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| <b>Title of Report:</b>                | <b>Correspondence Report</b>            |
| <b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>  | <b>Environmental Services Committee</b> |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>                | <b>10<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>    |
| <b>For Decision or For Information</b> | <b>For Decision</b>                     |
| <b>To be discussed In Committee</b>    | <b>No</b>                               |

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| <b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b> |  |
| Strategic Theme                              | Leader and Champion  |
| Outcome                                      | Establish key relationships with Government, agencies and potential strategic partners |
| Lead Officer                                 | Director of Environmental Services   |

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|---|--|
| <b>Estimated Timescale for Completion</b> |  |
| Date to be Completed                      |  |

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Budgetary Considerations</b>    |     |
| Cost of Proposal                   | N/A |
| Included in Current Year Estimates | N/A |
| Capital/Revenue                    | N/A |
| Code                               | N/A |
| Staffing Costs                     | N/A |

|                                  |           |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Legal Considerations</b>      |           |
| Input of Legal Services Required | <b>NO</b> |
| Legal Opinion Obtained           | <b>NO</b> |

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|--|--|---------------------------|-------|
| <b>Screening Requirements</b>            | Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. |                           |       |
| Section 75 Screening                     | Screening Completed:   | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |
|  | EQIA Required and Completed:   | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |
| Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)             | Screening Completed  | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |
|  | RNA Required and Completed:  | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) | Screening Completed:   | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |
|  | DPIA Required and Completed:   | <del>Yes</del> /No<br>N/A | Date: |

## **1.0 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

**2.0** The following correspondence has been received:

**2.1 Michelle McIlveen MLA - Strangford, dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024** (copy attached)

### **Summary**

#### **Re. Proposed Nappy and Absorbent Waste Collection and Recycling Scheme**

Correspondence from Michelle McIlveen dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 encouraging Council to write to DAERA Minister Andrew Muir to consider the introduction of a specific nappy recycling scheme for Northern Ireland.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Environmental Services Committee consider the correspondence.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Michelle McIlveen MLA**  
**STRANGFORD**

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David Jackson  
Chief Executive  
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council  
66 Portstewart Road  
Coleraine  
BT52 1EY

**Our ref:**

**Your ref:**

12 November 2024

Dear Sir

**Proposed Nappy and Absorbent Waste Collection and Recycling Scheme**

I am writing to encourage your Council to write to DAERA Minister Andrew Muir to consider the introduction of a specific nappy recycling scheme for Northern Ireland. As you will know, under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 there is a 70% recycling target by 2030. The recycling rate between January and March 2024 was 46.4%. We are some way short of the target.

At the launch of DAERA's *Rethinking Our Resources* consultation, the Minister hopes the proposals contained in it would result in a recycling rate of 74%. However, the proposals contained in the document do not contain any suggestions on how to manage nappy and other absorbent hygiene products.

The proposals put forward by the Minister do include reducing bin capacity either by smaller grey bins or by fewer grey bin collections. While these have been measures adopted by countries and regions with higher recycling rates other measures have also been included such as nappy collection and recycling.

It is estimated that disposable nappies and other absorbent hygiene waste amount to 3–4% of the waste going to landfill or incineration. This equates to about 40 000 tonnes annually in Northern Ireland. Yet it contains recyclable product such as cellulose fibres and plastics. Nappies have been collected in Wales since 2009. They are recycled in Japan, the Netherlands and also Canada and in Italy Pampers operates a deposit bin at local supermarkets in exchange for vouchers. We are well behind the curve on this issue. We should be drawing on best practice elsewhere.

Currently, Wales is the only country in the UK to have met the 50% household recycling target and the only country in the UK to have introduced a nappy collection and recycling scheme. In fact Wales, has reached a 59% recycling rate. Pembrokeshire, the best performing local authority, has reached an amazing 73.2%

You may be aware of the story a couple of years ago of a trial in Wales where nappy fibres were added to the bitumen in asphalt roads and these were shown to last twice as long as other roads. Carmarthenshire County Council is now resurfacing in its roads with this product. This has been marketed as "a prime example of local circular economy in action".

While the removal of 3-4% of waste from our grey bins, it also addresses a problem being faced by residents when they have to balance reduced grey bin capacity with the problem of where to put nappy waste. By the time a baby is potty trained it could use anything between 4000 to 6000 nappies and maybe more.

I have asked the Minister to consider the creation of a nappy collection and recycling scheme for Northern Ireland ( see AQW 11304/22-27). He offered the following response:

Whilst there are no current plans to introduce a specific nappy recycling scheme here and challenges exist, I would be keen to explore opportunities and infrastructure requirements with District Councils should a prospect to meet and discuss the matter be offered.

I am therefore requesting that your council and the other councils in Northern Ireland write to the DAERA Minister expressing an interest in the development of such a scheme. I believe it is an essential step in reaching the challenging 70% target set under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 but it is also necessary to address the practical implications of the recommendations which will flow from the Department's *Rethinking Our Waste* consultation.

I am pleased to advise that Ards and North Down Borough Council has recently passed a motion on this issue at committee which is due to be ratified at full council at the end of this month. The motion reads as follows:

That this Council notes the 70% recycling target set out in the Climate Change Act 2022 and that the current household recycling average is 50.7%;

Further notes the aims and intentions around the consultation on "Rethinking our resources: measures for climate action and a circular economy in NI" includes the reduction in grey bin capacity by either volume of bin or three weekly collections;

Further notes that a nappy collection scheme was not referred to in Rethinking our resources: measures for climate action and a circular economy in NI" despite around 4% of residual waste being made up of disposable nappies and other absorbent hygiene products;

Further notes with concern the impact reduced grey bin capacity will have on those households disposing of nappies and/or other absorbent hygiene products as well as the amount of recyclable material such products contain;

This Council writes to the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs expressing its view that there is a need for a nappy collection scheme in Northern Ireland in order to meet recycling targets and to support households if grey bin capacity is reduced as a result of any future Departmental strategy and, further, that this Council would be happy to engage with the Department on how to best deliver such a scheme.

And that a copy of this motion is sent to other Councils in Northern to encourage them to write to the Minister on similar terms.

I hope that your council could also support this proposal.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Michelle McIlveen.

**Michelle McIlveen MLA**