

Local Authority Waste Funding and Governance Team
Defra
6/F15 Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6DE



COUNCILS AND
COMMUNITIES
IN PARTNERSHIP

13 August 2007

Dear Sirs,

INCENTIVES FOR RECYCLING BY HOUSEHOLDS - CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The South East England Regional Assembly supports the proposal to give local authorities the power to introduce financial incentives for promoting recycling and reducing household waste. At present, with the cost of waste collection and disposal included partially within the Council Tax, there is no clear financial incentive or penalty on householders to reduce their waste or increase the amount they recycle.

The Assembly supports Option C as set out in the consultation document, as being most likely to provide an incentive to householders in a revenue neutral way that may gain. Although the scale of the financial incentive is likely to be relatively small (c. £50 per household per year) it should also have the effect of raising householders awareness of their waste generation and the value of separating out recyclables for collection. Although a localised waste charge may more accurately reflect the true costs of waste collection and disposal, and has the potential to have a dramatic effect on behaviour, it is likely that it would be regarded as a 'stealth tax' and would be unlikely to gain public acceptance readily.

We agree that it should be up to each waste collection authority to determine the design of the scheme, meeting the criteria that are set out in the consultation paper (paragraph 5.4); however, more thought needs to be given to how such schemes would operate in areas with a large proportion of multiple occupancy buildings with communal bins or little space to store separated recyclables. This is only acknowledged briefly in paragraph 5.10. This is not only a concern in areas with high rise developments. For example, the majority of new dwellings completions in the South East are now flatted developments. It would be unfair for schemes to be introduced that would mean that residents of such types of dwelling, where it may be problematic to recycle, or for waste to be attributed to a given household would be unduly penalised. Such concerns strengthen the arguments in favour of ensuring that new developments are designed with sufficient space for waste separation and storage

I hope that you find these brief comments useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Moira Gibson'. Below the signature is a horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right side.

Cllr Moira Gibson
Chairman, Regional Planning Committee