

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
25th January 2018**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for
Property and Waste**

SUBJECT: Question from Philip Bettley

For decades I have been a good citizen, keeping our own home and environment tidy by taking often bulky items to a recycling facility. Frequently, I have helped family, neighbours and friends to do the same sometimes by hiring a van.

For the first time in my life this ability has been removed by Powys County Council forcing me to register one specific vehicle that can be permitted to enter the recycling facility.

I have a small van for domestic use only; my wife has a trailer; sometimes we hire a larger van when projects arise.

Your policy of enforcing Trade waste to pay for disposal is understandable, but your process for achieving this is diabolical. Me, and anyone else from my address, should be able to take non trade waste to the recycling facility as many times as may be necessary, in whatever vehicle, van or trailer we choose.

Your job is to enforce the trade waste issue, and in doing so not prevent domestic users from fulfilling their civic duty.

The current permit system was hastily conceived and is not fit for purpose. Please will you rethink this process?

Answer

The Household Waste Recycling Centres are provided for residents to dispose of their own household waste. They are not provided for commercial use as under the legislation businesses must make their own arrangements for their waste and recycling and are required to pay for this service ensuring that all relevant documentation is held to prove that they have disposed of their waste legally.

Unfortunately many businesses do try to circumvent the system and illegally use the Household Waste Recycling Centres. It is of course impossible to prevent all such use, but having controls in place for commercial vehicles and trailers does make it more difficult. We do appreciate that this may inconvenience householders who do use a commercial vehicle as their private mode of transport, but unfortunately it is very difficult for a site attendant to identify what is and what isn't commercial waste as it may look identical. An example of this would be waste produced through the operation of a holiday let. Any waste produced by the holiday tenants, any cleaning

materials, or garden waste from maintaining the grounds of these premises, is classed as commercial waste but could easily be mistaken for domestic waste. Similarly, if any waste is produced from a business operating from a domestic address, the waste is classed as commercial and should not be taken to a Household Waste Recycling Centre.

There is a considerable cost to running these sites and processing the waste, which includes garden waste. In order to make savings, the previous Cabinet reduced the opening days at each site to three days and prohibited all commercial vehicles and trailers. This was following a consultation where the public responded overwhelmingly to not close facilities but instead restrict days and access to commercial vehicles. These changes still proved very unpopular with the public and on this basis one of the first decisions that the new Cabinet made was to increase the number of opening days and introduce a commercial vehicle and trailer permit scheme. This scheme would allow those residents who do use commercial vehicles and trailers for domestic use to use the sites on condition of pre-registering for permits when a few simple checks can be made for legitimacy. The limit of permits per household is another method of controlling misuse by traders as residents should not require more than 12 visits each year, providing residents are using the kerbside recycling service. Whilst the sites will accept small amounts of DIY waste, there is no requirement for them to do so and hence we would advise that a skip company is used where large projects are undertaken.

With regards to the permit system being 'hastily conceived and not fit for purpose', this system is commonly used by many other authorities, several of whom we spoke with prior to its implementation. Since the policy was introduced we have made some minor alterations, for example increasing the length of permitted trailers from 2.1 to 2.4 metres, but we are not in a position to make any significant changes if we are to realise the savings that the authority must make.