

Review of UK 2018 waste strategy shows only 20% of policies fully implemented

8 months ago



A [review of the 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy](#) undertaken by [CIWM](#) (the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management) has found that only 20% of the policies in the strategy have been fully implemented, with another 54% only partially in place. As a result, work is yet to start on over a quarter (26%) of the policies originally detailed over six years ago.

The reasons cited for this slow rate of progress include frequent ministerial changes post 2018, preparing for the UK's exit from the European Union and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

CIWM makes the point that while delivery of some aspects of the 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy, such as EPR (Extended producer Responsibility) and Consistent Collections, must be prioritised, the world has moved on. As a result, this strategy is now outdated and will be unable to deliver a zero-waste economy which has the ability to deliver significant growth in UKGDP, increase jobs and maximise resource efficiency. CIWM believes there is an urgent need to produce a new Resource Resilience Strategy aimed at delivering a circular economy and helping the UK to achieve net zero.

Commenting on the launch of the review, CIWM's Director of Innovation and Technical Services, Lee Marshall, said:

"CIWM members have undertaken a comprehensive review of the 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy and the findings confirm that progress on implementing its policies has been incredibly slow as many in the sector thought. The ambitious scale of the strategy was never matched by the resources made available within Government to deliver it.

Whilst it is good to see that Defra has been slightly bolstered in recent years, the fact is that political

indecision has left the original timelines meaningless in many cases. There is an urgent need to see certain policies delivered, including packaging EPR and Consistent Collections which will directly increase recycling rates, whilst digital waste tracking and carriers, brokers and dealers' reforms will help regulators address waste crime and increase standards still further. Given the picture this review paints, it is time to produce a new Resource Resilience Strategy that will help deliver on the Government's ambition of a zero-waste economy."

The outstanding 2018 policy with the potential to have the biggest impact is Consistent Collections which would see weekly food waste collections services provided by the 50% of councils in England not already providing this service. This will help all households to recycle more and will reduce carbon emissions as a result of less biodegradable waste entering the residual waste stream. It is estimated that carbon savings could be as high as 58MtCO₂ up to 2035. The overall recycling rate in England could increase from the current 44% to around 60% and cost-effective societal benefits are estimated to be around £3bn up to 2035.

The full review of the strategy is available [here](#).