

## Lyons share to tackle climate change

A new charging system may enable householders who are prepared to reduce the amount of waste they produce to pay less than those who are unwilling to change their habits without increasing overall costs to citizens, according to the UK's leading front-line council services organisation.

APSE was commenting on recommendations to allow local councils the freedom to introduce supplementary charges for collecting household waste that are included in Sir Michael Lyons' final report on reforming local government finance.

APSE's chief executive, Paul O'Brien, said: **"Many councils face increasing pressures on dealing with the cost of waste collection and disposal. If we are to avoid increased pressure on council tax, we have to think about how we can better reflect the costs of waste in what citizens pay locally. If charges are administered fairly, householders who are prepared to help tackle climate change by recycling and other measures to cut landfill should not pay any more than they do already, while those who disregard the damage caused to the environment are forced to rethink their behaviour or pay more"** However Mr O'Brien warned **" We cannot simply introduce charging measures for the ordinary citizen without tackling the behaviour of the manufacturing and retail sectors; They too have a responsibility to deliver on waste minimisation."**

- Waste costs to councils have risen drastically as a result of the introduction of landfill tax meaning that despite better recycling initiatives the cost of waste collection and disposal continues to rise.
- Chancellor Gordon Brown announced in today's budget that landfill tax will rise by a further £8 per tonne from April 2008 until at least 2010 creating a further cumulative increase in charges of £24.00 per tonne by 2010.
- Councils are already expected to pay £21.00 per tonne which will rise on April 1st 2007 to £24.00 creating a charge of £32.00 per tonne of landfill waste by April 2008 .

Mr O'Brien also warned that any new system of charging must be accompanied by maximising the use of new powers under the new Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act to ensure that there are no rises in fly-tipping alongside a strengthening of packaging laws to prevent excessive packaging of goods by manufacturers and retailers saying **"Councils have more powers now than they have ever had to tackle fly-tipping but that must be matched by a strengthening of the regulations that govern packaging of goods by manufacturers and retailers with strict penalties for non-compliance"**

**Ends**

### Notes to Editor

1. APSE is the Association for Public Service Excellence and works with over 300 local authorities throughout the UK

2. APSE represents councils who directly delivery front line council services such as household waste collection and parks and environmental services
3. Sir Michael Lyons has today produced his final report into the future of local government aiming a series of recommendations including:-
  - The introduction of a new power to allow councils to raise supplementary charges for waste and recycling
  - Extension of council tax bands to include a new upper and lower tier
  - Creation of an automated rebate system for council tax benefits so that the £1.8 billion currently unclaimed by mainly pensioner households is delivered automatically rather than applied for as a benefit
  - An end to the practice of 'capping' council tax bills allowing local councils greater freedoms and flexibilities.
4. APSE provides support to local authorities on waste and recycling services including a comprehensive performance measurement system that measures the cost of waste and recycling to councils and the participation rates for recycling by different authorities
5. The introduction of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act in 2005 provided councils with additional powers to tackle fly-tipping and other environmental crimes
6. The draft Climate Change Bill is likely to introduce tough targets for the public sector to reduce its carbon foot print placing additional pressures on councils to increase recycling, reduce pollution and the amount of waste going to landfill.

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