

# High Risk Of Tax Hikes If Government Targets Missed

Last Tuesday, the plastics industry launched a groundbreaking campaign to challenge itself, the government and consumers to step up recycling and stop sending plastic to landfills. The [Plastics 2020 Challenge](#) [1] is the first time plastics manufacturers and processors have called for a widespread open debate and set their own targets for helping make the country greener.

The plastics industry pledges several commitments on the “four Rs” — reduce, reuse, recycle and recover — including doubling the recycling rate of plastic packaging by the year 2020. The campaign also challenges the government, MPs, environmental groups and consumers to join forces with the industry to get more out of the resources we all use.

According to coordinators, MPs and council leaders gathered at Westminster, where new research is to be published to illustrate that only half of responsible councilors are confident that they can meet the government's waste strategy targets for 2010, 2015 and 2020, suggesting large, unnecessary hikes in council tax bills unless action is taken. The campaign website urges members of the public and interest groups, moreover, to join the debate on the benefits, use, and disposal of plastic products and packaging.

In a radical move, other environmental campaigners — such as Friends of the Earth — are encouraged to take part in regular web debates on subjects like marine littering and bioplastics. The sponsors of the Plastics 2020 Challenge believe that only an honest, open and rational debate on controversial issues can lead to a consensus about how to move forward.

Underpinning the scale of the challenge are research findings by [ComRes](#) [2] that estimate that almost a third of councilors do not expect to meet the government's targets for recycling, composting and energy recovery next year, while a third don't know if they would meet the targets for 2015 and 2020. Almost a fifth of councilors further report a high or very high risk of council tax bills rising in 2020 because the target could not be met. When asked about the scale of potential council tax increases if the target is missed, 18 percent say that it would be more than 5 percent, whereas half of those respondents say that it would be more than 10 percent.

Councilor Paul Bettison of the Local Government Association comments: “It is very welcome to see the plastics industry come to the table with proposals to drive up plastic recycling rates, as well as widen initiatives for resource efficiency.

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Consumers have shown high levels of support for recycling, and with the industry's engagement, I hope we see the challenge met."

Nigel Evans, Ribble Valley MP, states: "The industry set a challenging target [in] doubling plastic packaging recycling, and I hope we see others respond to the challenge so the 2020 target can be met."

The Plastics 2020 Challenge is additionally welcomed by the government-sponsored Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) agency and the Local Government Association.

Published on July 7, the Plastics 2020 Challenge mission is to lead the UK in diverting plastics from landfills by 2020 in order to reduce climate change impact, address the energy deficit and achieve a step change in efficient use of resources. Founding commitments include:

1. REDUCE — Reduce waste and environmental impact by continuous innovation of lightweight, high-performance plastic materials and products.
2. REUSE — Develop new solutions and designs to increase the reuse of plastic products.
3. RECYCLE — Double the plastic packaging recycling rate by 2020 through partnering with the entire value chain and all levels of government to facilitate and promote effective markets, technologies and infrastructure.
4. RECOVER — Support high-efficiency energy from waste techniques for end-of-life plastics in which recycling is not an option.

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<http://www.chem.info/news/2009/07/high-risk-tax-hikes-if-government-targets-missed>

### Links:

[1] <http://www.plastics2020challenge.com>

[2] <http://www.comres.co.uk>