

Officer Decision Record – 30 July 2025

Market Supplement for Driver Salaries

Classification	<p>Public</p> <p>This report contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council, specifically in relation to staffing costs and pay.</p> <p>These are presented at high level and disclosure of this information would not prejudice the Council's position in future negotiations nor undermine its ability to manage workforce costs effectively.</p> <p>There is a general public interest in transparency regarding the use of public funds, a public decision supports openness and accountability in pay decisions.</p>
Decision taken	Apply a market forces supplement of 5% to HGV driver salaries.
Reasons for the decision	<p>Background:</p> <p>New Forest District Council, as the statutory Waste Collection Authority, is currently undergoing a significant service transition. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A shift from weekly to fortnightly residual waste collections• The introduction of a new food waste collection service, in line with the Government's mandate for separate food waste collections by March 2026 <p>These changes necessitate an increase in the number of qualified HGV drivers to maintain service delivery standards and meet statutory obligations.</p> <p>Market Context:</p> <p>The Council is competing with other local authorities and private sector operators for a limited pool of qualified HGV drivers.</p> <p>Many neighbouring councils have already implemented market supplements or enhanced pay structures to attract and retain drivers.</p>

	<p>The logistics and waste sectors continue to experience high demand for HGV drivers, with pay rates rising accordingly.</p> <p>Proposal:</p> <p>To implement a 5% market forces supplement for HGV drivers employed by New Forest District Council, effective immediately, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance recruitment and retention • Ensure continuity of waste collection services • Support the successful rollout of the new food waste service • Protect the Council’s reputation and statutory compliance <p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This payment is a necessary and proportionate response to current market conditions and operational demands. It will help safeguard essential services and position the Council to meet future waste collection obligations effectively.</p>
<p>Consultations undertaken</p>	<p>Internal discussion with HR, finance, waste and streetscene colleagues. Consultation with the Strategic Director for Corporate Resources and Transformation (s151) and relevant Portfolio Holders.</p>
<p>Finance and Resourcing implications</p>	<p>The estimated cost to 2025/26 of the 5% is £105k, to be funded within existing 2025/26 budget, from virement from the pay award contingency.</p> <p>Any ongoing use of the MS into 2026/27 will need to be allowed for in the updating of the Council’s MTFP.</p>
<p>Legal implications</p>	<p>Statutory Authority</p> <p>Under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, local authorities have the power to appoint officers “on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit” for the proper performance of their functions</p>

	<p>This provides a clear legal basis for introducing a market forces supplement, provided it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justified by operational need • Applied transparently and consistently • Reviewed periodically <p>Equal Pay and Discrimination Risks</p> <p>Market forces payments must be implemented in a way that does not breach equal pay legislation or discrimination laws under the Equality Act 2010. To mitigate this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supplement has considered including benchmarking with neighbouring councils and private sector rates. • The supplement is role-specific, not person-specific. • The rationale is clearly documented and can be regularly reviewed. <p>Employment Contracts and HR Policy</p> <p>The supplement is clearly defined as a separate allowance. It aligns with the Council’s pay and reward policy and can be subject to periodic review to ensure continued relevance. Changes will be communicated transparently to affected staff and unions.</p> <p>Precedent and Internal Equity</p> <p>Introducing a market forces payment for one group of staff may lead to requests from other service areas. The Council should be prepared to justify why this group is uniquely affected by market conditions. This report clearly establishes the case</p>
Risk assessment	<p>Operational and reputational risks of not implementing market forces payment:</p> <p>Service disruption:</p> <p>Insufficient driver numbers risk missed collections, delayed rounds, and incomplete coverage, particularly during peak periods or staff absences.</p> <p>Failure to meet statutory requirements:</p> <p>The Council must comply with the Government’s requirement for separate food waste collections</p>

	<p>by March 2026. Failure to recruit and retain drivers jeopardizes this compliance.</p> <p>Increased costs from agency reliance: Without a stable in-house driver workforce, the Council may be forced to rely on agency staff at significantly higher costs, impacting budget sustainability.</p> <p>Impact on wider operations: Waste collection is a frontline service. Disruption can have knock-on effects on street cleanliness, public health, and environmental performance.</p> <p>Public confidence: Waste collection is one of the most visible services provided by the Council. Service failures can quickly erode public trust and generate complaints.</p> <p>Political and media scrutiny: Missed collections and service delays are likely to attract negative media attention and political pressure, particularly during the transition period.</p> <p>Staff morale and retention: Existing drivers may feel undervalued compared to peers in neighbouring authorities or private sector roles, leading to attrition and further recruitment challenges.</p>
Impact assessment	<p>Impact Assessment: Market forces supplement for HGV Drivers</p> <p>Environmental / Climate and Nature Impact - <i>Positive Impact</i></p> <p>Ensuring continuity and reliability of waste and recycling collections supports the Council's environmental objectives, including increased recycling rates and reduced landfill.</p> <p>The successful rollout of the separate food waste collection service will significantly reduce biodegradable waste in residual bins, helping to lower methane emissions and improve composting outcomes.</p>

Avoiding service disruption reduces the risk of fly-tipping and uncollected waste, which can harm local ecosystems and biodiversity.

Equalities Impact - *Neutral to Positive Impact*

The proposal applies equally to all HGV drivers, regardless of protected characteristics.

By stabilising the workforce, the Council can maintain consistent service delivery across all communities, including vulnerable and rural populations who may be disproportionately affected by missed collections.

There is no evidence that the payment would disadvantage any particular group.

Crime and Disorder Impact - *Neutral Impact*

There is no direct link between the proposal and crime or disorder.

However, maintaining regular waste collections can contribute indirectly to community safety and cleanliness, reducing the likelihood of antisocial behaviour associated with waste accumulation.

Data Protection / Information Governance / ICT Impact - *Neutral Impact*

The proposal does not involve the collection, processing, or storage of personal data beyond existing HR and payroll systems.

No new ICT systems or data governance changes are required.

New Forest National Park Impact - *Positive Impact*

Reliable waste collection services are essential to maintaining the environmental quality and visitor experience within the National Park.

The introduction of food waste collections will support the Park's sustainability goals and reduce the visual and ecological impact of waste in sensitive areas.

Cranborne Chase National Landscape Impact - *Positive Impact*

Although the Council's direct operational footprint in Cranborne Chase is limited, consistent waste services in adjacent areas help

	<p>protect the broader landscape from environmental degradation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal supports the Council's wider commitment to preserving natural beauty and reducing environmental harm.
Any conflict of interest by officer taking the decision	There is none.
Decision taken by	<p>James Carpenter</p> <p><i>James Carpenter</i></p> <p>30 July 2025</p>
Background information	
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	<p>Councillor Heron – Finance and Corporate</p> <p>Councillor Blunden – Environment and Sustainability</p>
Strategic Director(s)	<p>James Carpenter</p> <p>Strategic Director of Place, Operations and Sustainability</p>
Officer Contact	<p>James Carpenter</p> <p>Strategic Director of Place, Operations and Sustainability Telephone Number</p> <p>James.Carpenter@nfdc.gov.uk</p>

Appendices

None

Background Papers:

None