

Report on	Update on Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for Drinks Containers
Date of Meeting	3 rd April 2023
Reporting Officer	Mark McAdoo, Assistant Director - Environmental Services
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Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform members on the Government response to the previous consultation on the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for Drinks Containers.
2.0	Background
2.1	A Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) is a system where consumers are charged a deposit up-front when they buy a drink in a container that is “in scope” of the scheme. The deposit can be redeemed when the empty container is returned to a designated return point.
2.2	Deposit return schemes are a well-established feature across Europe and the world. They often focus on single-use drinks containers, with the most effective schemes achieving collection rates of over 90%. The aim of the scheme is to boost recycling levels, reduce littering, protect resources and promote a circular economy
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In June 2021, the UK Government, the Welsh Government and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland consulted on the introduction of a DRS for single use drinks containers. Council responded at the time of the consultation and our views have now been considered, along with others, and the Governments response on the way forward has been published.
3.2	The key highlights from the Government response are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Deposit Return Scheme will be introduced from October 2025. - Single-use drinks containers from 50ml to 3 litre containers will be in scope of the Deposit Return Scheme. - Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles, steel cans and aluminium cans will be included for England, Northern Ireland, and Wales. - Glass bottles will be included for Wales only. - Retailers selling in scope containers in store will be required to host a return point, where consumers can return the empty container and be given their deposit refund, subject to some specific exemptions that retailers can apply

- for. Where containers are sold online, it is intended to require large grocery retailers to offer consumers a takeback service for those containers.
- A Deposit Management Organisation (DMO) will be appointed to manage overall operation of the Deposit Return Scheme.
 - The DMO will be appointed by Government through an application process and be a non for profit industry-led organisation. It will be made up of a consortium of industry representatives with membership of firms which represent drinks producers, retailers, importers and logistics.
 - The DMO will be required to ensure the collection targets are met. The collection targets will be introduced in a phased manner. In year one, at least 70% of in-scope containers that producers place on the market must be collected, increasing to 80% and then 90% from year three onwards.
 - The DMO will be responsible for setting the deposit level.

3.3 As waste is a devolved issue in the UK, the separate devolved Governments will be introducing differing regulations in relation to DRS. In addition, the Republic of Ireland is also introducing a similar scheme and main points of all the schemes are set out in the table below (the areas highlighted are the elements of other schemes that aren't the same as those planned for Northern Ireland):

	Northern Ireland	England	Wales	Scotland	Republic of Ireland
Start Date	October 2025	October 2025	October 2025	August 2023	February 2024
Materials in Scope	Drinks Containers made of Plastic (PET), Steel, & Aluminium	Drinks Containers made of Plastic (PET), Steel, & Aluminium	Drinks Containers made of Plastic (PET), Steel, Aluminium, & Glass	Drinks Containers made of Plastic (PET), Steel, Aluminium, & Glass	Drinks Containers made of Plastic (PET), Steel, & Aluminium
Size of In Scope Containers	50ml to 3L Plastic & Metal Drinking Containers	50ml to 3L Plastic & Metal Drinking Containers	50ml to 3L Plastic, Metal, & Glass Drinking Containers	50ml to 3L Plastic, Metal, & Glass Drinking Containers	150ml to 3L Plastic & Metal Drinking Containers
Deposit Management Organisation	DMO for England & NI	DMO for England & NI	DMO for Wales	DMO for Scotland	DMO for Ireland
Deposit Rate	TBC	TBC	TBC	£0.20	15c - 150ml to 500ml inclusive; 25c - 500mls to 3 litres

3.4 DRS has an implication for Council recycling services as it may result in residents removing DRS applicable drinking containers from kerbside recycling schemes. Digital reclaim systems are being considered to allow the householder to obtain their deposit from their household while still using the Council kerbside services, although an agreed mechanism has not been identified.

3.5	The Governments are developing the regulations and related secondary legislation for the Deposit Return Schemes which reflect the policy outcomes set out in the consultation response and a further update will be provided in due course.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: The introduction of DRS will impact on future gate fees payable for the processing of kerbside collected mixed dry recyclable (blue bin) material collected by Council.
	Human: None
	Risk Management: None
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	None