

The Environment Act 2021 - Update

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 May 2022



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Act 2021

- A framework for protecting and enhancing the natural environment through long-term, legally binding targets.
- DEFRA required to set legally binding environmental targets by late 2022
- Main provisions relating to waste management
 - **Improved consistency in recycling collections**
 - Enhanced producer responsibility (EPR)
 - Deposit return schemes (DRS)
- DEFRA consulted on proposals in summer 2021
- Results of consultations expected early 2022
- EPR consultation response received - to be implemented in a phased manner from 2024



Improved Consistency in Recycling Collections

Consultation proposals (response awaited):

- Free of charge fortnightly garden waste collections during growing season
- Separate weekly food waste collections would become mandatory for all households by 2023
- Core set of recyclables to be collected separately (glass, plastic, metal and paper/card) by 2023/24
- Flexible plastics such as plastic film for collection by no later than 2026/27
- Business premises will also have to separate their waste for collection



Enhanced Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Consultation response received 26 March 2022

- Reforms to be implemented from 2024
- Producers to pay the costs of managing household packaging waste
- Payments to local authorities for collection of household packaging waste and “on the go” packaging disposed of in street bins (excludes littering)
- Modulated fees to incentivise the use of recyclable packaging (from 2025 instead of 2024)
- Mandatory takeback scheme for the collection and recycling of fibre-based composite cups (disposable coffee cups)
- Mandatory labelling of packaging for recyclability with a single labelling format
- Annual packaging waste recycling targets to 2030
- Appointment of a Scheme Administrator



Deposit Return Schemes (DRS)

Consultation proposals (response awaited):

- Consumer pays a deposit on purchase of drink in single use container and reclaims on return of empty
- Producers would sign up to a deposit management organisation (DMO) to which they would have to report and pay a fee
- Retailers would be required to accept all DRS containers returned to their store and add the deposit price to the purchase price
- All retailers that sold drinks covered by the DRS would be required to take returns either by a reverse vending machine or manually
- Mandatory labelling would be required so that retailers, consumers and those recycling or reusing containers could identify containers easily
- Local authorities can still expect some containers destined for the DRS to enter household waste streams (potential reimbursement linked to EPR)

