

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change****Food Waste and Simpler Recycling****1. Purpose of Report**

To update Members on progress regards food waste collections, particularly around options for trade waste implementation, due 31 March 2025. The report will also provide an update on Simpler Recycling initiatives. This is in accordance with the Council's Corporate Priority of Environment – 'Protect the environment for the future'.

**2. Recommendation**

**Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the fees and charges for Trade waste food collections as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.**

**3. Detail**

After the Environment Act was mandated in November 2021, one of the expected outcomes was the introduction of consistent waste and recycling collections, with local authorities required to collect food waste from the kerbside on a weekly basis.

In September 2023, 'Consistency in Recycling' was rebadged as Simpler Recycling. At the time of writing this report additional information has emerged and key timeline deadlines include the following:

- Introduction of Simpler recycling and Food Waste to businesses – 31 March 2025.
- Introduction of Simpler recycling to households – 31 March 2026.
- Introduction of Simpler recycling and weekly food waste collections for micro businesses – 31 March 2027
- Collection of plastic film from businesses and households – 31 March 2027
- Introduction of weekly food waste collections for households – 1 October 2027.

These timelines are critical for ensuring that both businesses and residents are prepared for the forthcoming changes in waste management practices. These are aimed at enhancing recycling efficiency and reducing overall waste.

Prior to the release of new Government information at the end of November 2024, the Council anticipated that in general the collection practices for kerbside collections for recyclables would remain unchanged. The only expected

modification was an expansion of the waste acceptance criteria for the green-lidded recycling bin. However, newly published Government guidelines now mandate for a separate collection of paper and card, which is a shift away from the current operating model.

Discussions with the County Council and other Nottinghamshire Districts have highlighted the desire to maintain the current collection system, given the current costs (both in collection and processing) and logistical challenges. At the time of writing, consideration is being given to submitting an exemption request under the Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP) framework. This exemption would illustrate that the costs of separating out paper and card would outweigh the benefits.

In addition to the changes in recycling, the introduction of weekly food waste collections is due to commence for households in October 2027 and businesses on 31 March 2025. However, businesses with fewer than 10 employees will not be mandated to participate until 31 March 2027. For trade waste collections, initially the focus will be on businesses that meet the employee threshold (those that have more than 10 employees) to ensure they are compliant but there will be a possibility of expanding the service depending on the trade waste rounds capacity. Further detail is highlighted in **Appendix 1**.

**Appendix 2** contains the Food waste collection service questionnaire, for Trade waste customers. **Appendix 3** contains information on simpler recycling and food waste for domestic collections, and **Appendix 4** contains a copy of the Government's letter relating to Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (EPR).

### Trade waste

This report also addresses the need for a review of the current trade waste service. This is due to an increase in the gate fee for recyclable material (A gate fee is a charge imposed by the County Council for each load of trade waste received at their facilities. The fee reflects the disposal costs associated with that type of waste), which necessitates an analysis of how the Council currently delivers this service. The current decline in the number of businesses utilising the Council's trade waste services underscores the need to undertake a review, which will then inform a marketing strategy and potentially lead to a re-evaluation of pricing. This review is included in the Environment Service's Business Plan 2025-2028 and is planned to occur towards the end of 2025.

### Simpler recycling and food waste collections for domestic households

Further detail on the effects of these new waste and recycling initiatives for households, along with the financial implications including pEPR and the New Burdens Capital funding are detailed in **Appendix 3**.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it will affect two or more Wards.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

Further details on the financial implications are included within the appendices to this report.

The delivery of simpler recycling and weekly food waste is marked by several recent developments. The indications are that the Council will be faced with substantial increases in trade waste disposal fees. A proposed review of trade waste and its pricing in Spring 2025 is deemed prudent to assess the financial implications of these changes. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

The Council has received notice of the New Burdens Funding available to support the implementation of weekly household food waste collections. Whilst this will be used to cover the capital investment costs of the service, there is a funding gap of around £138,000, which may further widen due to inflation. Whilst this budget pressure could be eased by the receipt of a pEPR funding allocation (recent notice of £950,000 potentially being received later in 2025/26), this money may also be partially earmarked to offset Recycling Credits which may be phased out.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Any legal comments will be provided at the meeting.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The implications of Climate Change on recycling and food waste collections are significant, especially in light of the mandates established by the Environment Act 2021. Both trade and domestic properties are required to enhance their recycling practices, which will help to support in the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The transition to more efficient recycling and food waste collection systems will not only help to support environmental goals but will contribute to a circular economy, ultimately mitigating the impacts of climate change.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

Not applicable.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.