

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
11th July 2019**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for
Highways, Recycling and Assets**

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Gareth Ratcliffe

With the growing concerns nationally on the way councils have been transferring and disposing of their recycling collections and some have been found not to be recycled but ending up in landfills 1000's of miles away in places such as China and India. Also this has been highlighted by Sir David Attenborough and the plastic within our world seas there is even more scrutiny put upon the way we dispose of our waste and recycling in Powys as well as other councils in the UK. On the doorstep I am being asked how Powys County Council are disposing of our recycling and waste we collect. One of the issues people are asking is are we recycling just for PCC to chase a figure set nationally or are we ensuring the future of our children. I believe its fundamental that if we are to get residents to buy in there has to be purpose to why we and what we recycle to build confidence in the process.

Please can the portfolio holder supply a briefing for council members on how the council recycle and where our recycling is processed to ensure recycling means recycling?

Response

Following the various media coverage around plastics, notably David Attenborough's Blue Planet series and more recently Hugh and Anita's War On Plastic documentary, we have received many enquiries on this issue. Whilst this may have suddenly become a hot topic, it is nothing new for those of us familiar with the workings of the waste and recycling industry. Indeed we have already provided the information requested by Cllr Huw Williams in the same question to Council on October 18th 2018. We are of course happy to provide this information again with the document attached to the response to Councillor Bryn Davies giving some detail regarding what happens to the material collected at the kerbside.

We are required by law to account for all the material we collect including all end destinations and this information is publicly available on the NRW/Defra website www.wastedataflow.org. Whilst this does not in itself guarantee the most ethical or sustainable outcome for the material, the contracts for our recyclable materials have been procured through WRAP who work on behalf of the Welsh Government, which adds an additional layer of scrutiny.

When we collect plastics at the kerbside we only collect material that recycling processors actually want. This is why we stopped collecting plastic film several

years back as it is very difficult to find a market for this material. We take our recycling responsibilities very seriously which includes developing our own infrastructure to ensure that we have a sustainable solution to bulk up and transport recyclable material generated by residents of Powys. We can assure residents of Powys that the material they put out at the kerbside is recycled and helps us to achieve a recycling rate in excess of 60%.