



<b>Subject:</b>	External Consultations on: Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework WEEE Compliance Scheme Methodology Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers
<b>Date:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Cathy Matthews Operations Director, Resources and Fleet
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	John McConnell City Services Manager Resources and Fleet

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on recent and current consultations which may have an impact on Waste, namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework</li><li>• the WEEE Compliance Scheme Methodology.</li><li>• The Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers.</li></ul>

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note the draft response to the Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework subject to council ratification. (Consultation paper as Appendix I and Draft response as Appendix II)</li> <li>• To note the proposed approach to the WEEE Compliance Scheme Methodology</li> <li>• To invite members to comment in advance of the submission on the DAERA consultation for the Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers and to forward any comments for consideration for inclusion in the response from Belfast City Council by Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to Jennifer Stephens Waste Officer <a href="mailto:stephensj@belfastcity.gov.uk">stephensj@belfastcity.gov.uk</a> The consultation document is attached at Appendix III.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>A summary of each of the consultations is provided below:</p> <p><b>(1) Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework</b></p> <p>3.2 The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) recently published a consultation on a draft Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework. The document presented proposals for a new strategic food systems approach for Northern Ireland, and on the proposed vision, principles and goals of the Framework. Subject to the outcome of the consultation exercise, it is anticipated that an agreed Framework will be published in early 2022.</p> <p>3.3 DAERA highlights that there is growing international acceptance of the interconnectedness between food, health and the environment. It notes that there is an expectation that a food system should ensure environmental, social and economic sustainability and also that there is also a growing interest in sustainable healthy diets.</p> <p>3.4 The draft Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework recognises the interconnectedness around food and proposes a strategic food systems approach. It sets out a long-term</p>

	<p>vision, high level principles and areas for strategic focus to optimise cross-departmental working on food matters in Northern Ireland to deliver Programme for Government and departmental objectives. The vision is a transformed food system that protects natural resources for future generations, is economically and environmentally sustainable and provides safe, nourishing, accessible food to people.</p>
3.5	<p>DAERA has been leading on the development of the cross-departmental Framework with input from other Departments and a wide range of external stakeholders.</p>
3.6	<p>During the development process six strategic priorities were identified:</p> <p><b>Priority One:</b> Building connections between health /wellbeing and food</p> <p><b>Priority Two:</b> Building Sustainable Economic Prosperity</p> <p><b>Priority Three:</b> Building a Food Culture and Food Conscious Society</p> <p><b>Priority Four:</b> Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Resources</p> <p><b>Priority Five:</b> Building Healthy Lives through Food Education</p> <p><b>Priority Six:</b> Building and maintaining appropriate Emergency Contingency plans across the supply chain.</p>
3.7	<p>Following the development process, DAERA launched a public consultation in order to seek views on this new collaborative approach under a Northern Ireland Framework from across a much broader range of stakeholders and the general public.</p> <p>The Consultation launched on Friday 24 September 2021 and closed on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The consultation presented 24 questions relating to the proposed Food Strategy Framework.</p>
3.8	<p>A copy of the Consultation document is attached as Appendix I.</p>
3.9	<p>A copy of our draft response to the consultation is attached as Appendix II. The response has been provided pending People and Communities Committee and full Council further input and authorisation.</p>
3.10	<p>Generally speaking, we are supportive of the proposals contained within the consultation, including a “whole of government approach” which will align policies that affect the food system. We do note in our response that if the NI Food Strategy Framework aims to be a cross government unifying strategy, it should be mindful of the work currently being</p>

	undertaken by DAERA in relation to waste (For example, in developing a Waste Collections Consistency Framework).
3.11	Within our response, we emphasise the importance of a life-cycle approach and we propose a “soil-to-soil” principle, (going beyond the farm-to-fork concept), incorporating a closed loop food system approach. We reference the Circular Economy, pollution, ecosystem services, climate change and EU exit as issues which need to be considered within the new Framework. We also note the omission of linkages to the new NI Biodiversity Strategy and to existing legislation such as the Habitats Directive and Water Framework Directive.
3.12	It is noted that our responses to the consultation questions are mainly from a waste perspective and that they also include comments relating to Biodiversity issues. No other comments were received from across the Council in response to the consultation.
	<p><b>(2) Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Compliance Scheme Methodology</b></p>
3.13	The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recently launched a four-week consultation on setting a compliance fee under the Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment Regulations. The consultation closed on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2021.
3.14	The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013 established a system in which producers of equipment are required to finance the cost of collection, treatment, recovery and recycling of WEEE arising from private households. The WEEE Regulations introduced a system of annual collection targets that are imposed on Producer Compliance Schemes (PCSs).
3.15	This particular consultation invited views on setting a compliance fee for 2021, as well as on two proposals (from external organisations JTA and Valpak) for managing this year’s fee.
3.16	After consulting with arc21 and European Recycling Platform (ERP), who are the Producer Compliance Scheme managing WEEE collected from Belfast City Council, we note that Producer Compliance Schemes, rather than Local Authorities are best placed to respond to this consultation.

3.17	<p>Currently, the compliance fee and any associated calculations do not affect local authorities: Belfast City Council receives WEEE collections from ERP free of charge. ERP have confirmed that the fee referred to in the consultation and its calculation will not impact the service provided by ERP and they will continue to collect WEEE free of charge from Belfast City Council.</p>
3.18	<p>As a major WEEE Compliance scheme, ERP has been closely involved in the development of the proposal from the JTA (Joint Trade Associations) every year since 2014 and has confirmed support of the JTA proposal for managing this year's fee.</p>
3.19	<p>As a result, and having taken on board comment from arc21 and ERP, it is not felt necessary for Belfast City Council to comment on this consultation.</p>
<p><b>(3) Consultation for the Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers</b></p>	
3.20	<p>The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) had published a consultation on proposals for the reduction of the usage of Single-use Plastic (SUP) beverage cups and food containers in Northern Ireland. The aim is to encourage a more sustainable environment and circular economy for everyone across Northern Ireland. The consultation has been designed collaboratively with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to consider a number of policy options on the most effective way to ensure a substantial reduction in the use of SUP beverage cups and food containers. The Department is seeking views on the suggested policy options to ensure the most effective method of reducing the consumption of SUP beverage cups and food containers is identified.</p>
3.21	<p>The goal of the policies is to reduce the use of the targeted types of SUP packaging, by encouraging wider take up of multi-use and/or single-use non-plastic alternatives. The responses to the consultation will be used to determine the best policy options to help to promote the reduction in SUP items.</p>
3.22	<p>Within the consultation document, three policies are modelled for both SUP beverage cups and food containers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A ban on their use.</li> <li>• A levy of 25p on each cup and 50p on each food container; and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A voluntary scheme or schemes implemented by businesses that make use of SUP cups or food containers, which may comprise a range of charges for cups/food containers, discounts for multi-use cups/food containers and communication efforts. This is modelled as having the same effect as a 10p levy for a beverage cup and 25p for a food container.</li> </ul> <p>3.23 The consultation document poses 32 questions based around these policy options and invites responses by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Waste officers are currently examining the proposals presented within the consultation and welcome any additional comments for consideration within the council response to be received by <b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b>. A copy of the consultation on the Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers is attached as Appendix III</p> <p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.24 None in relation to responding to the consultations.</p> <p><u>Equality or Rural Needs Implications</u></p> <p>3.25 None in relation to responding to the consultations.</p> <p><u>Abbreviations</u>  DAERA - Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  DEFRA - Department for Environment, Food &amp; Rural Affairs  ERP - European Recycling Platform  JTA - Joint Trade Associations  PCS – Producer Compliance Scheme  SUP - Single-use Plastic  WEEE - Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment  WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix I - Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework Consultation Appendix II – BCC draft response to the Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework Appendix III - Reduction of Single-Use Plastic Beverage Cups and Food Containers Consultation