

Telephone:

E Mail: bryan.lodge@sheffield.gov.uk

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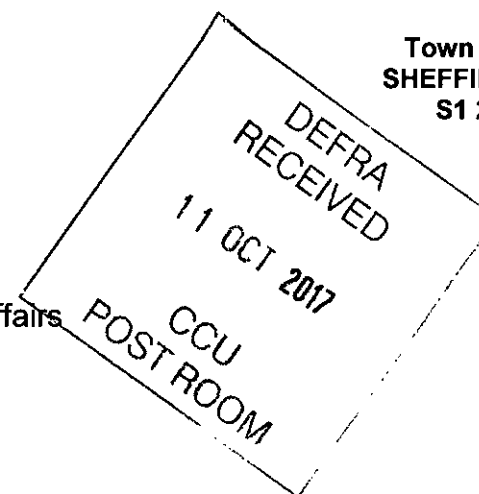
**Sheffield**  
**City Council**



**Councillor Bryan Lodge**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment and Streetscene**  
**Councillor for Birley Ward**

**Town Hall**  
**SHEFFIELD**  
**S1 2HH**

Therese Coffey MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR



Dear Dr Coffey

#### Recycling Performance

Further to your letter regarding our recycling performance for 2015/16, please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you. In part, this has been due to trying to ratify the data you quoted in your letter compared to the submissions the Authority provided via Waste Data Flow. The later, for 2015/16, attributed a combined recycling/ composting rate of 31.1% for household waste, not the 28.9% you state.

The Council is proud that Sheffield has actually recovered value from 99% of its waste each year for the past three years, achieving a landfill rate of 1% or less. This is due to our significant investment in Energy Recovery. Having a District Energy Network also means the plant in Sheffield has R1 status in recognition of the benefit of the thermal heat be recovered and utilised (compared to just electricity generation). We are clear that if not top, Sheffield very comfortably sits within the top ten in the Country in this respect.

In addition, we note that the average kilograms collected per person from the top ten combined recycling rate achievers was 390.87kgs, compared to Sheffield's being nearly 20% less at 330.7kg. Clearly, with waste reduction being at the top of the waste hierarchy, this lower amount again reflects good performance by Sheffield. It is our view therefore that to judge the success of sustainable waste management on just the combined recycling performance rate is too crude.

We do expect to see a lift in yields when we invest an additional circa £4m in changing from a box and bin system to a two bin system. Bin systems for paper and

card have a higher-rate of kilograms per collection than a box system. In addition, by continuing to collect our paper and card separately we are ensuring we have a high quality product to offer the market for recycling.

Our new service will therefore be a 140 litre blue bin for paper and card collected every 4 weeks and a 240 litre brown bin for glass, cans and plastic bottles, also collected every 4 weeks. This system will be more efficient than our current bin and box system and we will realise revenue savings against the current cost of collection.

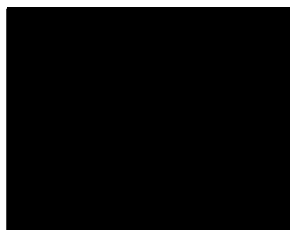
The Council is not however planning any other service changes or investments to realise any step change in recycling. In this era of austerity the Council has incurred funding cuts from the Government and pressures of £390m over the last eight years. This has resulted in Council Services, including waste management, facing budget cuts.

In recent years, Sheffield has been the mass development of purpose built student accommodation, where the companies providing such accommodation seek a relatively short term return on investment. Mostly the developers behind these purpose built blocks are national chains such as Unite, Vita and Liberty, operating in many cities. Despite their multi-million turnover businesses Councils receive no income as the blocks are Council Tax and Business Rates exempt. The cost of providing waste collection and recycling services to these blocks is therefore a significant impact for Local Authorities. In Sheffield for example we will have around 25,900 bed spaces provided in such blocks in the next 12 months and that figure is set to rise further in future years.

I am pleased to confirm Sheffield is working with Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham, the other Councils in South Yorkshire in relation to waste services. Last year the Councils jointly commissioned a review to identify the areas where working together could realise the most benefits and cost savings. A high level joint waste strategy setting out our aspirations and targets will be approved by each Cabinet this Autumn.

However, given the continued political choices of your Government to impose unprecedented cuts in funding to Council's, at the same time as demand for services continues to increase, we are still having to make savings across the board, instead of making the investments we would want to see

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Bryan Lodge**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment and Streetscene**