

EX66. Deposit Return System Update

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Place Services which provided an update following the Scottish Government announcement of 7 June 2023, which delayed the introduction of the Deposit Return System (DRS) to at least October 2025. The announcement also detailed that glass would not be a feature of the forthcoming UK DRS scheme. The report detailed the Council's plan to mitigate the impacts of the delay to DRS introduction, the impacts for current kerbside collection services and the proposal to retain a kerbside glass collection service.

On 7 June 2023, the Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity announced that the DRS was to be delayed until October 2025 at the earliest. The delay followed the UK Government's decision to exclude glass bottles from the accepted target materials, and did not provide the required exemptions to the Internal Market Act to enable the scheme as was proposed to proceed. The UK Government in making this decision indicated that this would align any future Scottish scheme to those schemes proposed for England and Northern Ireland.

The Council had revised and aligned its proposed kerbside collections to both support and meet the published launch dates of the proposed Scottish DRS. This process culminated with the decision to remove the black box collection service and enhance the local recycling point provision at the Executive of 9 May 2023. At that meeting the Executive agreed that should there be a significant change in the scope of DRS ahead of the cessation of the black box service (scheduled for 31 March 2024) a further report would be provided.

The current black box collection service was scheduled to terminate on 31 March 2024. Due to the ongoing uncertainties surrounding a national DRS launch date, and with no known infrastructure at present regarding the required Regulations and Scheme Administration for a UK DRS scheme, it was recommended that the Council retain a black box collection service for glass only. Due to the continued uncertainty surrounding the DRS launch date and scope, the Council could exercise grounds to issue a further extension to 30 September 2024 to the current contract arrangements. The incumbent supplier had indicated that such an extension would be accepted, with the current terms and conditions of the contract applying.

To enable adequate time and provision for bidders to compile a response to the to-be-issued Council tender, it was proposed that the Council further extend its current black box (glass, textiles and small WEEE), food waste and AHP kerbside collection service contract until 30 September 2024. For 1 October 2024 onwards, the Council proposed to issue a contract for 7 years with the option for up to a further 3 years extension. The contract would provide a weekly collection of food waste, a fortnightly collection of a black box (glass only) and, a fortnightly collection of AHP. The Council would continue to provide service users with AHP bags.

The new contract would contain a provision for the Council to modify contract delivery should market or legislative changes require an

amendment to be progressed through the contract term. Should there be any resultant proposed change to service provision, this would be subject to future Executive consideration.

Due to the low volume and quality of presented textiles and the low volume of small WEEE collected at the kerbside, these materials would in future be collected via the network of local recycling points (textiles) or via the HWRCs for WEEE. Additionally, textiles were often collected via charity doorstep collections, and there was a growing interest in textile reuse through social media platforms. It was anticipated that removing textiles and small WEEE from kerbside collections would reduce costs to the Council resulting from new contract requirements.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) agreed to further extend the current kerbside black box collection contract from 31 March 2024 to 30 September 2024;**
- (2) noted that the Council would review and enhance recycling point provision, to maximise resident glass and textile recycling opportunities, and**
- (3) agreed that the revised Procurement Strategy for Glass, Food and Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) collections would commence from 1 October 2024.**