

WASTE STRATEGY 2022-2027

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Cabinet, having considered the recommendations of the Environment and Sustainability Overview & Scrutiny Panel, approves and recommends to Council the adoption of the Waste Strategy 2022-2027. The adoption of the Strategy includes changes to frontline services and one-off transition costs as follows:
 - a) the introduction of a weekly food waste collection service
 - b) the adoption of a two-weekly, “twin stream” recycling service to enable residents to recycle a greater range and quantity of recyclable materials (collected on the opposite week to general waste)
 - c) the introduction of a two-weekly collection of general waste (collected on the opposite week to recycling)
 - d) the use of wheeled bins for general waste and mixed recycling, with paper and card collected in a reusable bag
 - e) the use of wheeled bins for garden waste collections (collections remain two-weekly)
 - f) transition funding of £1.1m is required to mobilise the roll-out of the new strategy, including delivery of new bins, temporary staff, communications and education. Beyond the transition period, communications and education will continue to have a vital role in reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- 1.2 That authority is delegated to the Executive Heads in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Coastal Services to take all operational decisions to implement the above recommendations and all aspects of the Strategy.
- 1.3 That the progression of the strategy is on the understanding that new burdens funding will cover the increased costs associated with food waste collection.
- 1.4 That the council continue to monitor progress at national and regional level to ensure that Strategy implementation is compliant and delivered in the most financially efficient manner.
- 1.5 That allowance is made within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Planning to accommodate a variety of funding scenarios until clarity on new burdens and new income is provided.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report presents the council’s proposed waste strategy for 2022-2027.

- 2.2 Considerable work and research has been undertaken to assess and determine the strategic approach to a modernised waste collection service that will prevent waste, increase recycling, and deliver on the council's objectives regarding climate change. This work has been led by the Sustainable Waste Management Councillor Task and Finish Group.
- 2.3 This report provides background on the waste strategy review research carried out since 2019, as well as the implications of this strategy on residents, staff, resources and the environment. The strategy itself describes the policy drivers and objectives in detail, as well as actions and further work required to meet these objectives. The Strategy is Appendix A to this report.
- 2.4 Waste and recycling is the only council service that is delivered directly to every household, every week. The council has an obligation to provide a service that encourages waste prevention and minimisation, and the most effective way to do this is to change the frontline collection services. It is a significant challenge for any local authority to manage waste in a more sustainable way and reducing waste and increasing the amount of material recycled is key, along with making it as easy as possible for residents to make positive choices and use the services correctly.
- 2.5 The council is committed to sustainability and the protection of natural resources as outlined in its Corporate Plan, Community Matters 2020 to 2024, and has a desire to improve its recycling rate. Additionally, the council declared a climate change and nature emergency in October 2021 and approved an action plan in February 2022.
- 2.6 In December 2018, the UK Government released 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England' (known as the Resources and Waste Strategy, or RaWS). The strategy set out key objectives for dealing with waste at a national level and suggests ways in which these objectives might be achieved. New Forest District Council recycling rates are currently 34% (2020-21), significantly below the national average of 43%. The current national target has been set at 55% by 2025, rising to 65% by 2035. The current collection system will not meet these national recycling targets or be in line with forthcoming legislation.
- 2.7 NFDC is a waste collection authority, and works closely with other Hampshire councils, particularly Hampshire County Council who are the waste disposal authority and therefore responsible for the disposal of the waste we collect. As part of infrastructure renewal and a new joint strategy for all Hampshire authorities, changes to collection services will be needed.
- 2.8 In response, a waste strategy has been developed which provides a roadmap for how NFDC will manage its waste and recycling collection service to meet local needs, whilst ensuring any environmental impact is minimised, and that the requirements of any wider policy drivers are met. It details service changes and initiatives that are needed to meet these aims and objectives. This report seeks to agree the council's preferred waste collection arrangements necessary to implement the strategy.
- 2.9 It is important to note that the NFDC waste strategy has had to make certain assumptions about future Government policy and legislation, and future arrangements for dealing with waste and recycling in partnership with Hampshire County Council. Changes to these assumptions will mean that the strategy may have to flex and adapt. This is particularly the case regarding financial elements, when for example there is still uncertainty about the council's ability to charge for

certain services (e.g. garden waste) and the scale and scope of future funding direct from the Government and/or via Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR, see section 16.5 for further information).

3. Policy Drivers

3.1 Local, regional and national policy objectives are driving the agenda for a more sustainable approach to waste management, along with the waste hierarchy principles that prioritise reducing waste in the first instance, with disposal as its lowest priority. NFDC has a legal obligation to manage waste as high up the hierarchy as possible, driving material up the waste hierarchy and reducing CO₂ emissions accordingly. The strategy has this objective as its focus.

3.2 The strategy itself details the main policy and strategic drivers for change, broken down as follows:

- *Local drivers – for example NFDC’s commitment to the climate change and nature emergency, and desires to improve recycling rates and improve working conditions for staff.*
- *Regional drivers – for example NFDC’s commitment to collecting “twin stream” recycling, and the requirements for new waste infrastructure in Hampshire.*
- *National drivers – for example new requirements for councils to collect recyclable waste differently in future, and new national schemes to overhaul funding and increase recycling rates through deposit return schemes*

3.3 These drivers have led to the development of a new waste strategy that:

- Complies with the legal obligation to apply the waste hierarchy principles by prioritising the reduction of waste first, followed by reuse and recycling, and finally recovery and disposal.
- Complies with Government direction regarding the consistency of collections
- Is compatible with our Hampshire partners regarding future waste and recycling transfer and processing arrangements
- Delivers the council’s strategic commitment of increasing recycling rates and reducing carbon emissions
- Meets resident expectations by collecting a greater range of material for recycling
- Provides greater protection to council staff, from the risks associated with waste and recycling collections

3.4 The proposed waste strategy 2022 – 2027 actively supports this case for change, ensuring compliance, maximising collaborative efficiencies, and contributing to the council’s sustainability commitments.

4. Current Service and Performance

- 4.1 Under Section 46 of the Environment Protection Act (1990), the council must arrange for the collection of household waste, but it can require residents to place the waste for collection in receptacles of any kind and number specified, providing flexibility to design collection schemes which are best suited for local circumstances and priorities.
- 4.2 The current service, summarised in the table below, provides for weekly collection of general waste and mixed dry recycling, with a separate four weekly collection of glass and an optional paid service for the two-weekly collection of garden waste. The net cost of providing the waste collection service in 2020/21 was £53 per household.

Collection Service	General waste	Mixed Dry Recycling	Glass	Garden Waste (chargeable)
Receptacle	Black Sacks	Clear Sacks	Plastic Box	Reusable Bag
Collection Frequency	Weekly	Weekly	Every Four Weeks	Fortnightly
Materials Collected	General waste	Cardboard, newspapers and magazines, plastic bottles, food tins & drinks cans	Mixed glass	Garden waste

- 4.3 As highlighted in 2.6, recycling rates are considerably lower than the national average and future targets. Further performance measures are detailed in the strategy.
- 4.4 Whilst there are high levels of public satisfaction with many elements of the existing service, there is also a high demand for a wider range of materials collected for recycling. Some residents have concerns over the ripping of collection sacks by animals and livestock within the forest and by seagulls in coastal parts of the district, as well as the use of single use plastics in the form of sacks provided for collection. See section 9.3 of this report for further information.

5. Waste Strategy

- 5.1 The waste strategy (Appendix A) sets out the approach to managing waste and recycling in a more sustainable way, with the aim of reducing the environmental impact of waste in the New Forest. It focuses on the waste hierarchy and prioritises the reduction, reuse, and recycling of waste.
- 5.2 The aim of the strategy is to *“provide the New Forest district with a cost and carbon efficient recycling and waste service that maximises the recovery of valuable natural resources and meets the need and expectations of residents. We will ensure that this service is compliant with forthcoming national legislation and compatible with any new working arrangements with our Hampshire partners.”*
- 5.3 Its objectives are expanded on within the strategy, and are as follows:

Objective 1 – Minimise carbon impact of waste/recycling service

Objective 2 – Increase quality and quantity of recycling

Objective 3 - Reduce levels of overall household waste

Objective 4 – Legislative and regulatory compliance

5.4 The strategy defines 13 clear actions to meet these strategic objectives prioritised in line with the waste hierarchy. It is a wide-ranging strategy covering the council's approach over a 5-year period.

5.5 In order to provide a service that aligns to the strategic objectives of the council and the national requirements, a new collection service is required as a key outcome – this is described in the next section.

6 Waste Collection Service Options Assessment

6.1 Funded by the waste advisory body WRAP, specialist consultants were engaged in 2018-19 to:

- benchmark the council's services against similar authorities; and
- assess a range of kerbside collection options with the aim of improving the amount of household waste recycled and reducing residual waste.

6.2 National-level benchmarking showed that when compared to authorities with similar characteristics across England, NFDC was in the third quartile when considering both recycling performance, and levels of general waste collected. More targeted benchmarking selected 10 authority areas that shared characteristics with NFDC. When ranking recycling yields (measured in kilogrammes of different materials collected per household), NFDC was placed 7 out of 11, and when looking at levels of general waste, NFDC was ranked 9 out of 11. This highlighted the opportunity to increase the capture of recyclable material by expanding the range of recyclables collected, restricting general waste via containerisation, and introducing food waste collections.

6.3 The council and specialist consultants originally identified six possible waste and recycling collection options. These were all assessed by the consultant as part of options modelling. The options considered were identified at a time when the key outcomes from the government's national strategy were still emerging. It soon became clear that options that did not include the collection of food waste, and/or some level of separation of recyclable material, would not be viable going forward. This left three viable options. The table below summarises the three viable options assessed.

Option	General Waste	Mixed Dry Recycling ¹ (plastic, cans, paper, card)	Glass	Food	Garden
1 "3 weekly refuse plus food waste"	Once every 3 weeks, wheeled bin	Fortnightly, wheeled bin	Once every four weeks, recycling box	Weekly, caddy	Fortnightly (charged), wheeled bin
2 "Fortnightly refuse and recycling plus food waste"	Fortnightly, wheeled bin	Fortnightly, wheeled bin	Once every four weeks, recycling box	Weekly, caddy	Fortnightly (charged), wheeled bin
3 "Kerbside sort with food waste"	Fortnightly, wheeled bin	Weekly, multi-stream ²			Fortnightly (charged), wheeled bin

6.4 This modelling concluded the following:

- all three options would result in a net additional cost to the council, largely due to the cost of food waste collection.
- all three would result in an increase in recycling performance, in the range of 15-20 percentage points.
- The use of bins and reduction in collection frequency of general waste results in improved recycling performance
- The use of bins will result in financial savings when compared to the continuous annual provision of disposable sacks
- Collection of waste from bins is slower than collection of sacks but cost benefits of reducing the collection frequency outweigh any collection inefficiencies from use of bins.

6.5 Via an appraisal that took account of not only cost and performance improvement, but also qualitative factors such as customer satisfaction and visual impact, a preferred option was identified. Option 2 - was assessed as the most feasible model to deliver the council's aims of minimising environmental impact by reducing waste and increasing recycling, achieving good value for money, legal compliance, and synergy with county-wide arrangements.

6.6 The main factors leading to the discounting of other options were:

- Option 1 - significant reduction in collection frequency for general waste, from weekly to 3-weekly.
- Option 3 - manual handling impact upon staff, the suitability of this kind of collection vehicle in the New Forest, and the increased number of collection containers (and sorting) required in each household. Subsequent analysis

¹ For the baseline, option 1 and option 2b, this way of collecting recycling is known as "twin stream" because recycling is collected in 2 streams – mixed dry recycling, and glass.

² Multi-stream is a collection system whereby recycling is sorted into numerous containers by the householder. These containers are emptied by hand into one side-loading multi-compartment vehicle.

carried out with Hampshire partners showed that this option would have significant infrastructure implications, particularly on the network of waste transfer stations which would need significant investment by HCC to accept material collected in a kerbside sort system.

- 6.7 Further work on the implications of the national strategy, in particular the need to keep paper and card separate from other recyclables to maintain its quality for recycling, meant that preferred option would need to be amended. This is shown below, and compared to the existing service:

Option	General Waste	Mixed Dry Recycling (plastic, cans, paper, card)	Glass	Food	Garden
Current service	Weekly, single-use sack	Weekly, single-use sack	Once every four weeks, recycling box	n/a	Fortnightly (charged), reusable bag
Option	General Waste	Mixed Dry Recycling (plastic, cans, glass)	Paper and card	Food	Garden
Preferred option	Fortnightly, 180L wheeled bin	Fortnightly, 180L wheeled bin	Fortnightly, 90L reusable bag	Weekly, 23L caddy	Fortnightly (charged), 240L wheeled bin

- 6.8 This preferred option was therefore incorporated into a draft waste strategy which was released in November 2020.

7. Service Change

- 7.1 The introduction of the strategy will result in significant service change as detailed in the table above. Comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessments for residents and for staff (Appendix C and D) have been undertaken to support these changes to the kerbside collection service. There may be instances where alternative arrangements are required for certain property types. This is discussed in section 8 of the waste strategy (Appendix A).
- 7.2 Collections of general waste and recycling will take place on alternate weeks, meaning that residents will receive a collection of food waste plus a bin collection every week. Mixed recycling and paper/card will be collected on the same vehicle, using separate compartments. The following table illustrates a typical collection pattern across a 4-week period. Collections are indicated via the grey boxes:

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
General waste	✓		✓	
Recycling		✓		✓
Food waste	✓	✓	✓	✓
Garden waste (if subscribed)		✓		✓

7.3 Food waste will be sent for processing at an anaerobic digestion facility. Such a facility will turn food waste into electricity and a fertiliser for use on agricultural land.

8. Overall Strategy Actions

8.1 Meeting the strategy objectives and improving recycling rates can only be achieved through radical service change. However, success will only be possible with additional engagement and communication actions to elicit the resident participation levels needed to achieve these targets.

8.2 The waste strategy actions are focused on the upper tier of the waste hierarchy namely waste prevention, reuse and recycling and are not solely focused on service change. The following table summarises the actions and indicates waste hierarchy priority and whether the action will significantly change the frontline collection service:

Action Number	Hierarchy	Actions	Frontline service change
1	Prevention	Restricting household general waste capacity	Yes
2	Prevention	Collect general waste fortnightly	Yes
3	Prevention	Introduce an effective side waste policy	Yes
4	Prevention	Promote home composting	No
5	Prevention	Promote food waste reduction campaign	No
6	Prevention	Implement a Waste prevention plan	No
7	Reuse	Increase reuse and repair of bulky waste	No
8	Reuse	Increase textiles reuse	No
9	Recycle	Introduce a separate weekly food waste collection	Yes
10	Recycle	Increase the range of dry materials that we collect from the kerbside	Yes
11	Recycle	Provide wheeled bins for mixed dry recyclable materials and a reusable bag to separate paper and cardboard	Yes
12	Recycle	Review bring site provision across the district	No
13	Recycle	Provide wheeled bins for garden waste customers	Yes

9. Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

9.1 The development of the strategy has been informed by the views of a full range of stakeholders including residents, elected members, town and parish councils, business owners, partner/local organisations, landowners and council waste and transport employees.

- 9.2 A doorstep and online survey was carried out with residents, weighted to be representative to known characteristics of the district as a whole. The fieldwork took place between January and February 2020 and overall, 3,832 residents responded to the survey. There were a range of findings, for example –
- There was high satisfaction (94%) with frequency of current collections
 - There was a medium level of satisfaction (58%) with the use single-use plastic sacks
 - There was a low level of satisfaction (36%) with the range of materials collected for recycling
- 9.3 Additionally, following the release of the draft Waste Strategy document in late 2020, consultation was undertaken. This took the form of an online and paper survey, inviting comments on the draft strategy and the preferred option in particular. This generated 3,863 responses and over 8,000 free text box entries. The results of this engagement are shown at Appendix B. Some of the key findings were:
- 74% of respondents thought that recycling food waste was a good idea
 - Two thirds of residents have a strong willingness to recycle more and think the proposed recycling improvements are positive.
 - Regarding fortnightly collections of general waste and recycling, 27% thought this would work well, 18% could see the benefits of this change but would need to consider how they'd store waste, and 26% would want a suitable container to store waste for a 2-week period. 30% expressed specific concerns about this change
 - Half of responders support the introduction of wheeled bins, with the other half raising concerns regarding for example, storage space and handling of wheeled bins
 - Regarding wheeled bins for garden waste, 41% felt this was a good idea, 59% felt it was easier to use a reusable bag.
- 9.4 Town and Parish councils echoed the concerns over the storage and visual impact of wheeled bins, as well as bins being left outside of properties, on the curtilage or street.
- 9.5 The consultation showed an appetite for change but also illustrated the need to do this with sensitivity to the local environment and with the needs of residents in mind. A new collection policy will be implemented to support the strategy by surveying properties to ensure as many households as possible can access the core collection services, and introducing alternative arrangements for certain property types, container sizes and allowances for larger households. Section 8 of the strategy (appendix A) details the alternative arrangements for:
- Properties with no side/back access
 - Rural/narrow access properties
 - Flats
 - Properties with access to free roaming animals
 - Assisted Collection
 - Larger households or those with additional waste needs

- 9.6 The Customer Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix C) identifies issues for the handling of wheeled bins and the strategy commits to publicising and making available a continued assisted collection service for residents who are unable to take their waste to the edge of their property.
- 9.7 Further engagement and communications will be undertaken with community groups and individuals throughout the planning phase to identify any further barriers to resident participation. We will look to provide solutions and mitigations to ensure that resident's needs are met.

10 Implementation

Timeline

- 10.1 Changes to waste and recycling collection services requires significant planning to ensure that stakeholders are informed, resources are made available to support deployment, and that realistic timescales are set and adhered to.
- 10.2 The Council will consider, plan and deliver a service change implementation programme, which from point of decision making is anticipated to take approximately 20-24 months. Consideration will be given to:
- Surveying of properties to inform alternative arrangements
 - Stakeholder communication and engagement
 - Procurement of vehicles and services
 - Operational Service re-design including ICT system
 - Staff workforce plan
 - Customer information and communication plan
 - Service rollout
- 10.3 A survey of properties in NFDC will be needed in order to determine suitability for wheeled bins. This would entail staff assessing factors such as access and storage, to determine suitability.
- 10.4 A frontline service change of this nature will have to be made in phases, because of the size of the district and the need to target sufficient resources to achieve the service change. It is likely that the rollout of garden waste containers will take place after the main frontline service change, in 2025.
- 10.5 Frontline service changes will be made by issuing of "section 46" notices (see 4.1 in this report) to households as part of the pre-implementation communications which will educate and inform residents on forthcoming service changes.
- 10.6 At the time of writing, the government has only released its response to one of four consultations that took place in the summer of 2021. This was their response to the consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility, which revealed that EPR payments to councils will commence in April 2024. It is a reasonable assumption that government timelines for collecting food waste and other changes, will coincide with this, or may follow on shortly after.
- 10.7 As described earlier, a new MRF is required to process twin stream material and to accommodate the widened range of recyclable material. A planning approval

process is underway for a new MRF in Eastleigh. This facility is likely to become operational in 2024. Investment by HCC is also needed across Hampshire’s waste transfer network. NFDC currently delivers waste to three transfer stations within the district, where material is bulked and sent onwards for processing. HCC will need to upgrade these facilities in order to accommodate twin stream and food waste collections.

10.8 Confirmation from the Government is required, regarding timelines and transitional arrangements for Councils making significant service changes before an implementation date for the new service can be confirmed. However, the Waste Strategy document identifies the summer of 2024 as a likely rollout window. Using this assumption, the indicative timeline is shown below, broken down into financial quarters:

	Financial Year (Apr-Mar)												
	2022 -2023				2023 - 2024				2024 - 2025				25/26
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Waste Strategy approval	■	■											
Waste reduction activities	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Procurement and implementation planning		■	■	■	■	■	■						
Finalise waste collection policy						■							
Rollout of new service and communications								■	■	■	■		
Introduction of EPR funding									■				
Start of new collection services										■	■	■	
Rollout of garden waste wheeled bins													■

Procurement

10.9 The Council will pay close attention to the lead times for containers (wheeled bins, bags and caddies) and vehicles to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for developing and agreeing specifications before making orders. In addition, the council will need to identify/procure:

- A specialist delivery company to support the distribution of containers.
- Sufficient storage space for storing containers during the distribution stage.
- Personal Protective Equipment and equipment required for service provision.
- Any spare or back up vehicles and crew that may be required to increase support through the implementation phase.

10.10 Early engagement with suppliers has been carried out. These indicative lead times may be subject to significant variation, depending on Govt deadlines for service changes across England, which could place increased demand on vehicle and/or container manufacturers. In addition, sufficient contingency needs to be allowed for to make sure that resources are in place well before scheme launch.

	Indicative lead time from commencement of procurement to delivery
Vehicles	Up to 14 months
Wheeled bins	7 months
Reusable bags	8 months
Food caddy	5 months

Communications and engagement

10.11 Engagement with the council's range of stakeholders will be covered in a waste strategy communications plan which will be further developed after the strategy approval. The communications plan will highlight aims, objectives, stakeholder-specific plans, communications channels, and stakeholders. By having the communication plan in place, the council will be able to plan and deliver communications which clearly explain the waste strategy, the case for change, and consider the needs of everyone in our community.

10.12 Key stakeholders have already been identified, and will include the following:

Residents	Council staff
Businesses	Trade unions
Town and Parish Councils	Elected members
Partner organisations such as HCC and NPA	Other council depts, (housing/customer services)
Housing associations	

This communications plan will utilise a range of media channels, including for example:

Written information direct to residents	Messages on council vehicles
Social media	A 'waste ambassadors' scheme
Resident emails	Website
Printed advertising	Press engagement and media releases
Roadshows and events	

Links to other key projects

10.13 The waste strategy has very close linkages to two other key projects affecting operational services.

10.14 In 2021, the Council approved funding for new ICT systems to support the work of operational services, including waste & recycling and open spaces. These systems will deliver:

- Improved back-office systems and processes
- In-cab technology for operational teams

- Improved customer experience for residents engaging with operational services (e.g., reporting an issue such as a missed bin or flytip or subscribing to a council service such as garden waste collection).

These improvements will be vital to the success of the new waste strategy rollout and ongoing provision.

- 10.15 The council is also planning a new depot as a replacement for one of its three existing depots (Claymeadow, located in Totton). The new site is on Hardley Industrial Estate and has received planning permission. The depot is scheduled to be completed in quarter 4 of 2023-24. This new depot will be needed to accommodate the larger vehicle fleet that will be needed to deliver the waste and recycling service in future.

Governance and oversight during implementation

- 10.16 The implementation of the waste strategy will be overseen by the Waste Programme Board. This Board will be comprised of senior councillors and officers.
- 10.17 The sustainable waste management councillor task and finish group will continue to provide regular updates to the Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

11. Monitoring

- 11.1 Performance will be monitored to ensure outcomes and objectives are met. Key success measures are included within section 7 of the waste strategy (Appendix A).
- 11.2 These measures will be kept under review and revised to reflect the introduction of any new schemes or initiatives i.e., national deposit return scheme, or changes in government targets.
- 11.3 Resident satisfaction will also be kept under review as a key measure of the service success and resident feedback will be sought through the Councils Resident survey.
- 11.4 Performance will be reported annually to the relevant overview and scrutiny panel with the strategy itself reviewed every five years or where a substantial change in legislation, policy or other circumstances merits a review outside that timescale.

12 Risk Analysis

- 12.1 Key risks and mitigation will be kept under review by the Programme Board and are summarised below:

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of public support	<p>The public engagement exercise conducted on the draft waste strategy identified that there were mixed views regarding wheeled bins.</p> <p>A comprehensive communications plan will be developed to assist residents in preparing for the new service and the Equalities Impact Assessment considers additional support required for residents who could be adversely impacted by the changes.</p>
Delays in waste transfer and processing infrastructure (for food waste and recycling)	<p>HCC, through the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, have committed to the twin stream collection system, which requires them to develop the necessary infrastructure. However, delays in infrastructure could affect the council's ability to make frontline service changes at the required time. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the timetable for infrastructure once outcome of planning application for Eastleigh MRF is known • Set a realistic front line service change date • Discuss contingency arrangements with HCC, in the event that there were any delays in infrastructure, to ensure frontline service change could still take place.
Inaccurate net service cost forecasts	<p>Cost modelling for the new service is based on desktop exercise which uses assumptions about resources and costs to calculate overall service costs.</p> <p>These assumptions will be continually updated to ensure the cost forecasts remain up-to-date and as accurate as possible.</p> <p>Discussions with HCC on future financial arrangements will continue, and clarity from the Government on funding arrangements will be continuously sought.</p>
Delays in procurement of containers and vehicles	<p>External factors affecting supply lines for raw materials could cause delays in manufacturing. There is also the unknown impact of numerous local authorities in England needing the same or similar resources over a short period of time.</p> <p>This will be mitigated by commencing procurement as soon as possible and building in contingency to the timetable.</p>
Further announcements from the Government	<p>The Government has not yet made clear some aspects of future waste/recycling policy, and these could affect the costs and income as well as timetable for implementation.</p> <p>Government announcements will continue to be monitored and plans amended as and when needed.</p>
Insufficient depot provision	<p>Additional capacity provided at the new council depot at Hardley will be required to accommodate the expanded vehicle fleet.</p> <p>Contingency needs to be built into the overall programme, and the depot development will be overseen by Programme Board that will also oversee the waste strategy implementation.</p>

13 Staff implications

- 13.1 As part of the council's engagement on the draft waste strategy, frontline waste and recycling staff were briefed and given the opportunity to submit comments or questions. Trade Unions have been updated on a regular basis through monthly operational meetings and more formally through the Employee Side Liaison Panel. A staff engagement plan will keep staff informed and engaged in service changes as we move from decision making to implementation planning. This will take the form of written communication as well as face to face briefings.
- 13.2 The frontline service change will have the following positive impacts on council staff:
- The existing service has a relatively high level of inherent risk to the health and safety of operatives. Health and Safety Executive research recommends that in order to minimise musculoskeletal injuries, where possible wheeled bins should be used for waste and recycling instead of bags and boxes. The provision of wheeled bins for general waste, recycling and garden waste satisfies this regulatory recommendation and helps protect operatives from the risks associated with a sack collection.
 - Moving away from sacks will reduce the impact of temporary or longer-term changes in waste generation levels, e.g., higher than average weights after Christmas, or because of the covid-19 pandemic.
 - A new service with a clear collection policy will make it clear to residents and staff how services should be used, meaning a move away from the current unlimited sack collection service
 - The introduction of the food waste service will provide opportunities for existing and new staff.
- 13.3 Recent staff briefings have shown that there is widespread support for the changes to the service. The service changes, and the staff benefits shown above, should also help improve recruitment and retention of permanent and temporary staff. Recruitment and retention have been extremely difficult in the last 12 months and has had a significant knock-on effect onto service delivery.
- 13.4 As we move from decision making to implementation of the new service, this will require changes to staff working practices. Discussion and consultations with staff and Trade Unions will take place and any recommendations will be made through Employee Side Liaison Panel to HR Committee.
- 13.5 An equalities impact assessment has been completed (please see appendix D). It shows beneficial impacts upon older staff and those with disabilities.

14 Equality Impact Assessment

- 14.1 The public sector equality duty requires the council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that it is paying due regard in its decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

- 14.2 As detailed earlier in this report, a public engagement exercise was undertaken to better understand any comments and concerns that could arise through a changed service design. Two comprehensive Equality Impact Assessments (Appendix C & D) have been undertaken to fully consider the impact on protected groups and other service users.
- 14.3 Assisted collections are an important part of the existing service to support those with physical disabilities and mobility issues in accessing the service. These arrangements will continue to ensure assistance is available to those who need it.

15 Environmental Implications

- 15.1 The strategy recognises the impact that waste management can have on the environment, using fossil fuels to collect and transport waste, which when burned releases greenhouse gases, contributing to climate change. It also considers the wider environmental impact. The extraction of raw materials from the earth, material processing, manufacturing and transport are all stages in the process that use energy and emit greenhouse gases. The strategy is underpinned by the principles of the waste hierarchy that prioritise not producing waste in the first place, then reusing it followed by recycling and composting. It aims to increase the councils recycling rate from 34% in 2021 to 55% by 2025.
- 15.2 Both our current and proposed future services generate **emissions** (e.g. from collection vehicles) but there are also **avoided emissions** that would have been created if all waste were sent to incineration or landfill rather than being recycled. Our research into a new service included an environmental impact assessment using a carbon modelling tool³ that considered the following:

Emissions created by:	Avoided emissions through:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections - Containers used for collections (bins/bags/boxes) • Transportation - Vehicles for both collections and bulk transport • Intermediate facilities - Waste transfer stations and material recovery facilities to cover the bulking and processing of recyclable materials • Treatment and Recovery - Processing facilities, for example energy from waste • Landfill - The impact of landfilling waste or by products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling - The benefits gained from the recycling of materials

³ The tool used is “WRATE”. WRATE is used to assess the environmental impacts of waste management activities during their whole life. It allows users to track the environmental impacts from kerbside collection to advanced waste treatment facilities, such as anaerobic digestion, through to ultimate disposal. This allows us to estimate the CO2 emissions from current and future services.

15.3 The assessment resulted in estimates of both the emissions and the avoided emissions associated with our current and future service. The assessment shows that:

- The **emissions** from both the current and future service are broadly the same
- The **avoided emissions** for the proposed service are greater than they are for the current service. This is because of the increase in recycling, and reduction in incineration
- Both current and future services deliver an overall saving in CO2 emissions. The future service is anticipated to deliver an increased saving of 1,037 tonnes of CO2 per annum – as shown below:

Estimated tonnes CO2 saved per annum - <u>current service</u>	Estimated tonnes CO2 saved per annum - <u>future service</u>	Improvement in tonnes CO2 saved per annum
1,524	2,561	1,037

15.4 In addition to the emissions savings detailed above:

- The digestate produced by the anaerobic digestion of food waste is used as a fertiliser and therefore displaces the manufacture/use of synthetic fertiliser.
- Improving the quantity and quality of the material collected for recycling will conserve raw materials such as wood, aluminium, and hydrocarbons.

15.5 The current collection system relies on the constant manufacture, replenishment, and delivery of single use plastic sacks to contain both general waste and recycling. 10 million sacks are currently provided to residents each year. The use of wheeled bins will eliminate the need for the Council to provide these sacks.

15.6 Residents will be able to add bagged general waste from internal bins directly to the general waste wheeled bin, and recyclable materials will be added to the wheeled bin loose, as bagged recycling will not be compatible with sorting mechanisms in place at the material recovery facility.

15.7 Wheeled bins have an anticipated lifespan of up to 20 years. In that time each household would be provided with 2,480 plastic sacks (total 81.8kg plastic). A wheeled bin weighs roughly 15kg, so the provision of 2 wheeled bins uses less than half the plastic currently provided through single-use sacks. There are environmental benefits from reduced manufacture, replenishment and delivery needed compared with single use plastic sacks. Additionally, the council will seek to procure wheeled bins made from recycled plastic and ensure that they are recycled when at the end of their life.

15.8 The current sack collection service has long been associated with litter issues caused by split waste sacks. Litter has numerous negative environmental impacts, it poses a threat to wildlife and free roaming animals, contaminates our water ways and is aesthetically detrimental. Wheeled bins and the no side waste policy will positively impact litter by containing waste. Secure containerisation of food waste

via a caddy is preferable to sacks and will help prevent attacks from birds and other animals.

- 15.9 Overall, 16.7% of material found in clear sacks is classed as contamination, in that, it cannot currently be recycled via that collection method. This material must be separated at the sorting facility and then disposed of at additional environmental impact. Wheeled bins help reduce contamination because it allows us to introduce systems that feedback directly to residents when services are used incorrectly. This will enable us to educate and help bring about behaviour change. The council aim to reduce contamination to less 5%.

16 Financial Implications

- 16.1 Following work on the original options appraisal, the council again engaged with the Waste and Resources Action Plan (WRAP) and a specialist consultant to carry out work on the business case for service change. Using desktop modelling, they were able to estimate the cost of the preferred option, primarily focussing upon staff, vehicles, fuel and container costs, as well as income. This information was used as the basis for a comparison with current service costs, also taking account of other cost areas such as support services, overheads, communications, and personal protective equipment.
- 16.2 This exercise is based on a wide range of assumptions, for example regarding vehicle prices, location of future tipping points for waste/recycling, fuel usage, future waste arisings, income forecasts etc. Once the waste strategy is approved, further modelling work will be needed to refine future costs and income. The exercise has also made certain assumptions about future government policy – for example, it assumes that the council can continue to charge for garden waste collections. This is one of the issues that the council is waiting for the Government to provide clarity on.
- 16.3 The table below shows current forecast service costs for 2022-23 and compares them with likely annual costs for the new service. Note that, until the exact scheme launch date is known (see section 12) it is not possible to say exactly which financial year these costs will fall into. Some costs will be incurred in the planning and implementation phase, and others after scheme start. For this reason, the table refers to “year 0”.

	Current service, annual cost 22-23 (£'000)	New service, annual cost, year 0 (£'000)	Variation	New service, steady state (£'000)	Variation to current service
Waste and Recycling Service (excl food waste)	5,058	4,716	-342	4,716	-342
Food waste collection	0	1,612	1,612	1,612	1,612
One off transition cost	0	1,100	1,100	0	0
Overall	5,058	7,428	2,370	6,328	1,270

16.4 The exercise shows an increase in annual cost of the waste and recycling service from £5.1m to somewhere in the region of £6.3m. These costs include the depreciation cost of vehicles and containers for both current and future services. Whilst the figures in the table above look very exact, the nature of the modelling means that there is inevitably going to be some flux in the estimates as procurement and roll-out is accelerated. Applying a sensitivity analysis of 10% either side of the estimates isn't inconceivable in these circumstances, resulting in a lower range steady state estimate of £5.7M and a higher range estimate of £6.9M.

16.5 In addition, c£1.1m will be needed in one-off transition funding. This is used to support additional staffing, communications and container delivery and is likely to be drawn upon following the adoption of the strategy and throughout the whole implementation period.

16.6 The initial capital outlay for containers for the new service will be an estimated £4.4m. When spread over the expected life of the containers, this amounts to £252,000 per annum. This is less than the cost of black and clear sacks which in 2020-21 amounted to £388,000.

16.7 The Council replaces its fleet on a rolling basis. If we were to maintain our current waste/recycling service, the anticipated capital requirement covering the period 23/24 – 25/26 for vehicles and plant replacement would be £2.7M. Considering the new requirements, including additional vehicles, and retrofitting of existing vehicles, the additional cost over the same period is in the region of £2.3M. These added depreciation costs are included within the forecast steady state costs, as per paragraph 16.3.

16.8 Whilst the information above shows an increase in service cost, it is believed that this is the most cost-effective way of achieving the objectives set out earlier in the report.

16.9 External funding is expected to cover some areas of service cost in future. This is summarised in the table below, and estimated minimum and maximum figures are

included, to take account of the uncertainty of this funding as described below the table.

Funding Source	Min £'000	Max £'000
New burdens funding – food waste	1,270	1,612
Extended Producer Responsibility Funding	800	1,200
Deposit Return Scheme Funding	TBC	TBC
Overall	2,070	2,812

- 16.10 In consultation documentation released in 2021, Defra said *“Given the additional costs involved in separate food waste collection, Government will ensure that local authorities are resourced to meet any new burdens arising from this policy, including up front transition costs and ongoing operational costs.”* The exact parameters of this funding have not yet been made clear. Food waste collection in New Forest is forecast to cost c£1.6m.
- 16.11 Extended Producer Responsibility funding is designed to cover the full cost of the collection, transport and processing of packaging waste. The funding will come from packaging manufacturers. The exact parameters of this funding have not yet been made clear. However, based on some high-level assumptions, this funding could be worth at least £800,000 to NFDC. Note that the funding will cover “efficient and effective” collections carried out by councils. The new service has been designed to be efficient and effective and it should therefore attract this funding.
- 16.12 In the consultation documentation released in 2021, Defra also asked whether LAs should be able to claim the unredeemed deposits on material collected at kerbside that is within scope of a Deposit Return Scheme. If this were to be introduced this could be a significant income stream to NFDC but further clarity is needed from Government, and it is not possible to estimate this at this stage.
- 16.13 Uncertainty remains on the nature and longevity of the new burdens funding, and so it would be considered prudent to allow for an increase in costs of waste collection within the Medium-Term Financial Plan, even if simply flagged, as opposed to quantified at this stage.

17 Conclusion

- 17.1 The mix of local, regional and national drivers detailed in the waste strategy demonstrate that the waste and recycling collection service cannot continue in its current format. If the strategy’s aims and objectives are to be met, a new approach is needed – one which applies the waste hierarchy, increases recycling, reduces emissions, and complies with new legislation.
- 17.2 The NFDC strategy proposes a new frontline service to help achieve these objectives. The proposal has resulted from considering:

- The parameters set out by the Government in its own strategy for waste and recycling, and the future legal requirements that will apply to all councils
 - The requirements within Hampshire's JMWMS
 - The modelling and benchmarking carried out in partnership with specialist consultants
- 17.3 The waste strategy actions are focused on the upper tier of the waste hierarchy namely waste prevention, reuse and recycling and are not solely focused on service change
- 17.4 The council's preferred option for the frontline service was included in a draft strategy in November 2020, and the council asked for feedback from customers and other stakeholders. The feedback received has informed the final waste strategy and will continue to inform its implementation. This will include for example, alternatives to wheeled bins where they cannot be accommodated. This will be determined via property surveys.
- 17.5 The Council will consider, plan, and deliver a service change implementation programme, which from point of decision making is anticipated to take approximately 20-24 months. Considerations around infrastructure requirements and Government policy mean that the timeline for implementation of the frontline service change will continue to be developed but is expected to be in the summer of 2024.
- 17.6 The strategy will have a positive impact upon working conditions including Health and Safety of our frontline council staff. This will bring us into line with Health and Safety Executive guidance.
- 17.7 The strategy will help to reduce carbon emissions, increase recycling, reduce the amount of single-use plastic bags used in the New Forest, and preserve natural resources.
- 17.8 The new collection service will cost more than the current collection service, largely due to the addition of food waste collections as required in legislation. However, the impact of this should be mitigated by Government and packaging sector funding. As with the timelines, full financial implications will be refined as those outstanding national and regional issues are resolved.
- 17.9 Overall the strategy will enable the Council to deliver its objectives for a modern, high performing waste & recycling service.

18 Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel Comments

- 18.1 There were two members of the public who took part in the public participation section of the meeting, speaking as objectors of the recommendation.
- 18.2 The Panel considered the proposed Waste Strategy and associated documents. Members spoke about the need for the District council to increase the recycling rate and that a target of 55% had been set for 2025. It was recognised that there were national and regional drivers which had been considered in

developing the Waste Strategy which included the need to increase the recycling rate and the need to dispose of waste in a more environmentally friendly way, with the District Council having recently declared a Climate Change and Nature Emergency. Members spoke of the problems of the current collection system whereby it was not possible to identify those who do not recycle.

- 18.3 The proposed weekly food waste collection service was welcomed. Members acknowledged the benefits of the proposed waste collection service, particularly for the waste operatives with more automation. However, some views were expressed in relation to the negative changes to the proposed service which included the visual aesthetics of wheeled bins, particularly if they were left out at the roadside, the ability of residents to move them and the need for appropriate storage. Concern was also raised about the change to a fortnightly collection service for residual waste, particularly for households which had for example nappies and sanitary products forming part of the waste to be collected. It was noted that some properties would not be suitable for wheeled bins and therefore alternatives would need to be considered. This would be addressed through property surveys and it had been set out within the waste strategy.
- 18.4 Members felt that there needed to be greater emphasis on the communications strategy to convey important messages to residents and on education on waste, which included waste minimisation so that waste was not created in the first place. It was accepted this had been addressed through the Waste Reduction Plan, but members felt that it should be further highlighted.
- 18.5 The Panel concluded their discussions with a recommendation to Cabinet to support those recommendations within the report and Appendices, with an amendment to recommendation 1.1 f) to place greater emphasis on the need for more communication and education for local residents on how to manage their waste in accordance with principles of the waste hierarchy, and how to maximise recycling using the proposed new service.

19 Employee Side Comments

- 19.1 The trade unions recognised by NFDC were asked for comments on the Waste Strategy.
- 19.2 The comments received were as follows:
- “I commend the council’s commitment to improved recycling and waste management. I am mindful that the changes when implemented will mean training, retraining and some upskilling of staff.”
 - “We are broadly supportive of the approach being suggested. We will be keen to discuss the issues that will arise as we move towards the new service as we do have some reservations. An issue that we have already identified is the intention to use bags for card and paper, the concern is that this could lead to loaders having to handle heavy bags which is contrary to the aspiration to limit manual handling. We would also like some dialogue around the side waste policy and the exceptions to wheeled bins.”

20 Portfolio Holder Comments

- 20.1 The Waste Strategy is the culmination of three years of work by officers and by members from across the chamber to improve our front-line service. The objective is to manage waste in a more sustainable way and reduce our impact on the climate. We will do this by firstly, giving priority to the prevention of waste, helping our residents to reduce and reuse more materials and secondly giving our residents the ability to recycle more materials at the kerbside.
- 20.2 This document provides the key details of the Waste Strategy and with the appendices provides a clear undertaking to bring our District in line with our partners across Hampshire by following guidance from central government.
- 20.3 We have consulted with groups across the District including town and parish councils, the National Park Authority, the Verderers, Forestry England - and more importantly our residents whose feedback from our survey in 2020 we have valued and considered carefully.
- 20.4 The significance of the Strategy cannot be stressed too highly as we move towards a more sustainable and greener waste collection, an improved recycling function and I must stress a cost-effective service. We all accepted change when supermarkets successfully removed tens of millions of plastic bags from circulation; it is inconceivable now that the New Forest, alone in Hampshire, could contemplate a new core waste collection service that perpetuated the use of plastic sacks.
- 20.5 Going forward we will continue to communicate our plans to improve recycling and reduce waste and we will undertake a comprehensive property survey of our District to inform the most appropriate collection method for our residential areas. I commend this Strategy and offer my gratitude to all those that have worked so hard to bring this forward.

Further Information:	Background Papers
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