

**REPORT FROM: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL SERVICES**

**TO: EXECUTIVE**

**DATE: 30th MAY 2024**

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## **DOMESTIC WEEKLY FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on the introduction of weekly food waste collections and to seek Member approval to carry out tendering exercises for capital expenditure items such as vehicles and caddies to ensure Pendle is ready to meet the DEFRA deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) To grant authority to the Assistant Director Operational Services to start working towards the introduction of weekly food waste collections.
- (3) To grant authority to the Assistant Director Operational Services to purchase vehicles and caddies through standalone procurement exercises.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To ensure arrangements are in place to deliver a weekly collection scheme from all domestic premises within the Borough from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

### **ISSUE**

1. The Environment Act 2021 became law in November 2021. The Act introduced changes to waste collection services so that recyclable household waste (which includes food waste) had to be 'collected separately from other household waste'. Food waste itself must be collected at least once a week.
2. DEFRA initially reported that they wanted local authorities to have a separate food waste collection service in place as soon as possible. Initially they proposed that the requirement for weekly separate food waste collection would be introduced during the 2023/24 financial year. This deadline was then moved back to April 2025 but was later moved to April 2026.

3. DEFRA expect food waste to be treated through anaerobic digestion or In Vessel Composting (IVC) rather than Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) processes, where it is normally collected as part of the residual waste stream. In preparation for this the County Council have been redeveloping the material reclamation facility in Farington in order to be able to accept food waste at this site.
4. The County Council report they will not be providing any other facilities for food waste and as such each District will be required to deliver material collected from kerbside collections to the facility at Leyland.
5. On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024, the Council was provided with information on the level of indicative capital transitional costs for the introduction of weekly food waste collections. The Council were advised we would receive £793,377 with the payment being split as below.

Kitchen caddies	Kerbside caddies	Communal bins	Vehicles	Total
85,302	194,393	2,182	511,500	793,377

6. The Council wrote to DEFRA in February requesting a review of the capital award providing evidence as directed to show we required an additional £198,000 if underspend from one budget stream could be used to fund another or alternatively £272,500 would be required if underspends could not be re-used. At the time of writing this report no response has been provided by DEFRA.
7. In the interest of working towards the introduction of weekly food waste collections Council representatives have attended the Lancashire Waste Strategy Group and the Lancashire Chief Executive's Waste Strategy Sub Group meetings and the Operational and Strategic working group (OPSTRAT) that has been set up to look into the introduction of food waste collections across the County.
8. The activities of the subgroup and OPSTRAT working group have on occasion mirrored each other with both groups advising that it would be possible for all Districts and unitary authorities to consider a joint procurement exercise for kitchen and kerbside caddies in the hope of achieving greater discounts than purchasing singularly.
9. A similar exercise for vehicles was not insurmountable but would need detailed work to ensure all variations of specifications that may be required could be captured and included in any specification document released for tendering.
10. Though a joint procurement stance was being recommended a press release issued in March has recorded that South Ribble has set about sourcing the facilities that households will need to separate their leftover food from other rubbish. Chorley Council Executive cabinet has also taken the decision to move forward with the introduction of a food waste collection service when they met on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
11. It is suspected other authorities will be moving forward with making arrangements for weekly food waste collections to ensure they meet the April 2026 deadline.
12. The position for Pendle is we have agreed capital in excess of £1000,000, created from £793,377 awarded by DEFRA and £281,807 from Pendle's own capital programme. We are awaiting the outcome of DEFRA's review of our capital allocation.
13. We currently have no information on the amount of transitional and new burden funding from DEFRA though within their letter to all Local Authorities issued on 9<sup>th</sup> January DEFRA have advised resource transitional funding would be provided from the 2024/2025 financial year and ongoing revenue funding would be provided from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

14. Internal calculations have resulted in costs of around £900,000 annually being incurred dependant on the level of caddies replaced, liners issued, fuel and staff required to provide the scheme
15. Investigation into possible delivery times for the equipment required to deliver the food waste service has found vehicles are currently delivered 12 months after ordering and caddies are currently available within 10 weeks after ordering. Recent discussion with a potential supplier however finds that from ordering through to roll out to resident can take 5 months.
16. Discussion with equipment providers has found there is little or no impact on unit price for kitchen and kerbside caddies if bought in bulk across the County. Unit prices are advertised on procurement websites and batches reduce in price to a maximum of a trailer load. No further incentives are promoted.
17. Equipment providers are fully expectant that manufacturing slots will be taken as we move nearer to the manufacturers delivery deadline for producing equipment in time to meet the requirement to deliver a weekly food waste collection service. Even with looking to Europe or beyond if orders are not placed within the next few months, it is likely equipment will not be delivered in time to start the required collection scheme.
18. We are concerned that delaying ordering equipment and vehicles will impact on our ability to meet the Governments deadline yet introducing food waste collections without knowledge of transitional and new burden funding is a risk.
19. Mindful of manufacturers capacity to produce equipment in the numbers needed across the country and conscious available production slots will reduce as we draw nearer to the critical order dates for both vehicles and caddies we would recommend that tendering exercises are completed to secure vehicles, caddies and the delivery of both prior to information on new burden funding being released. Without doing so we are unsure if we would be able to meet the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 deadline.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** Links with Priority 1 within the Council's Corporate Plan. Providing high quality services and facilities. Develop a Council that is as effective and efficient as it can be.

**Financial:** Capital of in excess of £1 million has been set aside within the Council's capital budget. Budget created by DEFRA's £793,377 allocation and Pendle's capital commitment of £281,807.

We are awaiting news from DEFRA on whether additional capital funding will be received.

Ongoing revenue costs of £900,000 estimated to provide staff and equipment to deliver weekly food waste collections from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. We are currently awaiting guidance from DEFRA on the provision of transitional and New Burdens funding

**Legal:** None arising from this report

**Risk Management:** Completing tendering exercises will strengthen our ability to have vehicles and equipment available to deliver the weekly collection scheme from the 1st April 2026

**Health and Safety:** None arising from this report

**Sustainability:** Further investigation into the development of Fleet Street Depot has been requested within this we will explore the possibility of permitting Fleet Street Depot to accept food

waste. Local infrastructure will reduce the need for all food waste collection vehicles to travel 29 miles beyond the Borough's boundary to transfer collected waste materials.

**Community Safety:** None arising from this report

**Equality and Diversity:** None arising from this report

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None