



Report to: Portfolio Holder for Climate and the Environment

Decision Date: 10 March 2025

Portfolio Holders: Cllr Simon Forde, Portfolio Holder for Climate and the Environment, in consultation with Cllr Paul Peacock, Council Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director of Communities and Environment

Lead Officer: Andrew Kirk, Business Manager Environmental Services

<b>Report Summary</b>	
<b>Type of Report</b>	Open Report
<b>Report Title</b>	Simpler Recycling - responding to new food waste legislation for businesses
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	For the Portfolio Holders to approve resources to enable the Council to meet the Simpler Recycling legislation. Due to extremely short lead times, resources need to be put in place to afford a start date of 1 April 2025.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirms for the Council to deliver the additional Simpler Recycling Service to businesses in Newark &amp; Sherwood District;</li> <li>2. Note the inclusion of provision in the Capital Programme Budget 2025/6 to 2028/9 for the purchase of a food waste vehicle in anticipation of approval by the Portfolio Holder; and</li> <li>3. Note the increase in the establishment by 1 driver from 2025/26, already in the Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 in anticipation of approval by the Portfolio Holder.</li> </ol>
<b>Alternative Considered</b>	<b>Options</b> As this service is legally mandated the only other option would be to not offer the service at all. This would result in major losses within the waste management service.

<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	This service helps to meet the Community Plan aspiration of “Protect & enhance the district’s natural environment and green spaces” by improving recycling as well as adhering to new legislation.
<b>Decision Taken</b>	As per the recommendation.

**1.0 Background**

In 2018, the former government laid its plans to revolutionise the way local authorities collected and managed recyclable waste through the National Resources and Waste Strategy. This has since been reviewed and is now being progressed under the title of ‘Simpler Recycling’. One of the key parts of this strategy is the move to create consistent waste and recycling collections across the UK and to mandate local authorities to collect food waste on a weekly schedule.

For Newark and Sherwood, this will mean items such as foil, food and beverage cartons and plastic tubs, pots and trays will be acceptable in the silver bin alongside the existing range of materials.

For several reasons, there have been delays to implementing this policy but with recent payments being made by central government to local authorities, we are finding ourselves in a position where we can actually plan for how these changes will impact NSDC and how they might be paid for.

Food waste collections will be taking place from October 2027 and plans are already underway to determine round sizes, vehicle numbers, disposal points, bin colours, staff requirements and depot requirements. Discussions with NCC and Veolia are still taking place to determine the viability of varying the environmental permit to allow food waste to be taken to Veolia’s transfer station on Brunel Drive. If this can be arranged, it will not be in place until October 2027 and is not an option for commercial food waste disposal.

**1.1 The most notable changes and timescales for how we will collect waste and recycling going forward are;**

**April 2025**

Trade waste customers with 10 or more employees will be obliged to separate food waste and arrange for this to be collected separately. These businesses will also be required to separate and arrange collections for an extended range of recyclable materials. Schools and educational establishments are also required to separate and arrange collections for an extended range of recyclable materials.

**April 2026**

All households will be able to recycle an extended range of materials in their silver bin.

### **April 2027**

All domestic and commercial premises will be able to recycle plastic film (soft plastics) from the kerbside.

All other commercial premises will be required to recycle the extended range of materials and collect food waste.

### **October 2027**

All households will be able to access weekly food waste collections from the kerbside.

## **2.0 Proposal**

As can be seen from the information above there is a requirement to offer Simpler Recycling (including food waste collections) for commercial customers a year to 18 months before Nottinghamshire has to provide the service to residents. To that end we need to ensure that we have the resources in place prior to 1 April 2025 to enable us to meet our legal obligations. Timelines and recommendations have been changed numerous times over the last 12 months, leaving us with very little time to put things in place. The supply of food waste vehicles nationally has now been exhausted but the Business Manager has been able to secure a vehicle from contacts within the industry. This vehicle has already been ordered to be ready for the commencement of the service from 1 April 2025, and, in anticipation of the Portfolio Holder Decision, was included in the budget approved by Council on 6 March 2025. Revenue budget for the running of the vehicle, container supply and a driver for the service have also already been put in place.

## **2.1 Food Waste**

Although the disposal cost of food waste is not expensive (£13.50 per tonne), the journey to Bio Dynamic in Colwick is a 44 mile round trip from our depot and would take a significant proportion from the working day.

To maximise efficiency, we would plan to make this journey once per day. Therefore an 11 tonne vehicle will be required to ensure that all of the food waste collected each day can be confined to one load. As the disposal point food waste is currently Colwick and the option of Newark transfer station is not available, it is also proposed that 11 tonne vehicles will be used when the food waste service is extended to domestic properties for the same reason.

Due to the nationwide demand for these vehicles and following discussions with colleagues in finance to budget for capital expenditure and revenue it has been necessary to place an order for an 11t food waste vehicle. It would have been unlikely that we would have been able to start the food waste collections by 1 April if there were any delays in ordering this vehicle.

NSDC currently collect waste from over 60 schools across the district. The waste generated from educational premises is Schedule 2 household waste from a non-domestic source. It means that we can charge for the collection of the waste but not

the disposal. Waste generated from school falls under the transitional arrangement for food waste collections (to be introduced in October 2027) but not for recycling and the simpler recycling materials need to be collected from April 2025.

In order to fully utilise the new food waste vehicle, it is proposed to offer food waste collections to schools and letters have been sent out to ascertain the levels of interest in this service.

Depending on take up, there is also the option to open this up to smaller businesses as although they won't have a legal obligation to separate their food waste, they may have a desire to do so to boost their own 'green' credentials.

As food waste is not compulsory for schools at this stage, it is possible that there will be a low take up of the service considering the additional cost.

## **2.2 Commercial Recycling**

Unfortunately, due to the very limited options available to dispose of the extended recyclable materials and the significant increase in disposal cost, servicing all of our schools and customers with 10 or more employees with the expanded range of materials is not something that we would be able to facilitate within our existing resources and would likely result in customers moving to one of our competitors. The current best offering from NCC is to take the recycling 22 miles away (2.5 hour round trip) to Veolia's disposal facility at Colwick, Nottingham. The alternative disposal facility is located at Raynesway, Derby which is 44 miles away (3.5 hour round trip). The cost to dispose at either of these facilities is £130 per tonne, which is triple the disposal fee of £44 per tonne to tip at Veolia's transfer station in Newark.

It is therefore intended to offer the additional range of 'simpler recycling' materials to businesses and schools in a separate bin and the existing range of materials will continue 'as is'. This means that the higher disposal rate will only apply to the smaller volume compared to if all of the recycling was collected together. The existing range can continue to be taken to Newark Transfer Station which will have significantly shorter journey times and disposal costs.

We will continue to offer recycling to businesses with less than 10 employees and collect the same range of materials so that we can utilise the existing tipping arrangements. By the time these commercial customers will be affected by the simpler recycling changes in April 2026, the Material Recycling Facility where our waste is currently treated will be upgraded to be able to accept this waste. It remains to be seen whether the disposal costs will revert to the cheaper rate once the MRF is able to take the additional materials.

We will collect the full range of materials produced from schools in one bin and on a fortnightly basis. These will be collected alongside the 'simpler recycling' bins from the larger businesses.

## **2.3 Recycling**

A significant increase in commercial recycling disposal costs could result in existing customers seeking alternative waste management providers leading to a reduction in income.

### **3.0 Further Considerations**

There is likely going to be a significant shift in the provision of bins to trade waste customers over the next 12 months. Businesses will be reducing their residual waste capacity and introducing or increasing their recycling capacity. With around 1300 businesses currently being collected from, even a small percentage of customers requiring a change it would result in a significant level of purchasing, storage, exchanges and disposal of bins.

### **4.0 Summary**

As a waste collection authority, we have a statutory obligation to either provide a commercial waste service or have provisions in place to direct businesses to an external service provider. These obligations are now extended to include the changes associated with the introduction of simpler recycling and by approving the proposals mentioned in this report, we can ensure that we are fully compliant by offering the full range of services to businesses in the district.

However, the businesses themselves are responsible for making arrangements and determining if they are affected by these changes.

To assist with this, we have engaged with all of our customers to make them aware and to notify them that they can contact us to arrange their collections. By providing waste services for all elements of the new Simpler Recycling initiative to local businesses in our area, we will be very well placed to maintain our customer numbers. We can ensure that we remain financially competitive to customers and look to take on new customers.

### **5.0 Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

#### **5.1 Financial Implications - Trade/Commercial Food Waste Collections FIN24-25/3183**

The 2025/26 revenue budget has been revised to reflect the increase to the establishment of 1x NS7 Driver at the cost of £40k including oncosts.

The running costs for a new Vehicle should be minimal in its infancy months and will be absorbed by existing budgets and built into future budgets. It is estimated that the new bin costs will be in the region of £12k (£20 x 600 240l bins) and will initially be absorbed by the Business Unit.

The Capital Programme has 1 new 11 tonne Food Vehicle, estimated to be £125k-£130k, built in the budget.

#### **5.2 Legal Implications LEG2425/7397**

There is a legal requirement for businesses to participate in Simpler Recycling. As a Waste Collection Authority the Council has a legal duty to provide, or facilitate, this disposal route.

**5.3 Human Resources Implications - HR2425/4282 SL**

Recruitment of one additional LGV driver is required and recruitment to the post will be carried out in line with the Councils procedures ensuring equality of opportunity.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None