

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	03/09/2026
REPORT OF	Carolina Borgstrom – Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Household Food Waste Delivery Plan
STATUS:	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The introduction of a new weekly food waste collection service aligns with our strategic Green Future: Waste and Recycling priority. This establishes the ambition for our waste and recycling services to be resilient and customer friendly and for the services we design and deliver to influence sustainable behaviour, minimise waste streams, and increase recycling.

The Council's priority is for residents to have access to an effective and accessible service, which is delivered right first time. Everyone has a part to play in making sure that we limit the waste we produce and reuse and recycle where we can.

Our priorities are monitored using our vital signs data which includes progress on our household recycling rate.

The North East Lincolnshire Council Waste Management Strategy 2020-2035 also sets out the following priorities and objectives relevant to this report.

- **Customer friendly** to increase the number of households that participate in recycling and increase the amount of recycling collected from each household
- **Environmentally responsible** to reduce the amount of waste produced and collect good quality recycling with a low contamination rate.
- **Education focused** to improve sustainable waste management education and awareness.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Communities Scrutiny Panel with an update on the delivery plan for the introduction of weekly household food waste collections from Spring 2027.

It follows Cabinet approval on 20 August 2025 for an all-household service delivered through dual-podded refuse collection vehicles and supported by borough-wide route optimisation.

The report outlines progress on route modelling, vehicle procurement, food waste containers, recruitment, communications, mobilisation, risks and financial considerations.

The Panel is invited to consider the proposed delivery approach, provide comments on key risks and dependencies, and identify any further assurance it wishes to receive as the final delivery plan is developed.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- Note the progress made in developing the Household Food Waste Delivery Plan following Cabinet approval in August 2025;
- Consider the current position on route optimisation, vehicle procurement, food waste containers, recruitment, communications and mobilisation activity ahead of the planned launch in Spring 2027;
- Provide feedback on the proposed delivery approach, including key dependencies around route modelling, container delivery, treatment arrangements, staffing and resident communications.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 Weekly household food waste collections are being introduced as part of national Government waste and recycling reforms in England. Local authorities are expected to provide separate weekly food waste collections to support more consistent recycling services and reduce biodegradable waste sent for disposal.
- 1.2 The Council's delivery plan sets out how this national requirement will be implemented locally in North East Lincolnshire, using the Cabinet-approved approach to balance compliance, operational deliverability, resident participation and environmental impact.

Route Optimisation

- 1.3 The Council engaged the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) in 2025 to undertake food waste scenario modelling reflecting the change from standard refuse collection vehicles to dual-podded refuse collection vehicles (RCVs). These vehicles include a dedicated food waste pod in addition to a reduced-capacity residual waste compartment.
- 1.4 WRAP's indicative modelling increases the number of collection rounds to 16 (one more than the current delivery model) with 4-person crews (one more loader than the current delivery model).
- 1.5 The Council's existing RCVs can compact c.12T of residual waste (household waste) in a single compaction compartment and typically 'tip' twice a day. The 'dual-podded' RCVs have a smaller residual compaction compartment with a c.7-8T capacity in addition to the 1.5T food waste pod.

- 1.6 Following approval of an Officer Decision Record (ODR) by the appropriate Director and Portfolio Holder, the Council has appointed 'Routeware' through the G-Cloud 13 Framework, via Crown Commercial Services, to commence a data-gathering exercise to build an accurate 'as is' model of delivery, after which the optimisation process will progress at pace.
- 1.7 To ensure all rounds are completed daily, changes to collection days are likely. The scale and nature of those changes cannot be confirmed until the 'as is' model has been received and tested. The first draft model is expected in November 2026, after which future route options will be developed with the Waste Service Management team and assessed for operational deliverability, customer impact and resilience.

Vehicles

- 1.8 19 26T Dennis Eagle dual-podded RCVs were ordered in October 2025 and the build programme is now well advanced with phased deliveries (2 per week) expected between October 2026 and January 2027.
- 1.9 Pending any recommended changes to the round modelling identified by the route optimisation process, 16 will be allocated to the standard rounds with the further 3 acting as a contingency in the event of vehicle downtime.

Food Waste Containers

- 1.10 The procurement process for dedicated food waste bins and caddies has advanced, with tenders published week commencing 17 August. The procurement has been divided into three lots: 5L kitchen caddies and 23L kerbside bins; 120L bins for use in communal properties, including HMOs and LHPs; and 5L-7L caddy liners. It is anticipated caddies and bins will be delivered to the Council in December 2026.
- 1.11 Following initial conversations with 'JET', the sole delivery provider on the G-Cloud Framework, it has been confirmed that bin and caddy delivery to residents can be supported on six-week delivery programme from mid-January 2027 onwards.
- 1.12 Each household will receive two rolls of caddy liners as part of the initial container delivery. These will be distributed alongside the 5L kitchen caddy, 23L kerbside bin and resident information leaflet to support participation from the outset and help residents store and transfer food waste cleanly and securely. Communal properties, including flats and houses in multiple occupation, will also receive kitchen caddies, liners and information leaflets, with use of shared 120L external food waste bins where individual kerbside bins are not suitable.

Food Waste Recruitment

- 1.13 As per the approved business case, a total of 23 new members of staff will be recruited to facilitate the delivery of the food waste service.

- 1.14 The recruitment process will commence in sufficient time to enable new employees to complete an induction process and necessary training in advance of the service launch.

Communications

- 1.15 A communications plan is being developed to support residents before, during and after mobilisation of the new service. This will include information through the Council website, local media, posters, leaflets and direct information issued alongside bin and caddy deliveries. The communications approach will focus on explaining why the service is being introduced, how residents should use the new caddies and bins, what can and cannot be placed in food waste containers, and any changes to collection arrangements arising from route optimisation.
- 1.16 The approach will also include targeted messaging for residents in flats, HMOs and other communal properties where storage and access arrangements may differ from standard kerbside collections. Communications will continue after launch to reinforce participation, address common queries and support behaviour change as the service becomes embedded.
- 1.17 Waste Services is planning to launch the weekly food waste collection service from Spring 2027.
- 1.18 Mobilisation activity will be sequenced around the confirmed vehicle delivery schedule, completion of route optimisation, container and caddy distribution, recruitment and training, treatment and disposal arrangements, and resident communications.
- 1.19 Progress against these milestones will be monitored through the project governance arrangements.

Key Project Milestones

Milestone	Date achieved or expected
Indicative WRAP food waste modelling received	May 2025
Cabinet approval	August 2025
Vehicles ordered	October 2025
ODR approval and Routeware appointed through the G-Cloud 13 Framework	July-August 2026
Tenders published for food waste bins, kitchen caddies, communal bins and caddy liners	August 2026

Phased delivery of vehicles	October 2026 to January 2027
First draft “as is” route model expected from Routeware	November 2026
Food waste caddies and bins delivered to the Council	December 2026
Recruitment and induction of 23 new staff	Late 2026/Early 2027
Resident bin and caddy delivery programme begins	Mid-January 2027 onwards
Recruitment of 23 new staff and completion of induction and training	Before Spring 2027 launch
Service launch	Spring 2027

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

Risks

- 2.1 Key delivery risks include recruitment of sufficient staff to implement the service in accordance with the project plan. The risk is mitigated by the agreed service design, which requires additional loaders rather than additional specialist drivers, and by commencing recruitment in sufficient time to enable induction and operational training before launch.
- 2.2 Treatment and disposal arrangements must be in place before launch. These arrangements will need to align with expected tonnage yields, procurement timescales, contractual requirements and operational mobilisation so that collected food waste can be managed reliably from day one.
- 2.3 The transitional capital funding may not be sufficient to cover the full cost of new vehicles, containers, caddies, liners and associated mobilisation activity. This creates a risk that additional corporate funding or budget management action may be required if procurement costs exceed current assumptions.
- 2.4 It may be more challenging to implement the new food waste collections in flats, HMOs and other communal properties where storage, access and presentation arrangements differ from standard kerbside collections. This will be mitigated through use of communal 120L bins where appropriate, targeted communications and operational review during mobilisation.
- 2.5 Actual tonnage yields may differ from the indicative modelled outputs. The projected food waste tonnages were based on evidence from the local food waste pilot and national evidence from other collection schemes, but participation levels, seasonal patterns and household behaviour may vary. This creates a risk that collection capacity, tipping frequency and disposal arrangements may need to be adjusted once the service is operational.

- 2.6 Residents may not welcome an additional waste container, particularly in areas where storage space is limited or where properties already have multiple bins. Clear resident communications, practical guidance on using caddies and bins, and targeted support for communal properties will be important to encourage participation and minimise avoidable complaints.

Opportunities

- 2.7 Using refuse collection vehicles with an integrated food waste pod minimises the change for residents by avoiding a further separate collection round. This should make participation easier, support higher take-up and reduce the need for additional vehicle movements when compared with a dedicated food waste fleet.
- 2.8 This new service will create new employment opportunities for local people.
- 2.9 The new food waste scheme is expected to increase the overall recycling rate in the borough. It is estimated that the service will divert between 4,000 and 5,500 tonnes of waste from disposal to recycling each year. This is anticipated to increase the baseline recycling rate for waste collected through the wheeled bin scheme by 8 to 11 percentage points, excluding garden waste.

Equalities Issues

- 2.10 Residents in flats, HMOs and other communal settings will receive a 5L kitchen caddy, liners and information leaflet, but may use shared 120L external food waste bins where individual 23L kerbside bins are not suitable. This reflects storage, access and collection constraints and will be supported by targeted communications and operational review during mobilisation.
- 2.11 The reduced residual waste capacity of the dual-podded vehicles means there is a possibility that some rounds may require an additional tip, depending on actual tonnage yields and the final optimised route model. This will be considered as part of the route optimisation process to ensure that operational arrangements remain deliverable and that any impact on collection reliability, accessibility and customer experience is minimised.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 There are potential positive and negative reputational implications for the Council resulting from the implementation of a food waste collection service.
- 3.2 The approved delivery option was subject to options appraisal and provides a balanced approach, taking account of resident experience, workforce requirements, operational deliverability and environmental considerations. Although individual collection days may change, the integrated collection model should provide a simpler approach for residents than introducing an additional separate collection round.
- 3.3 There may be some negative public reaction to the proposed changes, including the provision of an additional food waste container and any changes to collection

days. The Council will seek to manage this through clear, timely and practical communications before, during and after mobilisation. Communications will explain why the service is being introduced, how residents should use it, what support is available for different housing types, and how any collection day changes will be implemented.

- 3.4 The Council will encourage participation through a robust communications and engagement strategy. This will begin once key delivery milestones, including vehicle lead times and container delivery arrangements, are confirmed, and will continue after mobilisation until residents' new waste habits are embedded.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of the household food waste collection service will be managed within the approved financial framework for the project. The approved capital budget for the scheme is £6.123m, comprising £1.358m of new burdens capital transitional grant funding and £4.765m of corporate funding. This budget supports the procurement of the specialist refuse collection vehicles, food waste containers, caddies, liners and associated mobilisation requirements.
- 4.2 The Council has also received £428,052 of new burdens revenue transitional resource grant to support implementation activity. Further new burdens revenue funding is expected from April 2026 to support the ongoing operating costs of food waste collections, although the level and timing of future allocations has not yet been confirmed. Revenue costs and any resulting pressures will continue to be considered through the Council's annual budget setting and medium-term financial planning processes.
- 4.3 The WRAP modelling indicated that the introduction of weekly household food waste collections is expected to increase annual waste collection costs. The selected integrated dual-podded vehicle approach was approved following options appraisal because it provides a balanced method of delivery, limiting the need for an additional separate food waste fleet and reducing the extent of additional vehicle movements when compared with a dedicated food waste collection model.
- 4.4 There remains a financial risk that the available transitional capital funding will not fully cover all implementation costs and that future new burdens revenue funding may not meet the full ongoing cost of operating the service. This risk will be managed through continued procurement oversight, route optimisation, budget monitoring and consideration of revenue implications through established financial planning processes. At this stage, the delivery of the service change is expected to remain within budgetary forecasting.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The delivery of a food waste collection service will create additional employment opportunities within the Council. In its role as Corporate Parent, the Council will actively support care experienced young people to access suitable work opportunities where appropriate. In addition, the scheme, alongside existing educational initiatives, will help raise awareness among children and young

people about the importance of waste reduction and recycling.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The indicative modelling completed by WRAP identified a need for a total of 16 rounds; one round more than the current service.
- 6.2 The previous decision to incorporate food waste collection into the existing waste rounds, rather than establishing dedicated food waste rounds, is the most sustainable and carbon-efficient method, by reducing overall fleet and journeys made. This approach aligns with our sustainability goals.
- 6.3 Given the reduced tonnage capacity of the 'pod' vehicles, there is a risk that the vehicles may need to make an additional 'tip' per round, subject to collection tonnages. If this is the case, the potential environmental impact is mitigated by the fewer number of rounds than would have been required if implementing separate collections.

7. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The introduction of a weekly household food waste collection service is expected to have a positive wider public health and environmental impact by supporting cleaner, more sustainable waste management practices, reducing the amount of food waste placed in residual bins and encouraging households to recycle unavoidable food waste. By providing an indoor kitchen caddy, an external food waste container or communal food waste provision, and supporting information, the scheme is designed to make participation as simple and accessible as possible for residents.
- 7.2 The service has potential to support Marmot principles by helping to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities. Waste and recycling services affect all households, and the delivery plan will need to ensure that the service is accessible across different housing types, including flats, HMOs, communal properties and more densely populated areas where storage may be more challenging. The use of communal 120L bins, targeted communications and continued operational review will help to mitigate potential inequalities in access and participation.
- 7.3 The scheme will also contribute to wider environmental determinants of health by supporting waste reduction, recycling and improved environmental quality. The communications and education activity linked to the mobilisation of the service will help residents understand how to use the scheme effectively and may also support longer-term behaviour change around waste prevention and recycling.

8. MONITORING COMMENTS

- 8.1 In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer

(Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

9. WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The proposed service will have borough-wide impact and will affect all wards.
- 9.2 The implementation plan will seek to minimise inequalities between wards, particularly where housing type, density or bin storage arrangements may make participation more challenging.
- 9.3 By integrating food waste collections with existing waste collections wherever possible, the approach aims to reduce disruption, support ease of participation and encourage long-term engagement with the service.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[6.-Food-Waste-Implementation-Cabinet-Report.pdf](#)

11. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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