

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – THURSDAY, 28 JULY 2026



Title of Report	NEW RECYCLING CONTAINERS PROJECT UPDATE	
Presented by	Cllr Michael Wyatt Community, Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Holder PH Briefed: Yes	
Background Papers	Food Waste Cabinet Aug 2024 Cabinet Paper April 2025 Full Council May 2025 Procurement and Contract Award of Recycling Containers at Cabinet December 2025 (Private)	Public Report: Yes
	Update on Procurement of Vehicle Fleet for Recycling Containers Project Cabinet May 2026 (Private)	Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	This report is not seeking any additional financial commitment as these are already in place through previous Cabinet and Council decisions made in respect of this project	
	Signed off by the Acting Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The implications are set out in the April 2025 Cabinet report and are repeated as below: The notice required by Leicestershire County Council (The Waste Disposal Authority) regarding a change in how the Council collects and disposes of recycling from households in the district will be issued for the change in container collection method. At the end of November 2024, the Government confirmed the requirements for Simpler Recycling. Councils will need to collect the following materials using four different containers:	

	1. Residual (non-recyclable) waste 2. Food waste (mixed with garden waste if appropriate) 3. Paper and cardboard 4. All other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass) The adoption of a new Waste and Recycling Collections Service Statement constitutes the exercise of the Council's statutory waste collection functions under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Council must ensure that it is applied reasonably, proportionately and in accordance with public law principles. There is a risk of challenge (including complaint to the Ombudsman or judicial review) where the Service Statement is applied inflexibly or without regard to individual circumstances. The inclusion of discretion within the Statement is therefore important to mitigate this risk. The Council must also ensure compliance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including making reasonable adjustments where required.
	Signed off by the Deputy Monitoring Officer: Yes
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The implications are set out in the April 2025 Cabinet report
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the progress made to date in preparing to start the roll out of the new container system in early November 2026 and to comment on detailed draft plans for Phase One, the colours of the bins and a new policy in respect of the Council's approach to household waste and recycling collections.
Reason for decision	To comment on the progress being made by this project to date and formally approve the proposals in regard to the new bin colours, the approach to phase one and the Service Statement
Recommendations	THAT CABINET: 1. CONSIDERS THE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 25 JUNE 2026

	2. COMMENTS ON THE PROGRESS AND PLANS MADE TO DATE IN PREPARING TO ROLL OUT THE NEW SCHEME 3. APPROVES THE RATIONALE FOR PHASE ONE 4. AGREES THE PREFERRED PROPOSAL FOR BIN LID COLOURS 5. ADOPTS THE WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS SERVICE STATEMENT SUBJECT TO OFFICERS APPLYING THE POLICY WITH APPROPRIATE DISCRETION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD CIRCUMSTANCES.
--	--

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cabinet and Council gave the go-ahead and resources required for a new simpler twin bin recycling container scheme to be introduced in the districts households at meetings held in April and May 2025 respectively. In addition, Cabinet approval was given to the implementation of a new weekly food waste collection service at its meeting held in August 2024.
- 1.2 The Council intends to introduce food waste collections at the same time as introducing the new twin bins as this will be clearer for the district's residents to understand and can be promoted as a single new recycling system. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has been formally notified of the Council's plans in this regard.
- 1.3 On 31 March 2026, the Government's Simpler Recycling regime came into effect. In summary, the new default requirement for most households is the allocation of four recycling containers for the collection of the following:
- Fortnightly collection of residual (non-recyclable) waste
 - Weekly collection of food waste (mixed with garden waste if appropriate)
 - Fortnightly collection of paper and card
 - Fortnightly collection of all other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass)

The new recycling containers are intended to ensure lower levels of contaminated materials being rejected after collection if it is not economically viable to re-process them, therefore, reducing the amount of material recycled. This is particularly relevant to paper and card which is vulnerable to cross-contamination from food and liquid commonly found on other recycling, which can significantly reduce quality of collected material.

For further information on Simpler Recycling, see the following link: [Simpler Recycling in England: policy update - GOV.UK](#)

2.0 MOBILISATION FOR ROLL OUT

- 2.1 A Project Delivery Team, was established in May 2025 and has been making good progress in preparing for the new scheme. The project remains on the programme presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny at their meetings in March and April 2025. Once the Phase One roll out has been implemented a detailed review will be undertaken to learn what went well and what did not go so well in order that future phases can be more effective and efficient.

Phase one	Implementing the new service to 12,500 households November 2026
Phase two	Implementing the new service to 12,500 households March 2027
Phase three	Implementing the new service to 12,500 households July 2027
Phase four	Implementing the new service to 12,500 households November 2027

The roll out of the phases after phase one will be brought forward if this is possible and subject to earlier phases working well.

Vehicle Procurement

- 2.2 The Council has ordered 17 of the 19 vehicles required for the new collection regime from Dennis Eagle and delivery will begin in early October 2026. The contract will see the manufacturer supplying nine new vehicles to replace aging lorries in the Council's waste fleet, plus an additional seven 'split-back' vehicles. These are designed to collect the type of wheeled recycling bins the Council will be adopting whilst keeping the contents separated and free from cross contamination. Dennis Eagle will also provide familiarisation training for the Council's waste crews as part of the contract. Cabinet approval to commission vehicles 18 and 19 (a narrow vehicle and a JCB) was secured at its meeting in May.

Container Procurement and Delivery

- 2.3 Cabinet at its meeting in December 2025, agreed for the containers to be procured not only for the new twin bins but all future household bin purchases. This contract will also include provision for the delivery of the new twin bins directly to households. This procurement went live on an approved Council framework on 12 May and once evaluated the contract and order will be placed. Food waste container delivery will be aligned with the twin bin deliveries. The red boxes not required by households will be collected separately by the Council's delivery team.

Food Waste Vehicles and Containers

- 2.4 The Council has ordered the required eight food waste collection vehicles with the supplier Terberg Matec UK. The kitchen and kerbside caddies have been ordered from IPL Global Plastics Limited and the vehicles and containers will be delivered in phases from early October. The Council will be running a competition from late August amongst local school pupils who will be invited to name the new food waste vehicles.

Staff Engagement

- 2.5 Staff have been actively engaged throughout the project, with involvement in the specification and selection of the new refuse collection vehicles. This has ensured that operational and practical requirements from crews and drivers have been reflected in the final vehicle design.
- 2.6 Key features of the new vehicles include low-entry, high-visibility cabs to improve driver awareness and support compliance with Direct Vision Standard requirements. The vehicles also include fully compliant bin lifting equipment, designed in line with recent legislative changes, with improved controls and safer operator positioning.
- 2.7 Staff will continue to be kept informed and involved through quarterly all-staff meetings, where more detailed updates will be shared, and through information displays on a dedicated noticeboard at the Council's Linden Way Depot.

Communications

- 2.8 The project is backed by a regularly reviewed communications strategy, detailing the Council's activity to keep residents engaged and informed at every stage of the programme. There is a dedicated page on the Council's website with information on progress and a frequently asked questions section.
- 2.9 The dedicated web page includes details on the initial public consultation and the subsequent results, as well as publicising each of the project's key milestones via the local press and social media, particularly following key Cabinet decisions.
- 2.10 As the project approaches the rollout of the new containers to households, this messaging will become more targeted and instructional, using a variety of appropriate channels and methods to support the Council in embedding the new waste and recycling collection system in phases across the district.

Contract with Leicestershire County Council as Disposal Authority

- 2.11 The Council delivers its waste collection services in partnership with Leicestershire County Council in its role as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA). The WDA is responsible for determining the facilities to which collected waste should be delivered.
- 2.12 The disposal locations set out below reflect those currently designated and form part of the wider countywide waste management infrastructure, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements and supporting efficient and sustainable service delivery.
- 2.13 For food waste, multiple approved facilities are available. As the Council is not required to meet fixed tonnage targets at individual food waste locations, this provides flexibility to utilise more than one location, supporting efficient routing and service resilience. All disposal arrangements are undertaken in accordance with direction from the Waste Disposal Authority. The designated disposal locations have been confirmed by the County Council as follows:

Commodity	Operator	Location
Residual Waste	Biffa	Shepshed
Dry Recycling (NEW)	Casepak	Leicester
Garden Waste	Suez	Lount
Food Waste	Biogen	Atherstone
Food Waste (NEW)	Severn Trent	Derby
Food Waste (NEW)	Leicestershire County Council	Bardon

The County Council will agree a new contract in the summer with the district council to reflect these new arrangements.

Local Government Reform and Devolution

- 2.14 The Council is aware of potential future changes to local government structures. The approach to container design seeks to maintain operational flexibility should governance arrangements change in the future. This would mean that the current structure, whereby the statutory responsibilities for waste collection and disposal are split between the District Council and Leicestershire County Council, would no longer be the case under a new unitary council. To allow ultimate flexibility for this future structure the bins and containers will have no branding applied and the vehicles will have simple transfer applications that can easily be changed in the future.

3.0 Draft Twin Bins Colour Appraisal

- 3.1 To provide the most flexible, adaptable and efficient bin supply to households all future wheeled bin purchases will have a black body and a coloured lid. With garden bins being green lidded and residual waste bins being black lidded it is important that the new twin bins are of an appropriate colour. Seven criteria have been used to come to a recommendation, and these are more closely set out within **Appendix A**. In summary, these are as follows:

1. Residents - familiarity and positive behaviour
2. Residents - visual impairment and colour vision deficiency
3. Residents - use of bins in low light
4. Waste operatives - operational visibility
5. Waste operatives - familiarity and anticipation of contents inside recycling bins
6. Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP) advice
7. Best practice amongst other councils

Following the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment and an engagement exercise with operational staff, officers recommend an orange lidded bin for plastics, cans, tins, foil and aerosols and a blue lidded bin for card and paper.

4.0 Draft Phase One Rationale

- 4.1 **Appendix B** sets out the reasons for introducing phase one of the new recycling container system to 12,832 households in the Wednesday collection zone, covering Coalville, Whitwick, New Swannington and parts of Hugglescote and Thringstone.
- 4.2 The area was selected because of its close proximity to the Council's waste and recycling depot, it fits within a single collection day, includes a broad mix of housing types and demographics, and aligns with some of the Council's existing food waste and FlexCollect trials operating in the area. This makes it a practical and controlled setting

to test the new arrangements, identify issues early, and refining the approach before further rollout.

- 4.3 Officer-led street assessments of 50 terraced streets have been carried out, alongside site-specific consideration of flats/communal sites and shared bin collection points. The fieldwork examined pavement space, shared access arrangements, bin presentation and storage, providing an evidence base for identifying where standard arrangements can be implemented and where specific arrangements will be required.
- 4.4 The findings indicate that the majority of households in the phase one area can accommodate the standard 180 litre recycling bins, with detached and semi-detached properties generally having sufficient storage and pavement space. Shared bins for flats and communal households will be managed through collaboration with housing providers, alongside site visits.
- 4.5 The main issue identified relates to 32 terraced households, where restricted and narrow pavement space would not safely accommodate the two standard 180 litre recycling bins on collection day. For these addresses, the proposed solution is to provide two smaller 140 litre wheeled bins, with supported and targeted face-to-face resident engagement. Smaller 140 litre bins will normally be provided where physical constraints are identified, although each case will be assessed on its individual merits.
- 4.6 A further issue has been identified for some detached and semi-detached properties on newer estates, which use designated bin collection points. Under the current collection arrangements, the two recycling bins would be presented alongside the garden waste bin, then on the following week only the general waste bin would be collected. To reduce pressure on space at these collection points, it is proposed that the garden waste bin and general waste bin are collected on the same week.
- 4.7 Overall, the research and fieldwork confirmed the phase one is operationally viable, that identified risks are understood, and appropriate solutions and communications are in place to support implementation.

5.0 Draft Communications Programme for Phase 1

- 5.1 Residents in the Wednesday collection zone will receive communications through a variety of channels to ensure they are engaged and informed about the recycling collection service change launching in early November, empowering them to feel confident on how to use the new recycling bins.
- 5.2 The communications form part of the project's wider communications strategy, which includes:
 - Four printed communications in September, October, November and early 2027 delivered directly to households. Further information on these is detailed below:
 - A press release prior to launch
 - Instructional videos for use on the website, social media and emails
 - Three emails to residents in September, October and November
 - Social media posts from September through to December
 - Face to face promotion at events in the Wednesday collection zone

6.0 Draft Waste and Recycling Collections Service Statement

- 6.1 The Council already has an established [Refuse and Recycling Collections Policy](#) based on the bags and boxes container system, and this will remain in place for all residents who remain on this system of recycling until the entire district transitions to the new recycling container system. The policy provides a framework for service delivery but will be applied with appropriate flexibility to reflect individual household circumstances where necessary.
- 6.2 Having such a document reflects national best practice and provides a clear and consistent framework for the delivery of Council waste and recycling services. It sets out expectations for residents, supports fair decision making by officers, and addresses emerging issues such as recycling performance, service arrangements and contamination.
- 6.3 Residents in North West Leicestershire have made significant efforts to recycle as much of their waste as possible under the existing system, with the district currently having the highest recycling rate in Leicestershire. It is, therefore, important that this momentum is maintained. To support this, a new draft Waste and Recycling Collections Service Statement has been drafted which clarifies how the new recycling container system will operate and importantly ensures compliance with the Government's Simpler Recycling requirements. The Service Statement at Appendix C, which is in a different format, is largely the same as the 2022 policy referred to in paragraph 6.1 and some of the key changes are outlined below:

Batteries and Mobile Phones

- 6.4 Batteries and mobile phones will continue to be collected, however, the opportunity to recycle these more frequently will be extended, alongside the weekly food waste collections.

Textiles

- 6.5 Textiles will no longer be included as part of the kerbside recycling collection service. There is no statutory responsibility to collect textiles as part of Simpler Recycling, and approximately seven tonnes of textiles are collected by the Council each year. Of this, a proportion of textiles are of too low quality for reuse and have limited recycling options due to challenging global end markets, most gets incinerated. Residents will be advised to donate good quality clothing to charity shops and take textiles to a collection point, such as their local Recycling and Household Waste Site.

Excess Waste

- 6.6 As a general principle, only waste and recycling contained within the wheeled bins and food waste caddy will be collected. However, the Council may exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances where justified. Any waste or recycling left beside the wheeled bins or food caddy will not be collected. This keeps manual handling for both residents and operatives to a minimum and ensures operatives are not put at risk when loading waste and recycling into the rear of the collection vehicle. The rear of the vehicles are equipped with rear mounted lifting mechanisms designed to support safe handling of wheeled bins and maintain defined safety zones for operatives. Residents will be encouraged to flatten, squeeze and squash their recycling to make efficient use of space within their recycling bins. Households of four or more residents may request two larger 240l bins where additional capacity is needed and will be assessed on a case-

by-case basis. The Council will apply this approach with appropriate discretion where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated.

Food Waste Liners

- 6.7 The Council decided in 2019 to start and fund a trial of 4,000 households with food waste collections, which it has maintained on the basis that the government would fund the wider rollout across the whole district.
- 6.8 For the rollout, all households will receive an initial roll of 52 food waste caddy liners, providing approximately one year's supply. This initial provision has been made possible through Government funding to support the roll out of the food waste collection service.
- 6.9 After the initial roll has been used, residents will be encouraged to provide their own liners for ongoing use. This will also include the 4,000 households on the existing trial, as currently ongoing liners have been provided, but this will end as the government funding does not support it.
- 6.10 When providing their own food waste liners, residents will be encouraged to use compostable liners, paper or newspaper. Alternative liners may be acceptable where compatible with treatment processes, and guidance will be provided to residents to minimise contamination. Black bags should not be used in the food waste caddy as black plastic cannot be easily detected by sorting equipment at recycling and treatment facilities, and cannot be separated effectively from food waste, leading to contamination. In some other English council areas residents are advised that liners do not need to be used provided residents are content to wash their caddies.

The Waste and Recycling Collections Policy in **Appendix C** sets this out in detail.

7.0 Recycling rates

As a Council, there is an aspiration within the Council Delivery Plan to achieve a 60% recycling rate by 2028. The new twin bin collection scheme and particularly the food waste collection service is seen as the key drivers to achieve these higher rates of recycling. Currently the Council has a recycling rate of 43.5% which is the highest in Leicestershire. (Latest 2024/2025 DEFRA):

Local Authority	Recycling Rate
North West Leicestershire District Council	43.5%
Harborough District Council	43.4%
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	41.7%
Charnwood Borough Council	41.3%
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	40.6%
Blaby District Council	40.3%
Melton Borough Council	40.0%

8.0 Community Scrutiny Committee 25 June 2026.

A members briefing was held on 25 June before Community Scrutiny and at both events members were appreciative of the update and having more detail on the plans. The Service Statement has been revised in the light of scrutiny's comments in respect of the use of bags for the food waste caddies. The comments are at **Appendix D** for Cabinet's consideration.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Developing a clean and green district by providing residents the maximum opportunity to conveniently recycle Ensure where possible all waste is sent for recycling or reprocessing, diverting it away from landfill or incineration. The Council's current delivery plan commits to "Being a carbon neutral Council by 2030".
Policy Considerations:	The Fleet Management Strategy under the Council's Zero Carbon roadmap commits the Council to explore available fleet options which will be governed by the type of recycling container system introduced. Demonstration/confirmation the recycling container system introduced complies with the Governments Simpler Recycling policy.
Safeguarding:	N/A
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been carried out on the container system to ensure that any issues with moving to different container systems are identified and mitigated. Currently those residents who are physically unable to put out waste, garden waste, and recycling containers are able to apply for assisted service, this would remain in place. The service ensure waste operatives collect and return waste and recycling containers to an agreed location on the residents property. An equalities impact assessment has been completed for each of the following documents: the Draft Waste and Recycling Collections Policy, Bin lid Colours Proposal and the Rationale for Phase 1. The Council will continue to monitor impacts during implementation and will make reasonable adjustments where required in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
Customer Impact:	An easier, more convenient, and practicable way for residents to recycle at the kerbside.
Economic and Social Impact:	Not applicable.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	An easier, more convenient, and practicable way for residents to recycle at the kerbside which could increase the volume of materials recycled.

Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	A communications strategy has been developed and initiated to support the roll out of the new recycling containers project. The new container scheme has been subject to extensive consultation, and the twin bin scheme is in line with public demand. The operating guidelines set out in the Service Statement are not subject to public consultation as most of what the Council carries out is directed nationally.
Risks:	A full project risk register is in place. Key risks include: Operational risks associated with phased rollout; Resident non-compliance or misunderstanding of the new system; Storage and presentation constraints at certain property types; Reputational risks if communications are not effective; Risk of challenge if the policy is applied inflexibly. Mitigation measures include phased implementation, targeted communications, and the application of reasonable discretion in individual cases.
Officer Contact	Paul Sanders Head of Community Services paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk