

Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 12 September 2024

Cabinet – 2 October 2024

Waste Programme Update

Purpose	For Review and Decision
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report appraises and updates all elements of the programme for the proposed new refuse, recycling, and food waste collection service, and confirms dates for the roll out in three phases during 2025/6.
Recommendation(s)	It is recommended that Cabinet: (i) Approves the waste programme timeline attached at Appendix A (ii) Delegates authority to the Strategic Director for Place, Operations and Sustainability, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability and the Waste Management Programme Board, to keep the roadmap at Appendix B under review and agree any minor variations to the waste programme.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	<p>NFDC has been working on a new approach to waste and recycling services, detailed in a new Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (via Project Integra) approved in October 2021 and the NFDC Waste Strategy 2022-27, approved by Council in July 2022.</p> <p>On 21st October 2023, DEFRA released a response to the "Consistency" consultation from May 2021, though this has still to be formally passed in legislation.</p> <p>The new waste collection service will help to meet NFDC's environmental and climate change objectives, increase recycling rates, reduce emissions, and reduce the amount of overall general waste and littering from sacks.</p>
Ward(s)	All

Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Blunden – Environment and Sustainability Portfolio
Strategic Director(s)	James Carpenter – Strategic Director of Place, Operations and Sustainability
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Introduction and background

1. In February 2024 NFDC Cabinet approved the timeline, procurement, and budget to enable the new refuse collection, recycling, and food waste collection service to go live in 2025, rolling out in three phases.
2. The agreed service comprises:
 - **New weekly food waste collections**
Households will receive a 23-litre lockable caddy for kerbside collections, and a smaller 7-litre caddy to use in the kitchen.
 - **New recycling and rubbish collections using wheelie bins**
Recycling will be collected one week and rubbish the following week. Households will receive a 240-litre wheelie bin for recycling, and a 180-litre wheelie bin for rubbish. This will allow residents to recycle everything currently collected in clear recycling sacks: including plastic bottles, aerosols, tins, cans, paper and card.
 - **Four weekly glass collections**
Glass collections will continue to be every four weeks, using existing glass collection boxes, or communal bins for those living in flats.
3. A new internal governance structure for the waste programme has also been set up comprising:
 - Waste Management Programme Board (Leader, Environment and Finance Portfolio holders, Chief Executive, relevant strategic directors and waste lead officers)

- Waste Management Steering Group (Portfolio holder, Strategic Directors, waste lead officers, waste project lead officers, chairs of each of the working groups)
 - Three working groups - Waste Strategy Working Group, Waste Operations and Fleet Working Group and Waste Infrastructure Working Group (project leads, waste leads and waste managers).
4. The new structure is working well for the majority of decisions around the waste programme. The Waste Management Programme Board has no decision-making powers delegated from Cabinet and will decide when matters need to be referred to Cabinet for decision.

Timeline

5. A high level timeline has been prepared setting out the start date of each phase, as set out below and at **Appendix A**.
- Phase 1 (Lymington Depot area) June 2025
 - Phase 2 (Ringwood Depot area) October 2025
 - Phase 3 (Totton/Hardley Depot area) March 2026
6. The new collection service can be delivered to the majority of households (Phases 1-3) in the next financial year 2025/26, including most flats. The original timeline included a Phase 4 for flats, and it is likely that this will not now be needed. Operational staff are in the process of undertaking flat/bin compound assessments and agreeing any physical improvements with the landowner(s) or management companies. Several NFDC flat schemes managed internally by the housing service fall into this category. It is possible that some flats may not be able to go on a wheeled bin service if they do not have space for bins, or they may need an interim sack service if they are awaiting improvements to accommodate bins. The assessments and requirement for a fourth phase will therefore be kept under review.
7. The start date for Phase 3 (the Totton and Waterside area) has been extended to March 2026 to allow for changes to collections over the Christmas period 2025/26, to catch up on the bank holidays when waste operatives are not working.

Roadmap

8. A proposed roadmap is set out at Appendix B, showing each of the key elements that could impact upon start dates and phasing. This roadmap will form the basis of more detailed project planning for each element as set out below.

Project Integra and Disposal Infrastructure

9. The decision on long term collection systems for Hampshire under the Project Integra partnership is awaiting the outcome of reports from consultants. If a fully comingled service is agreed as the way forward, changes to the Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs) in the County will need to take place. This may involve changes in layout and capacity at the new site at Eastleigh and/or changes to other facilities. This is a major change and the whole process of gaining planning, EA and other consents and commissioning and implementing the changes is likely to take 3-4 years, i.e., beyond the current NFDC interim roll out programme (to 2026). Officers will keep apprised of HCC modelling work and the implications for NFDC.
10. The disposal infrastructure improvements for the Phase 1 rollout (Lymington area June 2025) are required to transfer food waste from the new food waste collection vehicles to a skip or other bay for onward transport to an anaerobic digester (AD) facility, as food has not been collected as a separate waste stream in NFDC under current arrangements. This will require changes to Veolia's Marsh Lane transfer station (Lymington) and changes either to Veolia's Blue Haze disposal site (north of Ringwood) or diversion to Eco Composting at Hurn (near Bournemouth Airport). Hampshire County Council (HCC) has advised that the changes at Marsh Lane are able to be undertaken before the Phase 1 roll out, but the disposal site in the west of the district is still to be confirmed. Food waste in the east of the district will be transferred at Marchwood.

Vehicle, Container and Wheeled Bin Distribution Procurements

11. Risks still exist around both vehicle and container procurement, and retro fitting of bin lifts, as these are complex procurements. The contract for the award of new food waste vehicles has been awarded, and the tender for new refuse vehicles is currently being prepared. The contract has been awarded for new containers supply, and a direct award has been made for wheeled bin distribution.
12. Delivery of vehicles and containers is planned in line with an earlier estimate of roll out phases, ahead of roll-out dates. NFDC owned sites will be used to store the containers, where needed, before they are delivered to households by the distribution company, as was the case with the Garden Waste wheelie bin roll out.

Human Resource (HR) Planning

13. HR processes are complex and time consuming. A new HR post has been created to assist with this large body of work, which is now underway. Changes to working practices will be required as a result of moving from sack collection to wheeled bin collection services,

and as a result of route planning (see below). Officers are considering the appropriate approach to be taken for staff and union consultation. Early engagement with the unions and preparation of new Job Descriptions (JDs) for evaluation will be undertaken up to December 2024, and temporary transition staff (e.g., waste advisors) will be appointed over a similar period.

14. Early in 2025 a recruitment campaign for new operational staff for Phase 1 will take place (with the newly agreed JDs) over 4-5 months, and similar recruitment plans will be required for phases 2 and 3.

Depot Improvements

15. Depot improvements are required to accommodate new vehicles and staff/crews for the additional collection rounds for the new collection service. This includes the completion of the new Hardley depot (expected January 2025), and an extension of the Ringwood Depot (subject to completion of extended lease with HCC) which is due for completion in March 2025. Changes to the layout for vehicle parking may also be required at Marsh Lane Depot (Lymington).

Route Planning

16. A significant project has been underway led by IT to introduce the Bartec system to waste and street scene services. One of the most useful modules is route optimisation which allows a number of factors to be calculated once data has been input – this includes routes required; the likely time each route will take; the likely tonnage from residual, recycling and food collections for each route; and helps to evaluate the most efficient use of vehicles from the 3 depots when disposal and/or transfer points (tipping distances) are calculated. Data on a district wide basis needs to be analysed first as this is the first major route optimisation project undertaken in NFDC. More detailed route planning will take place for Phase 1 (up to early 2025), with a period of 3 months for operational staff to test and validate the routes, and to enable practical changes to be made in good time before the roll out.
17. Route optimisation (2.5 months) and validation by staff (3 months) will also need to take place for Phases 2 and 3 and adequate time has been included in the programme roadmap shown at **Appendix B**.
18. As vehicles are delivered and/or retrofitted the in-cab devices (tablets) will be fitted. This allows the driver and crew members to input key information about collections using the Bartec system, that is picked up by the back office at the depot and/or customer services.

Administrative Processes

19. Each phase has allowed 3 months for any policy and procedure changes as a result of learning from earlier phases and/or any new government guidance. This would include any new or reviewed health and safety or risk assessments leading to changes in operational procedures or working practices.

Business Waste Review

20. The Simpler Recycling reforms require Business Waste collections to separate food and recyclables by 31 March 2025 for businesses employing 10 or more staff. A piece of work is currently underway to agree the scope and approach required and will be reported to the Waste Management Programme Board. The Roadmap at Appendix B allows time between November 2024 and February 2025 for a project to deliver any changes that might be agreed for business waste collections, though the number of larger businesses affected for March 2025 is likely to be minimal.

Garden Waste

21. The new Garden Waste service is extremely successful and is likely to continue to grow over the next 2-3 years. As the number of customers increases, more vehicles and crews will be required. A fifth vehicle and crew are already being planned. However, the routes have never been optimised, so there is an opportunity to use the Bartec system to do this to ensure services are running as efficiently as possible. Time has therefore been included on the roadmap for Garden Waste route optimisation once the route optimisation work for the main service has been completed.

Flats Rollout Planning

22. The assessment period for flats and communal properties is nearing completion. Time has been set aside in the programme from January to May 2025 for a project to clarify the proposed arrangements for each property, and any interim arrangements. These arrangements will be reviewed again following the Phase 1 rollout (August-September 2025).

Communications

23. Effective and constant communications is essential to the success of any new waste service, to increase/maintain recycling rates, reduce residual waste, and reduce contamination. Recycling can be confusing for many residents, and it can sometimes not be clear what should be put in which bin, or how the collection dates for each waste stream work. A Communications Plan is being prepared that will be considered by the Waste Management Programme Board. On this basis a long period of time has been allowed in all

phases, with an extended period for Phase 1 as the first roll out from December 2024 up to and beyond the proposed roll out date in June 2025.

24. Phases 2 and 3 each have a 3-month period set aside for comms.

Corporate plan priorities

25. The new waste collection service will help to meet priority 2: Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world by:
- Reducing the amount of non-recycled waste produced by households, by separating food waste.
 - Reducing emissions from the council's waste vehicle fleet by using the Bartec system to develop the most efficient rounds.
 - Increasing the percentage of household waste sent for recycling by collecting food waste separately from general waste and providing large capacity wheeled bins.
 - Reducing the amount of littering and spillages from sacks

Options appraisal

26. In February 2024 NFDC Cabinet approved the timeline, procurement, and budget for the agreed collection service following an appraisal of options reported to Cabinet in July 2022 as part of the development of the Waste Strategy. Options for each element of the roadmap detailed above have been explored in the officer working groups and the most realistic and achievable options proposed.

Consultation undertaken

27. The timeline and roadmap have been considered and agreed by the Waste Management Steering Group and Programme Board (membership at para 3 above)

Financial and resource implications

28. The MTFP includes provision in base budgets for increased staffing resources (for the new food waste rounds), and capital has been allocated for the purchase of new vehicles and containers, and distribution of containers. The waste transition budget was based upon an earlier estimate of phasing that assumed all three phases would be completed over a shorter time period. This is set out in the waste strategy report agreed by Cabinet in February 2024.

The full financial implications of the confirmed timeline and programme will be included in a future MTFP report. It is likely that transition costs will increase over a slightly longer time period, and with a more detailed understanding of each element of the

programme, and that frontline costs (e.g. staff) costs will be delayed. In addition, new burdens funding (£1.8mill) is intended to cover the cost of new food waste caddies and food waste vehicles. DEFRA are also due to provide transitional funding support to authorities introducing a weekly food waste collection service and £150,000 has been allowed for in the 2024/25 budget for this. From 2025/6 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) payments will also be received to cover the cost of collecting packaging and the amount each local authority receives will be announced in November 2024.

HR implications – see paras 13 and 14 above.

Legal implications

29. None.

Risk assessment

30. None required.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

31. See corporate plan priorities above.

Equalities implications

32. Equality Impact Assessments were conducted as part of the waste strategy approval in 2022. The proposals in this report are not fundamentally different to those in the strategy itself.

Crime and disorder implications

33. None.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

34. None.

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

35. Reducing the amount of littering and spillages from sacks will contribute to the interests of the National Park and National Landscape by enhancing the natural beauty and reducing risks for wildlife. It should be noted that wheeled bins are already in use in other parts of the national park covered by other (waste collection authority) councils.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Waste Programme
Timeline

Appendix B – Waste Programme
Roadmap

Background Papers:

Waste strategy implementation –
revised timeline and financial
appraisal Cabinet February 2024
[Agenda for Cabinet on
Wednesday, 21st February, 2024,
10.00 am Council Services
\(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

Waste Strategy 2022-2027
Cabinet July 2022
[Agenda for Cabinet on
Wednesday, 6th July, 2022,
10.00 am Council Services
\(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)