that the greatest benefit seemed to be from having a system in the school, so that recycling was the norm in the school as well as out of the school. We did not see as much benefit from trying to build it into the curriculum. We did not have a lot of success trying to get change that way. From observing my own children and how they change, if you educate them at one time, by the time they are 14 or 15 they will be very different and you may have lost it. However, in terms of getting the infrastructure and the recycling norm in schools that seemed to have quite an impact. So, I would say that that is something useful.

[204] **Alun Ffred Jones:** We seem to have come to a full stop. Do you want to leave us with any final message?

[205] **Mr Gover:** Yes. First of all, I would say that recycling is not just an environmental thing; it is also an economic thing. It is about more materials for more manufacturing businesses for more jobs for more income for a better economy in Wales. That is really important. We have seen that in some of the local authorities we are already working with. For instance, we are working with Merthyr at the moment, which is looking to save about 25% of its costs by switching to the blueprint. So, there are some real benefits coming. We have seen Bridgend going from the second worst at 31%, up to one of the best at 57% by bringing in the blueprint and also satisfying its residents—80% satisfaction. So, we very

much believe that the blueprint has a lot to offer to Wales. Through the collaborative change programme we want to help local authorities to get the benefits from it.

[206] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Thank you very much. We will send you a copy of the transcript so that you can check it for accuracy. Diolch yn fawr iawn. Thank you for coming in today to present your evidence to us.

11:43

Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note

[207] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Symudwn ymlaen i eitem 6, gan ein bod yn hepgor eitem 5, gan nad yw'r tyst ar gael. Eitem 6 yw papurau i'w nodi. **Alun Ffred Jones:** We will move on to item 6, leaving out item 5, as the witness is not available. Item 6 is papers to note.

[208] These are papers to note on item 6.

[209] **Llyr Gruffydd:** A gaf i ofyn, gan ymateb i lythyr— **Llyr Gruffydd:** May I ask, in response to the letter—

[210] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A gaf i eu cyflwyno fesul un? 'Ymchwiliad i'r ystâd goedwig gyhoeddus yng Nghymru: Gwybodaeth bellach gan Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru'—a ydych yn hapus i'w nodi? 'Ymchwiliad i'r ystâd goedwig gyhoeddus yng Nghymru: Gwybodaeth bellach gan Confor'—a ydych yn hapus i'w nodi? **Alun Ffred Jones:** May I take them one at a time? 'Inquiry into the public forestry estate in Wales: Further Information from Natural Resources Wales'—are we happy to note that? 'Inquiry into the public forestry estate in Wales: Further information from Confor'—are we happy to note that?

[211] **Llyr Gruffydd:** A gaf i ofyn, yng nghyd-destun hwnnw, a fyddai modd inni ysgrifennu at Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru i ofyn am esboniad ynghylch sut mae wedi cyrraedd ei ffigurau? **Llyr Gruffydd:** May I ask, in that context, can we write to Natural Resources Wales asking for an explanation as to how it has arrived at its figures?

[212] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Gallwn wneud hynny. **Alun Ffred Jones:** We can certainly do that.

[213] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I think also that Natural Resources Wales said that it would put—. I think that Trefor Owen said in his evidence that it would put in the public domain the breakdown of the figures. It would be worth looking back at the transcript, because that is not included here. NRW was going to put the economic breakdown of its economic figures.

[214] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Y trydydd yw 'Bioamrywiaeth: Gwybodaeth bellach gan RSPB Cymru'. Clerc, roeddech yn awgrymu— **Alun Ffred Jones:** The third is 'Biodiversity: Further information from RSPB'. Clerc, you had a suggestion—

[215] **Mr Davidson:** Yr awgrym oedd i gymryd awgrym Katie-jo ac ysgrifennu at y Gweinidog am atebion i'r cwestiynau. **Mr Davidson:** It was to take Katie-jo's suggestion and write to the Minister asking for responses to those questions.

[216] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A ydych yn **Alun Ffred Jones:** Are we happy to do that?

hapus? Diolch yn fawr. Yn olaf, mae ‘Llythyr gan Weinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth: Sioe Frenhinol Cymru 2014’. Mae hi’n dweud nad oes unrhyw un ar gael i’n cyfarfod ni yn y sioe. Felly, yn naturiol, rwy’n cymryd nad oes llawer o bwrpas inni gynnal sesiwn o’r pwyllgor yno.

Thank you. Finally, there is the ‘Letter from Minister for Economy, Science and Transport: Royal Welsh Show 2014’. She is saying that no-one is available to meet with us at the show. Naturally, I assume that there is not much point in having a committee session there.

11:45

[217] **Llyr Gruffydd:** A gaf i roi ar record fy siom nad oes un o’r tri ohonynt ar gael i dreulio awr gyda ni? Rwy’n meddwl ei fod yn gyfarfod pwysig yn ein calendr ni fel pwyllgor, yn sicr o safbwynt y budd-deiliaid sy’n mynychu fel arfer. Rwyf eisiau rhoi ar record fy mod i’n siomedig iawn nad ydynt yn teimlo bod y cyfarfod yn ddigon pwysig i’w fynychu. Rwy’n deall efallai eu bod yn teimlo eu bod yn weddol newydd yn eu portffolio, a byddem ninnau fel aelodau’r pwyllgor yn cydnabod hynny yn ein cwestiynu. Byddai wedi bod yn gyfle pwysig inni glywed rhai o’r syniadau a’r blaenoriaethau a fyddai ganddynt fel Gweinidogion newydd yn y maes yma.

Llyr Gruffydd: I would like to express my disappointment that none of the three is available to spend an hour with us at the show. I think that it is an important meeting in our calendar as a committee, certainly from the point of view of the stakeholders who usually attend. I just want to place on record my disappointment that they do not think that it is important enough to attend. I understand that they are relatively new in their portfolio and we as committee members would have recognised that in our questioning. It would have been an important opportunity for us to hear some of the ideas and priorities that they as new Ministers would have in this area.

[218] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A oes rhywun eisiau ychwanegu rhywbeth?

Alun Ffred Jones: Would anybody like to add anything on that?

[219] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I agree.

[220] **Joyce Watson:** I have spoken to them on this issue and it is the case—I am sure that we all recognise this—that these posts have only just been created and that two of them, in particular, already have heavy commitments with their existing portfolios, which they have not given up. So, I cannot absolutely agree with your statement; I agree that it is a disappointment that we cannot have a committee meeting there, which I was going to attend, as were others here—that is disappointing—but I do not agree that they do not see it as important. That is the point that I want to make. Having spoken to them, they do see the importance and they do want to meet with us as soon as they are able.

[221] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The point is that this is a big national event and has become a fixture in the calendar. That is the problem. When you take on a portfolio, you take on a portfolio—you do not take on a portfolio and say, ‘I will be ready in three months’.

[222] **Russell George:** I would just like to agree with Llyr’s points. I put that on record. I understand what Joyce is saying in that she believes that perhaps one of the Ministers has a particularly large portfolio—perhaps too large. That is not a view that I hold. That is a matter for the First Minister to decide. What I would like to say is that I think that the committee would have recognised that the Ministers are new in post. We would have respected that and we would not have expected them to come forward with answers that we would have had from the previous Minister. However, we would have at least expected them to set out what their priorities are. It would have been an opportunity for us to do that at the show. So, I put on record my disappointment.

[223] **Julie James:** May I ask a question? My understanding is that the Ministers are saying that they cannot come because of other commitments, not that they cannot come because they have not got their head around the portfolio.

[224] **Antoinette Sandbach:** What about Rebecca Evans?

[225] **Julie James:** She has other commitments; that is what we have been told.

[226] **Alun Ffred Jones:** As I understand it, two of the Ministers have stated that they are not available, but there is no comment on why Rebecca—. Anyway, I do not want to take a decision or anything. This is to be noted today and we will leave it at that.

11:48

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o'r
Cyfarfod
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the
Meeting**

[227] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Rwy'n cynnig **Alun Ffred Jones:** I move that
bod

y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar gyfer eitemau 8 i 11 yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog 17.42(vi). *the committee resolves to exclude the public from the meeting for items 8 to 11 in accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).*

[228] A ydych yn hapus i fynd yn breifat? Gwelaf eich bod. Are you happy to go into private session? I see that you are.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:48.
The public part of the meeting ended at 11:48.*