

Report Title	DOMESTIC FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS
Meeting	EXECUTIVE
Meeting Date	22 nd January 2026
Report Author	David Walker
Directorate	Place
Lead Executive Member(s)	Councillor Zafar Ali
Wards Affected	All
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	Public
Appendices (if any)	None

1. Executive Summary

1.1 To provide Executive Members with an update on the progress and planned activities for the introduction of weekly domestic food waste collections within the Borough.

1.2 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.

1.3 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. No further changes have been made.

1.4 In May 2024 the Executive resolved that the Assistant Director Operational Services be granted authority to start working towards the introduction of weekly food waste collections and as part of this process be allowed to purchase caddies and vehicles for the scheme through standalone procurement exercises.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Executive is recommended to:

2.1 Endorse the actions taken and to be taken.

3. Information: The Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

3.1 In May 2024 the Executive considered a report which provided an update on the introduction of weekly food waste collections. Authority was given to the Assistant Director Operational Services to carry out tendering exercises for capital expenditure items such as vehicles and caddies to ensure Pendle was ready to meet the DEFRA deadline of 1st April 2026.

3.2 The report provided information on the financial implications of the introduction of the scheme. A capital budget in excess of £1m had been set aside within the Council's Capital Programme. DEFRA had allocated funding of £793,377 to the Council and Pendle's capital commitment was £281,807 (funded by borrowing).

3.3 The report advised ongoing revenue costs of £900,000 had been estimated to provide staff and equipment to deliver the scheme from 1st April 2026.

3.4 Members were advised of the long lead times for new vehicles and equipment to deliver this scheme. The report set out the risk in delaying ordering equipment and vehicles and the impact any such delay would have on the Council's ability to meet the Government's deadline.

In response to the report Members resolved that the Assistant Director Operational Services be granted authority to start working towards the introduction of weekly food waste collections. That authority included the purchasing of vehicles and caddies to deliver the scheme.

3.5 Following Members' approval, extensive modelling of scenarios based on participation levels, weights and mileage have been completed and the level of resources that will be required to provide weekly food waste collections across the Borough has been identified.

3.6 In response to these findings:8 New collection vehicles were ordered in October 2024. Three vehicles are currently in build and expected delivery for vehicles starts from the beginning of February 2026. The remaining vehicles are due delivery prior to the end of March 2026

3.7 43,000 23 litre external and 43,000 5 litre Internal caddies with liners have been purchased. Delivery to Fleet Street depot has commenced and will continue through to January 2026. Liners will be delivered in January 2026.

3.8 Distribution from the depot to the residents' homes will commence on Monday 2nd February 2026. Deliveries are expected to take 20 working days. Teams will work Monday – Saturday between 07.00am and 5.00pm

3.9 An initial recruitment of drivers and waste collection operatives has been completed. Staff will be in post in January 2026 to support delivery of the new scheme and to allow time for the teams to learn new routes and assisted collections.

3.10 Reference to weekly food waste collections was highlighted in the annual leaflet issued in November 2025. Press releases and social media updates are planned

to run from 9th December through to April 2026. Releases will advise residents of the scheme, the purpose for its introduction, the arrival of their caddies and what can be recycled as food waste.

3.11 A programme of community engagement activities is currently being created. Our staff will be delivering promotional events in supermarkets, civic halls, libraries and other public areas as we lead up to April 2026.

3.12 Leaflets promoting the scheme will be delivered to all residential properties from week commencing the 2nd February 2026.

3.13

Disposal arrangements are yet to be finalised. The County Council has confirmed that should local facilities be available skips and transfer will be provided. Should local facilities not be available, the default position is to transfer to facilities within Leyland for which tipping away payments will be received. At the time of writing we are pursuing guidance from the Environment Agency regarding the temporary storage of material within the redeveloped site at Fleet Street.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (Providing High Quality Services and Facilities, Proud and Connected Communities and Places) (Good Growth)

4.1 The new scheme will create new jobs and development opportunities for our new and existing staff.

4.2 The new fleet will impact positively on delivery of statutory and income generating services, allowing Operational Services to investigate the in-house introduction of a commercial food waste service.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

Capital Expenditure and Funding

The scheme had an agreed capital budget in of £1,000,000, created from £793,377 awarded by DEFRA and £281,807 from Pendle's own capital programme. To date, the Council has spent and committed £1,091,863

Revenue Expenditure and Funding

The revenue costs of implementing the Scheme (including project management, communications and container delivery) will be met from Transitional Revenue Funding of £255,546 provided by DEFRA.

It is estimated that the cost of operating the Scheme with effect from 1st April 2026 will be £1,194,620. Details of this are shown in the table below:-

Staffing	£978,620
Transports (Vehicles)	£216,000

In estimating the operating costs of the Scheme, initially it has been assumed that there will be 100% take up although as Councillors will appreciate, it is difficult to predict this with any accuracy; it will be a matter that remains under review. Acknowledging that take-up may vary, the staffing budget provides for some agency costs, should that be necessary.

Tipping away payments figure provided by Lancashire County Council calculate to 0.59p per mile per tonne. Figure for transferring material to Farrington Waste Recovery Plant was quoted as being £18.28p

Originally, the Government had indicated that funding for the revenue costs of implementing and operating the scheme would be met by funding provided under the New Burdens Doctrine. Latterly, however, this appears not to be the case. The Local Government Policy Statement for 2026/27 states:

The government remains committed to supporting local authorities to deliver weekly food waste collections. Ongoing funding was allocated through the Spending Review and will be provided through the Settlement, rather than as a separate new burdens grant. This funding is included within the overall uplift to local government confirmed at the Spending Review, and will be provided to local authorities through the Settlement.

It has not been possible to establish what additional funding has been provided in the Funding Settlement for weekly food waste collection.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

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

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report

5.3 Climate and Biodiversity Implications

The new scheme will continue to support the Council's drive to reduce its impact on the environment. The introduction of food waste collections is forecast to increase the Borough recycling rate from 29.1% to 38.2%. Additional steps such

as limiting container size or amending the frequency of non-recycling collections estimate recycling performance could increase to 42.1%

5.4 Human Resources Implications

Additional staff are required to provide the weekly food waste collection service.

5.5 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no equality and diversity issues arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

6. Consultation

Resident panels were consulted regarding their preferences on internal and external caddies.

7. Alternative Options Considered

None. The scheme is mandatory.

8. Statutory Officer Sign off (please tick)

Section 151 Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

9. Background Documents

N/A

Contact Officers

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