

## Statement from IWMA

*Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016:* The Irish Waste Management Association met with Minister Simon Coveney and Minister Sean Kyne today and had a useful exchange of views concerning the implementation of the Government's policy on Pay By Weight.

The IWMA remains committed to supporting Government Policy on the introduction of Pay By Weight which is designed to financially reward those that manage their waste in a more sustainable manner and helps Ireland fulfil the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive.

Responsible waste operators have made the necessary investment to meet their obligations under the Government introduced regulations and the industry remains willing to work with Government to ensure its successful introduction.

**For nearly 20 years, since 1998, it has been the policy of successive governments to introduce a Pay by Use charging system for waste collection services.**

In 2007 the then Government committed to the introduction of Pay By Weight and in 2014 regulations were introduced which directed waste operators to introduce Pay By Weight in 2015. This was further delayed until 2016.

The Government Policy of introducing Pay By Weight is to help ensure Ireland meet its EU waste targets. By 2020, we need to recycle 50% of our municipal waste to comply with the EU Waste Framework Directive. We are currently at about 40% and have been at that level for a few years now. We also have obligations under the Waste Framework Directive to collect food waste source segregated and to actively engage in waste prevention initiatives. Pay By Weight is designed to financially reward those that manage their waste in a more sustainable manner, which in turn fulfils the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive.

The Pay By Weight charging structure, which provides for an annual service charge and a per kg cost for the collection of waste, was developed and approved by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. A flat rate does not incentivise people to segregate or reduce the waste they are producing and is not in line with either Government Policy or EU policy. The Pay By Weight charging structure actively encourages householders to recycle more. Householders that do so are charged less for the collection of dry recyclable and compost waste and can therefore reduce their annual charges.

Many people throughout Ireland are already paying by weight for their waste collection service and have been for several years. In these counties it has been very successful in reducing residual waste and increasing recycling.

***If the Government abandons its own policy now, environmental progress made in recent years will be halted. It will be a retrograde step and will reward those who make no effort to reduce their waste. We have to ensure that we minimise the amount of waste that goes to landfill and that we treat all other waste streams in the most environmentally aware way.***

## **Behavioural Change:**

Pay By Weight gives householders more control over their bills. In the same way that you can control your electricity bill by being careful how often you use the immersion, people paying by weight can better control or reduce their waste costs by changing their behaviour. If you put more waste in your mixed waste bin you will have a higher charge than your neighbours who segregate their waste and put less in the mixed waste or black bin.

In the current debate on bin charges under the new Pay By Weight system, there will be a change in behaviour that will lead to reduced charges for many householders. Consumers become more conscious of what they are putting in their bins and segregate their waste more carefully.

This is the case where Pay By Weight is operated by IWMA Members in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown for example, where there was a 25% reduction in waste collected and anecdotal evidence suggests similar findings in other counties.

## **Pricing Structures:**

As a trade association, the IWMA cannot and does not make recommendations on pricing structures to its members. That is a matter for individual operators and ultimately market forces will determine the prices charged for waste collection services. The IWMA encourages consumers to shop around for the best price for their collection service.

If householders want proper and efficient waste management services they must understand that there is a cost to the provision of that service. Householders are provided with between 50 and 100 collections from their doorstep each year, regardless of how often their bins are put out.

In 2003, Cork County Council introduced pay by weight, charging a service fee of €180 and a 45 cent per kilo charge for general waste and even then the Council could not run the service profitably. Dublin City Council was losing some €12million annually on waste services before tendering the service to private operators.

Private waste operators have invested heavily in improving waste collection services for householders.

- The vast majority of householders are now able to source segregate their waste into dry recyclables, bio-waste and residual waste fractions. This is not the case in many of the 28 EU Member States.
- Twenty years ago just 7.8% of municipal waste was recycled or recovered today that figure is closer to 80%.

These achievements reflect continuous investment by waste operators; government policies to improve recycling and efforts by citizens to act responsibly in managing and treating their waste.

**Ends.**