

Publication of Government response to consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging:

Summary of main policy decisions

1. Business payments element dropped (at least for now) in favour of maintaining the status quo based on producers purchasing PRNs and PERNs to meet their recycling obligations. According to Government estimates this brings overall EPR costs down by £1billion, from £2.7billion previously to £1.7billion now. However the consultation response does suggest this an 'interim solution' pending a review of options for payments in 2026/7;
2. On litter producers will be required to cover cost of communications activities and as far as England and Northern Ireland are concerned only the cost of packaging disposed of in street bins managed by local authorities. Scotland and Wales remain committed to applying both bin and ground litter costs to producers and will bring forward proposals in due course;
3. Confirmation that EPR implementation will be delayed until 2024 with a partial implementation from 1 April that year covering local authority disposal costs followed by full introduction via modulated fees, and including recyclability assessment, in 2025;
4. The current 'Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) system' will continue to be used to demonstrate recycling obligations have been met for both packaging that ends up in the household and non household streams. Household packaging waste and bin litter will also be subject to modulated disposal cost fees. [NB a consultation on minor reforms to the PRN system has been launched alongside publication of the responses – [see link](#)];
5. Current de minimis thresholds of £2m turnover and 50t of packaging per annum will remain as far as EPR payments concerned but for reporting purposes these thresholds will be lowered to £1m turnover and 25 tonnes of packaging;
6. All compostable and biodegradable packaging will be required to apply the 'do not recycle' label;
7. The Scheme Administrator (SA) is now likely to be a public body following HMT advice with opportunity for private sector to deliver some of its functions. It is intended to become fully operational in 2024. Further engagement with producers and other stakeholders can be expected.
8. All packaging types (except for plastic films and flexibles) will be required to be labelled either 'recycle' or 'do not recycle' by 31 March 2026; by 31 March 2027 this will also apply to plastic films and flexibles. Government has also agreed a single label approach based on the 'Recycle Now' mark;
9. Recyclable plastic film and flexible packaging is to be collected for recycling from both households and businesses across the UK by 31 March 2027. This represents a slower track for non household. No detail on scope of films included;
10. Revised materials recycling targets have been set out for 2024 and 2030 (Table 1, page 16 refers). For several materials these have increased from those set out in the consultation, notably aluminium and plastics. One reason given is the need to reflect final decisions on DRS systems. 2022 packaging waste business recycling targets will be rolled over to 2023 for all packaging materials;
11. Whilst a full response to the consultation on introducing a DRS in England, Wales and N Ireland will follow, the EPR response does reveal that a decision has been made by the Governments in England and N Ireland not to include glass in their DRS. However, Wales will continue to include glass. For all three jurisdictions the size of drinks containers included in the DRS will be between 50ml and 3ltr including containers sold in multipacks. This is consistent with Scotland.

[Summary of Consultation and the Government Response \(69 pages\)](#)