



Report To: South Holland District Council

Date: Wednesday, 23 July 2025

Subject: Report from Cabinet meeting on 26 June 2025

Purpose: To consider recommendations of the Cabinet in respect of:

- Waste Services Delivery Model

Key Decision: N/A

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services

Report Of: Jason King, Director of Communities

Report Author: Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader

Ward(s) Affected: All

Exempt Report: No

Summary

This report provides Members of the Council with details on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 June 2025, which require decisions by Full Council. Relevant extracts from the Cabinet minute are detailed at Section 2 below, and the relevant Cabinet report and appendices are attached as appendices to this report.

Recommendations

That as recommended from Cabinet to Full Council:

1. That Council approves drawing forward £3.150m from the Capital Programme allocation for 2028/29 and 2030/31 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.
2. That Council approves rephasing of £0.735m in the Capital Programme allocations for Food Waste for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles.

3. That Council approves rephasing of £0.225m in the Capital Programme allocations for refuse and recycling vehicles for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing new refuse collection vehicles.
4. That Council approves an addition of £3.771m to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.

Reasons for Recommendations

The reasons for recommendation are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

Other Options Considered

Other Options considered are detailed within the individual report attached and are summarised in the relevant Cabinet minute below.

1. Background

- 1.1. Article 4 of the Council's Constitution provides that only the full Council may exercise the functions of approving, adopting or amending the policy framework and budget, adopting or changing the Constitution. Staffing matters are also a Council function. The Cabinet however has responsibility for advising the Council on such matters. At its meeting on 26 June 2025, the Cabinet made recommendations to Council in respect of the above item which may affect budget and policy framework, constitution or compromise staffing issues.
- 1.2. The remainder of this report details the recommendations of the Cabinet which must be read in conjunction with the individual report to Cabinet, a copy of which is attached as appendices.

2. Waste services delivery model (Report submitted to Cabinet – Agenda item 3 attached)

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Communities which sought approval of changes to the delivery model for waste services across the district.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications and Environmental Services presented the report:

- Acknowledged that this would likely be most significant change to this Authority during its 51-year lifetime.
- Addressed the consultation, not a vote or referendum, that took place in 2024, which covered a wide range of issues on the future of waste collection across South Holland:

- 51% stated that they preferred sacks over 49% preferring wheeled bins.
 - 52% agreed with a commitment to collect food waste every week, an alternate weekly rubbish and recycling service and collecting no extra waste while 48% did not agree.
 - 79% agreed that increasing the type and amount of recycling was important to them versus 21% who stated that this was not important to them.
 - 52% agreed that an improved service and food waste collected every week would encourage them to recycle more, versus 48% who did not agree.
- The Environment Act 2021 introduced a waste reform programme across England with simpler recycling a central pillar to this. This required collections to separate paper and card from other recyclables along with a weekly food waste collection. The new Extended Producer Responsibility for producers to improve recyclability of their packages would provide funding to authorities but this would be reduced if recycling performance fell below an as yet undetermined level.
 - Thirteen options had originally been considered but this needed to be reduced. All options that did not meet legislative requirements had been subsequently discounted, along with those that would have created a complex collection regime, leaving three viable options to be considered by Cabinet:
 - Option C – this had been discounted due to the need to run additional vehicles within the fleet.
 - Option A – this had been the original preferred option, with 180l bins. However, following member feedback, the 180l bin was deemed to be insufficient for residents given the current waste collection service allowed for unlimited waste.
 - Option B – this was the preferred option, providing 240l bins. It is projected to deliver an average saving of £514k saving compared to the projected average cost of the current service but required an additional £189.5k capital and £20.5k revenue budget in comparison to option A.
 - Option B provided an invest to save opportunity and would create benefits:
 - Required fewer vehicles and provided capacity for future housing development.
 - Positive impact on the amount and quality of recycling.
 - Positive impact on health and wellbeing of the workforce.
 - More reliable collection regime
 - Positive impact on climate change and environment.
 - Suitability assessments would be required for properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins and would need to remain on a bagged collection.
 - A project board would have oversight of the delivery of the new wheeled bin collection service, along with policies being considered by Policy Development Panel before formal approval.
 - Assured residents and the Cabinet that all feedback had been considered, including that from the consultation, and believed that the recommendations put forward would enable the Council to deliver a service to residents that was effective, efficient, and meet the legislative requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

Consideration was given to the report and the following issues were raised:

- Concern that the Cabinet were making the decision on the future of the waste collection service rather than Full Council. It appeared that the feedback residents had given as part of the survey and their preference for bags had been ignored. The amount of recycling would not increase as once the 240l bin was full, residents may place their recycling into the general waste bin that would be collected sooner.
 - The Leader explained that under the constitution, this was an executive decision and therefore dictated that Cabinet had to make the decision, while Full Council approved the budget for the changes to the service.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services had provided the member concerned with a written response detailing the legislation for executive decisions. He explained that there would be an alternate weekly rubbish and recycling collection, as outlined within the report. The size of the proposed bins had been increased following member feedback to accommodate more household recycling.
 - The Portfolio Holder accepted that this was a significant change for residents and two engagement officers would be in place to work and assist residents during the transition.
 - He commented that the current co-mingling of recycling contaminated paper and card and therefore this needed to be collected separately to other dry mixed recycling.

- Would there be a policy regarding side waste? There was concern that an increase in fly tipping could occur if no policy was in place.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services explained that no policy was in place under the current waste service and residents could put out unlimited waste for collection.
 - As part of the service reform, there would be a recommendation for no side waste separate to what fitted in the wheeled bin. This policy, when formulated, would be considered by the Policy Development Panel before formal adoption.

- Where wheeled bins were deemed unsuitable for a property and it was appropriate for them to continue with a bagged collection, how many bags of waste would they be allowed to put out? Would bags be left behind if this limit was exceeded?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the mechanics of how this would work in practice would be included in detail within a policy but commented that it would be very difficult to restrict the number of bags put out and collected, with consideration being needed as to how this would be policed.
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that the default position would be that a 240l wheeled bin held on average four to five bags, but this detail would be included within a policy that would be considered by Policy Development Panel before formal adoption. He added that engagement with residents on this aspect was important to allow understanding of how many bags could be put out for collection.

- With the movement to a fortnightly collection, where would residents be expected to store bags if they don't have bins.

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services accepted that this was a concern but stressed that bagged collections would only apply to a small number of properties.
 - Engagement with ward members was a key part of the planning process to identify properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins.
- Would changing the collection service to wheeled bins make the service more reliable and would those remaining on bags still receive a reliable service?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that the current waste collection service having an unlimited waste strategy puts pressure on the rounds and can lead to additional crews needing to be put out to cover rounds that couldn't be completed the previous day. The introduction of wheeled bins and a policy of no side waste would make the collection service more reliable as the amount of waste collected on each round could be controlled.
 - Residents remaining on the bagged collection system would remain on the same collection regime which would benefit from the same reliable service as those with wheeled bins.
- While there was a personal preference for bags, there was confidence that the team involved had explored all possible avenues and that a move to a wheeled bin collection service was the best decision. Could reassurance be provided that ward members would be listened to when presenting properties that may not be suitable for wheeled bins.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that ward member views were important, and their knowledge of their ward would be respected.
 - There was also the opportunity for members to input into the mechanics and policies of the new collection service and its implementation through scrutiny.
- It was noted that the food waste collection would not be in place for 1 April 2026, what were the timescales for implementation of the wheeled bin collection?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services confirmed that no dates were in place yet and this was subject to approval at Full Council of the budget. He added that there was a long lead time on vehicles, and this dictated when the new collection system would be implemented.
- Concern for residents with long drives who may be unable to move the wheeled bin to the designated collection place, would this be considered as part of the criteria to remain on a bagged collection?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that the criteria would be considered carefully. He suggested that bins could be left at the edge of a property and bags be put in the back of the car to put in the bin.
 - The Head of Environmental Services said that the current policy was to not enter private drives due to the risk of damage to property from vehicles. Assisted collections could be requested by residents if they were unable to move the wheeled bin independently.
- This was a challenging decision for the authority to make, if no changes were made to the service would there be repercussions for the Council?

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the Environment Act 2021 was quite clear in its expectations and set out separate recycling collections, with a requirement for a separate food waste collection service.
 - If the Council chose to do nothing, there was a risk that the Government would come in to decide what the collection service should be.
 - There was also a risk that non-compliance would cause Extended Producer Responsibility funding provided by the Government to be lost.
- While welcoming some elements of the report, particularly in relation to food waste changes, feedback from residents had shown that the majority did not support wheeled bins and did not have the facility to store these on their property. Concern was raised about the early presentation of bins and the impact of this on the street scene, would the proposed engagement officers be working to encourage residents against early presentation and storing bins at the front of their property.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that the street scene was important and there was a need to have rigorous enforcement against early presentation and taking in of bins. This needed to be clear within the policies and amendments to the Council's enforcement policy may be required to assist with this.
- Would street bins be emptied at the same time as residential bin collections? Would there be a policy for how litter pickers could present their waste?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services clarified that residential waste was collected separately from street bins and litter picker waste in different vehicles.
- What were the timescales for implementation of the wheeled bin collection service and was April 2027 a reasonable target date for this?
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that a project board would be in place to oversee and decide the mobilisation plan. Typically, the transition period for Councils who have transferred from a bagged collection to a wheeled bin service has been 12 to 18 months. Vehicle delivery was the biggest driver for a mobilisation plan, and this had not yet been established.
 - The Leader commented that the date of implementation was really dependent on vehicle delivery, but 18 months seemed a reasonable timeframe. This time period would be used to carry out public education and inspections of properties requiring a bagged collection.
- There was concern among rural ward members that increased fly tipping could occur with the implementation of wheeled bins. Could some of the additional officer resource identified within the report be dedicated to enforcement, outside of the work already undertaken within the Kingdom contract?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that there was not necessarily a correlation between increased fly tipping and the introduction of wheeled bins.
 - The engagement officers would be funded by a specific resource for the life of the project. If the move to a wheeled bin collection service were approved, there would be a projected £540k saving in current Medium Term Financial

Strategy and it would be for the Cabinet to decide how that saving would be invested elsewhere.

- It was a huge ask of our residents to change to a wheeled bin collection but all policies relating to the new collection system would be heavily scrutinised by Policy Development Panel. The new food waste caddies would remove the issue of ripped bags, but concerns were raised about bins being emptied and becoming hazards in windy conditions, additional waste not in a bin being left behind, communal collection points and identification of which bin belongs to which property.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that these were all points that needed to be considered going forward and suggested that bins could be identified with stickers or by painting numbers on. The Environment Act 2021 did dictate changes that needed to be made but without this Act changes to the service would still need to be made as it was clear the current service was inefficient.
 - The Head of Environmental Services commented that different size containers could be provided in communal collection points that would be shared by residents. In relation to wind speed, where this was high on a collection day, crews would be asked to lay the bin down following collection to prevent them becoming hazards.

- Residents were concerned about the details of the new collection service and how it would impact their lives, therefore communication with residents about the collection changes was paramount. As the cost to purchase the new wheeled bins was very high, why did the Council need to make the change now, could it have waited until we were forced to change?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded that changing the collection service at this point provided a saving to the Council and provided an efficient and effective service for residents.

- How would biodegradable bags for food caddies be delivered?
 - The Head of Environmental Services stated that the Lincolnshire model for caddy liners was that Councils would provide liners with the caddies when delivered to the property. After this residents would be required to buy their own bags.

- Did the Environment Act 2021 force the Council to move to a wheeled bin collection service, it appeared only to mandate a food waste collection service. Would there be provision to have smaller bins for residents who didn't require a 240l bin?
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services responded the increase in bin size from 180l to 240l was based on member feedback. There would be operational issues with having different sized bins, but assisted collection was available for those who are unable to manoeuvre the bigger bins.
 - In respect of the Environment Act 2021, our interpretation was that the proposed wheeled bin service would produce the most effective service, as required under the Act.

- What was the timeframe for procurement of the food waste caddies?

- The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services stated that there was a 30 to 40 week lead in time for vehicles which would drive the roll out of food waste caddies.
 - The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the vehicles were on a Lincolnshire Framework agreement and therefore no procurement exercise was required.
- It was important to highlight that the move to a wheeled bin collection service would lead to improvements in staff wellbeing, given that manual handling and bin bags were a big concern.
 - The Head of Environmental Services explained that work related accidents were high and attributable to the way the bagged collection was carried out, with 4.1m collections a year all done through a physical manual handling process. Under the current service, there was no way to manage manual handling risks and the ability to do this significantly improved when using wheeled bins. The improvement to workplace safety would be significant under the new collection service.
- Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services and his team for pulling the report together. The biggest concern related to how the process of resident communication about the change to the waste collection system and areas where there would still be a bagged collection due to unsuitability for wheeled bins.
 - The Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Governance, Communications & Environmental Services commented that member feedback was important and had led to a change in the preferred option to be recommended for approval. It was inevitable that a bagged collection would need to remain in place for properties that are unsuitable for wheeled bins, such as terraced properties.

DECISION:

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves Option B as presented within the report as the preferred delivery model for collecting waste and recycling from households.
2. Approves the placing of an order for food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins in 2025/26, subject to the budget being confirmed.

Recommendations to Council from Cabinet:

3. That Council approves drawing forward £3.150m from the Capital Programme allocation for 2028/29 and 2030/31 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.
4. That Council approves rephasing of £0.735m in the Capital Programme allocations for Food Waste for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles.

5. That Council approves rephasing of £0.225m in the Capital Programme allocations for refuse and recycling vehicles for 2025/26 into 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing new refuse collection vehicles.
6. That Council approves an addition of £3.771m to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 to fund the capital costs of purchasing food waste collection vehicles and wheeled bins.

(Other options considered:

- *Option A – This delivery model follows the same principles as Option B, with the exception of a 180l bin for residual waste. The provision of a smaller residual waste bin was considered too restrictive following Member feedback. Residents will be transitioning from unlimited weekly collections under the current delivery model and it is considered that a 240l bin will provide greater capacity for residents to manage and adjust to the change. Option A would require £189,450 less of capital investment compared to Option B. There would also be a further revenue saving of £20,500pa achievable under Option A.*
- *Option C – This option has been discounted due to the requirement to run additional fleet to enable a full round sack collection to continue. It is also considered that asking households to retain dry mixed recycling for 4 weeks in sacks is unlikely to improve recycling rates.*
- *Wider options analysis – A number of models for service delivery have been reviewed and discounted for not meeting the statutory and legislative requirements and for the financial costs.*
- *Do nothing – this is not an option as the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections is a statutory requirement, and the cost of the current service is financially unsustainable.*

Reasons for decision:

- *Enables the Council to meet the legal obligation placed on local authorities to provide a separate weekly food waste collection.*
- *Enables the Council to meet the legal obligations placed on local authorities to provide an effective and efficient waste management service.*
- *Provides the most cost-effective option based on future annualised modelled costs.*
- *Ensures the Council is in the best position to transition.*

Makes use of capital already allocated in the agreed Capital Programme for waste fleet renewal in 2027/28-2030/31.)

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

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|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (covering report) |
| Appendix 2 | Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (Appendix A to original Cabinet report) |
| Appendix 3 | Cabinet Agenda Item 3 – Waste services delivery model (Appendix B to original Cabinet report) |

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

Name of Body

Date

Cabinet

26 June 2025

Report Approval

Report author:

Christine Morgan, Democratic Services Team Leader
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Signed off by:

The individual report has previously been signed off by the relevant Director and Portfolio Holder

Approved for publication:

As above