

## Appendix A

### **Extract –**

## **Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs – Government response on key proposals**

### **Timeline for implementation from households**

#### **Collection of dry recyclable waste streams**

*The dry recyclable waste streams (excluding plastic films) must be collected from households by the end of the financial year in which payments to local authorities for packaging materials under EPR will commence. This means they must be collected by 31 March 2026.*

*We will work with local authorities to support them to improve their recycling performance and overcome any difficulties they might face in relation to compliance within the legislative timeframes.*

*We will require recyclable plastic film to be collected by 31 March 2027. In the lead up to this, front-of-store and postal takeback schemes will continue to be a route for collection.*

#### **Collection of food waste**

*Waste collection authorities will be required to introduce weekly food waste collections to all households in England, including flats, by 31 March 2026 – unless they need longer to transition due to a long-term waste disposal contract (see the next section ‘Collection of food waste: where there are long-term residual waste disposal contracts’ for more detail). We recognise that it is most efficient to make changes to waste services holistically, so the deadline has been aligned with the implementation date for household dry recycling. This single date will ensure a consistent rollout of new requirements across England for most waste collection authorities and avoid confusion for householders.*

*If a local authority chooses to co-collect food and garden waste from households, they must ensure that food waste is collected for free on a weekly basis by 31 March 2026, where they are continuing to co-collect it with garden waste. We are consulting on providing an exemption to allow food and garden waste to be collected together in one bin. If using an exemption, waste collectors would not be required to produce a written assessment to co-collect. This exemption would apply for both household and non-household municipal premises. Subject to consultation with relevant parties as per the requirements in the Environment Act 2021, we will confirm these exemptions in upcoming regulations.*

*To ensure local authorities have the time they need to prepare, we have pushed back the date that these reforms come into force from those consulted on, acting on feedback from local authorities and the wider waste and producer sector, to provide additional time to prepare and align with implementation of EPR for packaging.*

*Government will provide local authorities with funding to meet agreed reasonable new burdens arising from this policy, including up-front transition costs and ongoing operational costs. We will be working with waste collection authorities to allocate funding to local authorities to implement separate food waste collections.*

### **Collection of food waste: where there are long-term residual waste disposal contracts**

*The government's position is that all local authorities should implement food waste collections by the end of March 2026. However, we recognise that there are exceptional circumstances in which specific local authorities may need longer due to long-term waste disposal (mechanical biological treatment and energy from waste) contracts that run beyond 31 March 2026. Government is not prepared to meet the costs of breaking long-term contracts.*

*Defra will proactively work with local authorities to provide transitional arrangements where needed to avoid contract-breaking. Any local authority that does not request a transitional arrangement and is subject to variation or contract break costs must meet those costs itself. The Secretary of State may in certain circumstances specify that an authority should be subject to a transitional arrangement, where the Secretary of State is satisfied that there would be a significant cost to the taxpayer if an arrangement was not in place.*

*The reduction of food waste collected within the residual waste stream following the introduction of food waste collections could cause increased contractual costs or financial penalties for affected waste disposal or unitary authorities. Our evidence shows that it would not represent good value for money were government to compensate waste disposal authorities and unitary authorities for these costs, as required by the new burdens doctrine. This is because the carbon benefits may be marginal compared to far greater carbon savings per pound spent on other government projects.*

*We will therefore provide named waste collection authorities with bespoke transitional arrangements, so that they have until existing long-term contracts expire, or at an earlier date as agreed, before they need to bring in separate weekly food waste collections. Following one-to-one engagement with local authorities this year, waste collection authorities who require a transitional arrangement will be listed in the commencement regulations, along with the date by which they are required to provide a weekly food waste collection. This will ensure that there is no uncertainty in respect of the legislation. As separately collecting food waste for treatment by anaerobic digestion (AD) remains the best environmental outcome, we will require these waste collection authorities to introduce a separate, weekly food waste collection service to all households as soon as contracts allow.*

*We will continue to work with affected local authorities and industry following publication of this response to see what can be done to introduce food waste collections sooner than contract expiry dates. If a local authority contract ends sooner than expected or they can amend it to incorporate separate weekly food waste collections at an earlier date than the contract end date, it might be possible to amend the date in the commencement regulations and/or bring the ongoing new burdens funding forward, subject to ministerial agreement and funding at the time. Government will remain in contact with local authorities that receive a transitional arrangement to assess annually if this date can be brought forward.*

### **Collection of garden waste**

*Waste collection authorities will be required to collect garden waste in accordance with the new requirements by 31 March 2026, but, as is currently the case, they will still be able to charge for the service. This means that the duty to collect garden waste only arises once the householder has requested its collection and has paid any charge.*

## **Annex A: Summary of implementation dates**

The summary below sets out the dates by which waste collection authorities, non-domestic premises that produce household waste, and producers of relevant waste<sup>[footnote 1](#)</sup> must comply with the new requirements in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended by the Environment Act 2021.

### **Implementation dates**

#### **New requirements for collections of dry recyclable materials (except plastic film) from:**

- households: by the end of the financial year in which EPR for packaging commences – by 31 March 2026
- businesses and relevant non-domestic premises: by 31 March 2025
- micro-firms: by 31 March 2027

#### **New requirements for collections of plastic film from:**

- households, businesses, non-domestic premises and micro-firms: by 31 March 2027

#### **New requirements for collections of food waste from:**

- households: by 31 March 2026 – unless a transitional arrangement applies<sup>[footnote 2](#)</sup>
- businesses and non-domestic premises: by 31 March 2025
- micro-firms: by 31 March 2027

#### **New requirements for collections of garden waste from:**

- households: by 31 March 2026

#### **New requirements for minimum collections of residual waste from:**

- households: by 31 March 2026
1. Relevant waste is waste from industrial or commercial premises which is similar in nature and composition to household waste. ↵
  2. Where long-term waste disposal (mechanical biological treatment and energy from waste) contracts present a barrier to introducing separate food waste collections, a longer implementation period may be required. Defra will continue to engage with affected local authorities. ↵