

Implementation of Weekly Food Waste Collections for Households

1. Contacts

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2. Cabinet recommends to Council:

- 2.1 Approval of the Project Initiation Document for the implementation of weekly food waste collections for households.
- 2.2 The project governance arrangements, including the establishment of a Project Board and associated Terms of Reference as outlined in the PID, to provide strategic direction and project oversight.
- 2.3 That £1,355,683 be released from council General Fund reserves to fund the estimated shortfall in funding of Capital and transition costs.
- 2.4 The procurement process to acquire the necessary vehicles, ancillary equipment, and containers in order to deliver the new service is commenced.
- 2.5 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Chichester Contract Services, to conclude the procurement process, award contracts, and approve capital and transition cost expenditure of up to £2,598,700 in order to expedite the service design and procurement project stages.

3. Background

- 3.1 Councils in England have long awaited further guidance and clarification from the government on the national waste strategy since the ascent of the Environment Act in 2021, which mandated all waste collection authorities (WCAs) in England to provide a weekly collection of food waste from households.
- 3.2 On 21 October 2023, guidance was issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) as part of the 'Simpler Recycling' waste reforms which stated that this new service requirement must be provided by 31 March 2026.

3.3 The announcement also included information on how local councils would be funded to deliver the new, additional burden which is intended to cover all reasonable costs associated with:

- capital expenditure for vehicles and containers. On 09 January 2024, Defra confirmed the funding allocation amounts which will be paid to councils in the 2023/24 financial year via Section 31 grants,
- resource transitional costs (such as vehicle routing, communications, and project management) to be paid from the 2024/25 financial year; and
- support for ongoing service delivery costs to be provided from 01 April 2026.

3.4 In response to the Government announcement, an Initial Project Proposal for the introduction of weekly food waste collections was prepared and approved by the Cabinet on 09 January 2024.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

4.1 Delivery of the project will ensure compliance with Section 45A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, introduced by the Environment Act 2021.

4.2 Residents will have access to an enhanced recycling service which supports the principles of the waste hierarchy.

4.3 Waste diversion and increased recycling performance, ultimately leading to waste minimisation.

5. Proposal

5.1 Delivering a separate weekly food waste collection is a significant service change impacting all residents. Whilst the consequence of not delivering the project by 31 March 2026 is currently unknown, the feasibility and financial implications of introducing a new service by March 2026 is a challenge and major project risk. It is anticipated that the project will take a minimum of 24 months from point of approval to initial service rollout, largely due to market constraints as waste collection authorities in England respond to the waste reforms. Cabinet is therefore asked to approve the Project Initiation Document in the appendix to enable commencement of the project.

5.2 It is also recommended that a Project Board be established, as outlined in the PID, to provide strategic direction and oversight and to enable a dynamic and agile project delivery approach.

5.3 Service design, vehicle and container procurement are critical project stages to meet the service rollout timescales. Lead times for food waste refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) specifically are currently estimated at a minimum of 18 months. It is therefore recommended that Officers commence these stages as a priority and delegated authority be given to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Chichester Contract Services, for capital and transition funding expenditure without the need for further Cabinet approval, providing the costs do not exceed the PID.

- 5.4 This delegated authority does not extend to the costs associated with responding to the CCS depot site constraints. As noted in the PID, an options appraisal of the built assets used by CCS is being prepared which will identify the costs to help inform recommendations for future accommodation requirements to ensure both operational and legislative requirements can be met, following which a report will be prepared for the Cabinet for further consideration.
- 5.5 The indicative resource and funding requirements set out in this report assume food waste being added to the current alternate weekly recycling and waste collection service. In November 2023, the Government consulted on their proposed requirement for local authorities to collect residual waste at least fortnightly as a minimum standard. The results of this consultation are yet to be announced. In the event that the Government allows councils to make their own decisions regarding the frequency of residual waste collection a report will be brought back to Cabinet and Council to enable it to make an informed decision about any future service changes.

6. Alternatives Considered

- 6.1 Do nothing – not recommended. Although the consequence of not delivering the project by 31 March 2026 is currently unknown, the requirement for separate food waste collections is a statutory requirement.
- 6.2 Accelerate delivery to commence service prior to 31 March 2026 – not recommended. This option is unrealistic considering the known market constraints.
- 6.3 Collect food waste with garden waste – not feasible. In vessel composting (IVC) can be used to treat food and garden waste mixtures however there is no IVC infrastructure in West Sussex. All garden waste collected is processed via open window composting which cannot be used to process organic matters e.g. food waste. In addition, if combined, food and garden waste collections must be provided free of charge. This approach would therefore have a negative financial impact on council revenue.
- 6.4 Procurement of electric vehicles – not recommended. The recommended project approach is based on the procurement of diesel vehicles. This is owing to the following reasons:
- CCS are trialling two 26 tonne electric RCVs. The trial is yielding mixed results and it is becoming clear that electric RCV's and the required charging infrastructure are still in a relative early stage of development and not currently robust enough to be relied upon for an essential service.
 - The CCS depot does not have sufficient electrical charging capacity to accommodate the new service, and while plans are being progressed to review depot site constraints, with the option of additional electrical capacity, there is no certainty that these plans will be completed in time for the commencement of new service.
 - Although it is recognised that electric food RCVs are becoming available from select manufacturers, soft market testing indicates that these will be approximately 100% more expensive.

It is therefore considered appropriate that for the initial fleet diesel variants are purchased with a 10-year depreciation.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 In preparation for the Government's waste reforms, officers have been preparing for the introduction of a separate food waste collection service. Following Cabinet approval in July 2022, a report was commissioned to provide greater clarity on the costs, impacts, and opportunities of implementing the new service to support any future decision in respect of its implementation. Whilst the PID draws on key data and assumptions outlined in this report, the delivery costs have since been re-assessed to reflect inflationary increases, soft market testing, current labour rates, and project contingency. The specific financial assumptions applied are outlined in the PID.
- 7.2 The anticipated capital expenditure requirements to deliver the project are outlined below. On 09 February Defra announced the allocation of capital funding to local authorities which falls short of the anticipated costs by approximately 33%.

Capital expenditure	
One-off capital to fund vehicles, ancillary equipment, containers and liners (subject to requirement review)	£1,735,200
Project contingency	£173,520
Gross total	£1,908,720
New burdens capital funding	-£1,243,037
Total expenditure shortfall	£665,683

- 7.3 New burdens funding amounts to cover transitional resource costs have yet to be announced but will be paid to local councils from the 2024/25 financial year. Considering the capital funding allocations, a further shortfall of at least 30% is forecast.

Transition expenditure	
Expenditure requirements include container rollout, temporary staffing, communications, route-planning, digital infrastructure changes.	£627,275
Project contingency	£62,728
Gross total	£690,000
New burdens transition funding	TBC
Total expenditure shortfall	£690,000

- 7.4 Similarly, a budget deficit from 2026/27 is forecast for the ongoing revenue costs. These costs are currently estimated at £1,400,000 per annum before funding. A further report outlining revenue expenditure will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration at a later date once the service has been fully costed and government funding amounts known.
- 7.5 Due to the scale of service change, the project has significant staffing implications which are outlined in the PID.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 As this is a statutory service requirement, no consultation with service users is planned.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1 A detailed risk log will be developed and reviewed by the Project Board with additional risks considered as and when they are identified. The PID outlines the critical key risks at this stage.

10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder - no crime and disorder implications are identified as a result of this project.		x
Biodiversity and Climate Change Mitigation - separately collected food waste, and processing via anaerobic digestion (AD), is the preferred method of handling food waste and supports the principles of the waste hierarchy. As the Waste Collection Authority, CDC's carbon emissions will increase owing to expanded diesel vehicle fleet. Environmental benefits will be achieved via the Waste Disposal Authority due to residual waste reduction and AD processing.	x	
Human Rights and Equality Impact - the project will enhance the delivery of recycling services district wide and has no foreseen equality impact implications.		x
Safeguarding and Early Help - no safeguarding and early help implications are identified as a result of this project.		
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) - no significant implications for processing personal data. Handling of data and use of vehicle CCTV is in line with current operating policies.		x
Health and Wellbeing - with weekly food waste collections there are no direct public health implications as a result of this project.		x

11. Appendix

- 11.1 Project Initiation Document - Implementation of Weekly Food Waste Collections for Households.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 Cabinet report 05 July 2022 Planning for Kerbside Food Waste Collection.
- 12.2 Cabinet report 09 January 2024 Corporate Plan and Initial Project Proposals for 2024-2025.