MAYOR OF LONDON

Local Authority Reduction and Recycling Plans

Guidance Note Version 2.0, January 2022

MAYOR OF LONDON

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1. Introduction and context

This Guidance note has been developed as a practical guide to support local authorities in writing their second Reduction and Recycling Plans (RRPs). It has been produced following consultation with local authority waste officers, ReLondon and the London Environment Directors Network (LEDNet) and will be updated as necessary in consultation with local authorities to ensure a consistent, practical and meaningful approach is undertaken. The aim is to foster collaboration and sharing of best practice between local authorities and the GLA to drive continuous improvement in a cost-effective way. The GLA will continue to discuss with local authorities the assistance they need including training as well as their progress against actions set out in RRPs and will work in partnership with ReLondon to support this. Engagement with local authorities will be undertaken through networks such as the London Recycling Officer Group (LROG), London Councils, LEDNet and via ReLondon. This version 2.0 Guidance Note was published in January 2022 and supersedes version 1.1 originally published in January 2019.

2. The London Environment Strategy

In May 2018 the Mayor published his London Environment Strategy (LES), which sets out objectives, targets and policies for the effective management of London's municipal waste and the acceleration to a circular economy. The strategy's waste objectives, targets and minimum service levels for London are:

- Objective 7.1 Drive resource efficiency to significantly reduce waste, focusing on food waste and single use packaging.
- Objective 7.2 Maximise recycling rates.
- Objective 7.3 Reduce the environmental impact of waste activities (greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants).
- Objective 7.4 Maximise local waste sites and ensure London has sufficient infrastructure to manage all the waste it produces.

London-wide targets:

- To cut food waste and associated packaging waste by 50 per cent per person by 2030.
- To achieve a 65 per cent municipal waste recycling rate by 2030, including a 50 per cent recycling rate for local authority collected waste (LACW) by 2025.
- To send zero biodegradable or recyclable waste to landfill by 2026.
- London to manage net 100 per cent of all the waste it produces by 2026.

Minimum level of household waste recycling service

Strategy Proposal 7.2.1.a sets a minimum level of service for household waste recycling that waste authorities should deliver by 2020:

- All properties with kerbside recycling collections to receive a separate weekly food waste collection service.
- All properties to receive a collection of, at a minimum, the six main dry materials, glass, cans, paper, card, plastic bottles and mixed rigid plastics (pots, tubs and trays).

Wider London Environment Strategy context

The Mayor declared a climate emergency in 2018 and has set ambitious aims for London to be a zero carbon city by 2030. Given the integrated nature of delivering waste services and associated environmental impacts, the Mayor expects that RRPs support wider environmental policies and proposals set out within the London Environment Strategy. RRP actions should therefore demonstrate consideration of wider key policy areas, including but not limited to reducing carbon emissions associated with waste operations, maximising air quality and vehicle LEZ / ULEZ compliance, and implementing actions that integrate circular economy thinking and practices.

3. Reduction and Recycling Plans – context

London local authorities produced their first RRPs following the publication of the London Environment Strategy. These plans set out how local authorities are putting the Mayor's policies on waste into practice at the local level, with over 500 individual actions to cut waste, increase recycling, protect the environment and utilise London's waste sites.

Since the publication of the London Environment Strategy in 2018, the Mayor has approved all 33 borough 2018-2022 RRPs. At the time of publication of this guidance, 32 of 33 boroughs meet the minimum service level, collecting the six main dry recyclable materials from properties with a kerbside collection; an increase from 28 boroughs in 2016 when the Mayor was first elected. 28 boroughs now have food waste collections or have undertaken trials or pilots with the aim of introducing food waste collections at the earliest feasible opportunity. The number of boroughs providing commercial waste recycling services has also increased, with 27 local authorities now providing a commercial recycling service for at least one material stream and nine providing a commercial food waste recycling service.

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic

The RRPs are four year plans and were written prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has since led to changes in waste volumes and composition, staff shortages and social distancing challenges. Local authorities have worked hard to keep services running smoothly, but this understandably had an impact on progress of the agreed actions set out in the first set of RRPs.

2020/21 Defra data

In December 2021, Defra published England's recycling figures for the 2020/2021 financial year. Although London has the lowest household recycling rate of any English region, with a 2020/21 rate of 33% against a national average of 43.8%, it was one of only two regions to show year-on-year annual increases in recycling between 2016 and 2020. The data shows London experienced a 0.5% decrease in recycling (the smallest decrease in household waste recycling in 2020/21 of all nine regions in England), against a drop of 1.5% in the national figure in the same period, which also includes the impact of the pandemic and lockdowns.

London sent the smallest proportion of total local authority collected waste to landfill (1.4%) compared to other regions (with the national average of 7.8%), but sent the largest proportion of total local authority collected waste to incineration compared to other regions, at 64.1 per cent (2.3 million tonnes). The Mayor has made it clear within his London Environment Strategy that if London achieves its waste reduction and recycling targets, no additional incineration capacity is required beyond that provided from existing facilities or those that have planning permission to be built. Given this, the Mayor is focussed on ensuring that all London's incinerators minimise their environmental impact by only managing truly non-recyclable waste, maximising electricity generation, supplying the waste heat created into a local heat network and operating with the best available techniques to reduce air pollution emissions. RRP actions supporting this are therefore encouraged, for example actions to divert recyclables or food waste from entering the non-recyclable waste stream.

4. Reduction and Recycling plans - timing

4.1 Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS)

Local authorities are now looking ahead to the government's Resources and Waste Strategy (Environment Act 2021), which will see the most significant changes to waste collection and disposal systems for a generation. At the time of publication of this guidance, Defra has still to confirm the changes local authorities will need to put in place. The GLA acknowledges that there is still considerable uncertainty over exactly which services local authorities will be required to provide, the timescales, and the funding they will receive to support their implementation.

Due to this uncertainty and given existing RRPs already contain actions from 2022 up to 2025, existing RRPs will remain in place until they are replaced by the new RRPs.

The GLA has determined that the new RRPs should focus on a two year period from April 2023 to the end of March 2025, rather than four years (2022 – 2026). Local authorities will therefore be expected to continue to work on their identified RRP actions until the new RRP is approved. The GLA may wish to extend the 2023 – 2025 RRPs after the initial two-year period, as details of the RWS timelines and funding are confirmed.

4.2 May 2022 Local Elections

The London local elections are due to take place in May 2022, which may provide further uncertainty for borough officers, in terms of securing political approval for the content of the second RRPs. For this reason and following feedback from boroughs, the deadline for submission of the second RRPs for GLA review has been pushed back to the **end of September 2022**. Given potential restrictions on policy development and engagement on the RRPs during the pre-election period, and also the need for engagement of new members post-election, it is recommended that early planning is undertaken by officers to ensure that member engagement and sign-off takes place in good time – including ensuring the RRPs are included on the forward plans for Cabinet (or equivalent formal approval processes).

5. RRP format and content

Following feedback from boroughs on the first set of RRPs, plans have been simplified and monitoring will be lighter touch, with annual rather than six monthly updates as previously requested by the GLA. New RRPs should be short, focussed documents setting out key actions or packages of actions to be undertaken within the second RRP period (April 2023 to March 2025). As outlined in the letter to authorities from the Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy dated 23rd November 2021, the format of the second RRPs has changed, and each borough will now be asked to complete them in two parts, as detailed below.

5.1 Part 1

This will build on the progress local authorities have made from their first edition RRPs and expand on existing local waste strategies and plans. RRPs should act as a useful internal reporting tool, as well as for the Mayor and other local authorities to understand the collective, London-wide impact of borough activity and progress towards the London Environment Strategy's London-wide targets.

5.2 Part 2

This will be an initial outline of the plans and activities local authorities will be implementing in order to prepare for the numerous service changes required under the RWS. Details will be requested on the areas of strategy, operations, communications and budget. This will not be a public document (and the GLA will not share this information without permission). The Part 2 plans will allow the GLA and ReLondon to review strategic, operational and communications information from boroughs for specific RWS proposals, allowing for support packages to be developed and any funding shortfalls to be identified.

5.3 Best Practice RRP

To assist local authorities with the completion of their RRPs, an example 'best practice' RRP is being drafted by the GLA and ReLondon. Once shared, this will provide local authorities with an example of the level of detail expected and the type of actions the Mayor would expect to see in response to the main London Environment Strategy objectives.

6. Publication of RRPs

The Mayor expects that Part 1 of the RRPs will be publicly available and signed off at Cabinet level (or at the equivalent formal approval process) by the end of March 2023. Any issues or challenges around this should be discussed with the GLA at the earliest opportunity. If there are actions in Part 1 of the second RRP which are not yet in the public domain, it will be possible to submit an amended version for publication, with a full version for GLA review.

7. Templates

To ensure a consistent approach, local authorities should complete their second RRP using the templates in Appendix 1 & 2, which have been simplified following feedback from borough officers.

7.1 Part 1 template

Part 1 requires populating a short dashboard of current and planned performance against a set of common metrics and targets, most of which are already reported locally.

Current RRPs include targets up to 2025. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the RWS and the changes in waste composition due to Covid-19, local authorities are asked to review their existing targets for 2025 (and no further) against current trends. However, the Mayor expects local authorities to continue maintaining ambitious recycling targets and they will be asked to review these once the outcomes of the RWS are clearer.

The GLA has provided an online tool for local authorities to use to model performance of their current waste services and service improvement options against the Emissions Performance Standard (EPS). Training to use the online tool (<u>accessible via this page</u>) will be provided to local authority officers by the GLA in Spring 2022.

RRPs should contain links to other relevant local authority strategic documents and plans, for example those relating to climate change, air quality, circular economy, and local waste plans. This is to ensure that local plans and strategies share common aims and objectives. The GLA recognises that a number of actions in the RRPs will be linked to outputs from borough climate action plans, which may not always align with the RRP timeline. Any

amendments required to align with other borough plans, including climate action plans, can be captured in annual updates to the RRP.

Common baseline performance metrics (2019/20*) *whilst 2020/21 would have been the baseline year for the second set of RRPs in normal circumstances, due to the impact of the pandemic on 2020/21 data, 2019/20 data provides a more appropriate baseline for comparison.

- Annual total household waste (including recycling) generated per head of population.
- Annual total household residual waste generated per household.
- Annual total household and LACW recycling rates (% by weight).
- The proportion of properties receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling including:
 - % of properties served at the kerbside receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling with separately collected food waste
 - % of properties served at the kerbside receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling (included for boroughs that are unable to provide food waste collections due to long term contractual issues)
 - % of properties collecting six main dry materials (glass, cans, paper, card, plastic bottles and mixed rigid plastics (pots, tubs and trays)
 - % of flatted properties (excluding flats above shops) with six main dry materials and separately collected food waste
 - % of flatted properties (excluding flats above shops) with six main dry materials
 - % of flats above shops (FAS) collecting six main dry materials and separate food waste collection
 - % of flats above shops (FAS) collecting six main dry materials.

Common performance targets – reviewing and refreshing the 2025 targets set in current RRPs

- Local waste reduction targets (per head of population for 2025) including separate targets for residual household waste. The GLA recognises that boroughs may not have waste reduction targets in their existing strategies but would request boroughs use their own methods to determine ambitious yet deliverable reduction targets, which the GLA will subsequently review progress against.
- Household and LACW recycling targets (% by weight for 2025), going beyond the Mayor's LACW recycling target where possible.
- The proportion of properties receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling including:
 - % of properties served at the kerbside receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling with separately collected food waste.
 - % of properties served at the kerbside receiving the minimum level of service for household recycling only (included for boroughs that are unable to provide food waste collections due to long term contractual issues).
 - % of properties collecting six main dry materials (glass, cans, paper, card, plastic bottles and mixed rigid plastics (pots, tubs and trays).

- % of flatted properties (excluding flats above shops) with six main dry materials and separately collected food waste.
- % of flatted properties (excluding flats above shops) with six main dry materials.
- % of flats above shops (FAS) collecting six main dry materials and separate food waste collection.
- % of flats above shops (FAS) collecting six main dry materials.
- Performance against the Mayor's CO₂e emissions performance standard (EPS) targets (*EPS targets: -0.069 tonnes of CO*₂e per tonne of waste managed by 2021, and -0.084 tonnes per tonne of waste managed by 2025)

Actions relating to the London Environment Strategy aims

Local authorities' second RRPs should continue to build upon the actions outlined in their first RRPs, with planned milestones (timeframes) for delivery, outlining how and by when they will work towards achieving locally set targets and objectives set out in their dashboard. Actions from first RRPs that are still in progress, or planned, should be included along with new planned work relating to:

- Reducing waste and increasing materials reuse (LES Objective 7.1)
- Maximising recycling performance (*LES Objective 7.2*)
- Reducing the environmental impacts (such as greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants) - of waste activities (LES Objective 7.3)
- Maximising use of local waste sites (LES Objective 7.4).

The following examples are given to help drafting – local authorities should aim to include as many of these as possible in their RRP though it may not be possible to include all. Actions should relate to work that is already planned by the authority, or that is created for the RRP and subsequently approved by Members.

Actions to help cut waste and boost materials reuse should include:

- Projects focusing on food waste reduction (including behaviour change).
- Projects focusing on reducing single use plastics (including behaviour change).
- Projects focusing on restricting residual waste (for example containerisation, reducing side waste, or reducing residual collection frequencies).
- Plans to adopt circular economy approaches to reduce waste such as repair, reuse or rental schemes, or other projects which aim to keep materials in use at their highest value for as long as possible. Examples include Library of Things, repair skills workshops or behaviour change campaigns.

Actions to help maximise recycling performance should include:

• Plans to deliver the Mayor's minimum level of recycling service (where this is not already in place) - including mechanisms and timescales for implementation.

- Further measures for boosting recycling performance in flats including planning for new build properties, operational changes and behaviour change projects and campaigns. See Table 2 for relevant ReLondon resources.
- Further measures for increasing the quality of recycling including tackling contamination, increasing the range of materials.
- Measures for increasing recycling from commercial and non-domestic properties, including matching the minimum standard for households.

Actions to reduce the environmental impacts of waste activities (greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants) should include:

- Plans for transitioning to zero emission waste fleets in the quickest possible time, with an ambition of achieving this by 2030 in line with the Mayor's net zero carbon by 2030 target, for example procuring electric-powered vehicles such as eRCVs
- Boroughs are encouraged to include other actions outside of transportation of waste, for example, but not limited to, actions which support the waste hierarchy and diversion from landfill or incineration, such as reuse of high quality 'bulky' items collected.

Activities for maximising use of local waste sites should include:

 Plans for maximising recycling at local Reuse and Recycling Centres, including measures to accept a wider range of materials. This could include hazardous waste.

Actions within wider London Environment Strategy context

As detailed in section 2, RRP actions should demonstrate consideration of wider policy areas included within the London Environment Strategy, such as reducing carbon emissions associated with waste operations, maximising air quality and vehicle LEZ / ULEZ compliance, and implementing actions that integrate circular economy thinking and practices.

7.2 Part 2 template

The GLA would like to see information on the plans boroughs have prepared for the implementation of the proposed RWS consultation reforms within their borough through responses to the questions included within the Part 2 template.

8. RRP drafting process and support

Although the return deadline for the second RRPs is not until the end of September 2022, local authorities are expected to commence developing them as soon as possible. Joint RRPs with other local authorities are supported, providing individual authority activities and targets are included and can be produced in a timely way. The Mayor expects Waste Disposal Authorities and their constituent collection authorities to work closely and

collaboratively in developing individual or joint RRPs; however, for avoidance of doubt, Joint Waste Authorities (JWAs) are not required to produce their own RRPs. The GLA recognises that Covid-19 has had an impact on local authorities' ability to deliver commitments identified in their RRPs, and so actions in current plans that are still outstanding should be rolled over into new Part 1 RRPs.

Table 1 - RRP 2022 development and submission process timetable

Key activities	Timetable
RRP development	
GLA issue revised RRP guidance	By 28 January 2022
Boroughs draft RRP; ReLondon support	Feb-September 2022
made available for RRP development	
RRP submitted to the Mayor	by 30 September 2022
RRP Mayoral review and sign-off	
process	
GLA Waste officers review RRP, feedback	October 2022 – February 2023
provided to Deputy Mayor	
GLA/ReLondon discussion. RRP amended	October 2022 to February 2023
if necessary	
Borough Cabinet (or equivalent) signs off	February/March 2023
RRP	
Deputy Mayor signs off RRP	by 31 March 2023

For avoidance of doubt, the new RRPs will run for a full two year period from April 2023 to end of March 2025.

Support for developing RRPs is available from ReLondon's Local Authority Support Team, with contact details provided in section 10 below. Surgeries will be set up by ReLondon to support local authorities with the drafting of the new RRPs. Table 2 at the end of this guidance document provides further links to online ReLondon reports, guides, toolkits and communications assets which can be used to assist local authorities.

9. RRP assessment and evaluation guidance

9.1 Part 1

The GLA and ReLondon will review RRPs to determine general conformity with the Mayor's municipal waste management provisions of the London Environment Strategy. As the first RRPs were all agreed by the Mayor, there should be a continued commitment in new plans to deliver key actions to move boroughs into general conformity. Boroughs should demonstrate that they are making a fair and proportionate contribution to the Mayor's target that, by 2025, boroughs collectively are achieving a LACW recycling rate of 50% and a Household recycling rate of 45%. The Mayor will want to understand the extent to which individual borough's recycling rate accords with the independent route map

modelling, undertaken in support of the LES, showing what is possible given their specific circumstances.

The GLA and ReLondon will use the following criteria to review second RRPs:

- Whether there is continuity from the first RRP to the new plan.
- How the RRP links to the Mayor's existing policies and strategies, for example climate change/circular economy/air quality strategies.
- Whether the Mayor's minimum level of service is being provided for dry recyclable and food waste.
- If not, whether there are clear mechanisms and commitments to meet it with clearly defined timescales.
- Whether the actions identified use recognised good practice and insight (for example from ReLondon/Wrap).
- Actions relating to a range of topics, for example:
 - Food waste reduction
 - Plastic waste reduction
 - Recycling for flats
 - Restricting residual waste
 - Increasing commercial waste recycling
 - Increasing recycling quality (participation/contamination)
 - Increasing food waste recycling
 - Use of planning tools for improving waste facilities for new build properties
- Measurable outcomes from the actions.
- Timescales identified for the actions.

In addition to applying the evaluation guidance above, the Mayor in reviewing RRPs will take account of local circumstances highlighted by a borough including, for example:

- Contractual constraints that restrict the introduction of new services, for example food waste collections, to improve recycling performance.
- The proportion of flats with lack of easily accessible and/or sufficient storage space for recycling.
- The proportion of rented accommodation (which can have an impact on participation in recycling services).
- Levels of deprivation.
- Numbers of households with gardens (noting boroughs with fewer gardens producing less green waste for composting).

The information boroughs provide in Part 2 of the RRP will be used to contextualise and moderate the targets, aims, objectives and project outcomes provided in Part 1 of the RRP.

9.2 Part 2

The information provided within Part 2 will be used in two ways. Firstly, strategic, operational and communications planning information will be used to develop ReLondon's support packages for each borough. The GLA recognises the significant amount of change

that will be required and the time it will take to implement all of the changes and would like to commence support as soon as possible in ways that would be most useful.

Secondly, information on the estimated cost of the changes for each borough (including income lost from charged for garden waste) will be used to help identify any funding shortfall and to make the case to Government to ensure that each borough and London as a whole receives its fair share of the necessary funding. It will also potentially enable the GLA and its partners to identify potential pinch points, bottlenecks and strategic opportunity for strategic collaboration to deal with problems and exploit opportunities.

The GLA will collate the information provided in this part of the RRPs, however there is no requirement for this part to be published on the London Data Store. The GLA or ReLondon may ask to share information, for example, with other London boroughs where we feel this would be beneficial but will not do so without permission.

10. **Contact Details**

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Table 2: ReLondon reports, guides, toolkits and communications assets

Subject Area	Resource	Hyperlink
Circular economy	Training academy	https://relondon.gov.uk/the-academy
Commercial waste	Toolkit – Commercial food waste recycling services	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- commercial-food-waste-recycling-services
	Toolkit – communications assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- commercial-waste-services- communication-assets
	Report - Putney Pedals scheme	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/case- study-putney-pedals-ramps-up-recycling- on-busiest-high-street-in-london
Communications	Toolkit - Be That Person behaviour change campaign assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- be-that-person-campaign- communications-assets
	Toolkit – HGV driver shortage communications assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- hgv-driver-shortage-communications- assets
	Toolkit – Plastics recycling communications assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit-plastics-recycling-communications-assets
	Toolkit – Service change communications assets:	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- service-change-communications
	Toolkit – Food waste recycling communications assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- food-waste-recycling-communications
	Toolkit – one bin is rubbish	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- one-bin-is-rubbish-artwork-toolkit
	London Recycles – information for residents and businesses on waste reduction and recycling (including recycling finder)	http://www.londonrecycles.co.uk
Contamination	Report – Tackling contamination	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report- tackling-contamination-improving-the- quality-of-household-recycling-in-london
	Case study – tackling contamination	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/case- study-tackling-recycling-contamination
	Toolkit – cost of contamination	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/cost-of-contamination
	Toolkit – service review workbook	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- tackling-contamination-service-review- workbook
	Toolkit – communications benchmark matrix	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- tackling-contamination-service-review- workbook-2

Subject Area	Resource	Hyperlink
	Report – impact of recycling quality officers	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report- impact-of-employing-recycling-quality- officers
	Toolkit – recycling quality officers cost benefit analysis tool	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- employing-recycling-quality-officers-cost- benefit-analysis-tool
Flats	Report - New build planning advice	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report- waste-management-planning-advice-for- new-flatted-properties
	Report – flats recycling	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report-making-recycling-work-for-people-in-flats
	Case study - Flats recycling	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/case- study-the-flats-recycling-package
	Webinar – flats recycling	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/webinar-making-recycling-work-for-people-in-flats
	Toolkit – flats recycling package	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- flats-recycling-package
	Toolkit – cost benefit analysis tool	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- making-recycling-work-for-people-in-flats- cost-benefit-analysis-tool
	Webinar – flats cost benefit analysis tool	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/webinar-making-recycling-work-for-people-in-flats-cost-benefit-analysis-tool
Food waste	Toolkit – communications assets	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/toolkit- food-waste-recycling-communications
HMOs	Report – Recycling in London's HMOs	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report-recycling-in-londons-hmos
Plastic	Research report on activities to reduce single-use plastic	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report-reducing-single-use-plastic-consumption
Repair	The Londoners guide to repair	https://relondon.gov.uk/wp- content/uploads/2021/03/The-Londoners- guide-to-repair.pdf
Textiles	Love Not Landfill campaign	https://www.lovenotlandfill.org/#problem
Waste reduction	Reducing single use plastic consumption	https://relondon.gov.uk/resources/report-reducing-single-use-plastic-consumption

Other formats and languages

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