

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY 12 MARCH 2024
title: WASTE REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTATION - UPDATE
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Committee with an update on the changes that will be required to waste collection services under the Environment Act 2021 and actions being taken by the Council to comply.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
- To ensure a well-managed council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.
 - To protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In 2018 the government published its Resources and Waste Strategy for England. Many aspects of this strategy have now become legal requirements as part of the Environment Act 2021.

2.2 In October 2023, the government provided further clarity on requirements under its "Simpler Recycling". This has provided certainty regarding the waste streams that need to be collected from all households from 31st March 2026. These can be summarised as follows:

- A weekly food waste collection – This is currently not provided
- A Residual waste collection – The government are strongly encouraging Councils to collect residual waste at least fortnightly. Currently we collect weekly.
- A Garden Waste collection service where requested – This can be charged for but is free of charge in Ribble Valley.
- Dry Recyclables, including
 - Glass - glass packaging including bottles and jars
 - Metal - steel and aluminium tins, cans, aerosols, jars and bottle lids; aluminium foil and food trays; aluminium tubes
 - Plastic - plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, plastic tubes larger than 50mm x 50mm; cartons,

These are currently collected fortnightly in Ribble Valley in one bin. Plastic film packaging and plastic bags will require separation and recycling from 2027.

- Paper & card – except paper and card that contains glitter or foil; laminated paper, stickers. This is currently collected fortnightly in sacks.

- 2.3 Bins are used in all but approximately 1000 premises where access/space does not allow for bins. Lilac sacks are used for these properties.
- 2.4 Final detailed guidance is still to be provided, however it is suggested that it could be possible to collect food waste and garden waste together. This has been examined closely as it could simplify collections of food waste. Unfortunately, County Council cannot process combined Food and Garden Waste. Investigative discussions have taken place with other waste disposal providers, but it would involve committing to long term 10 year contracts and negotiating a breakaway from the current County arrangements. It has been concluded therefore that food waste and Graden waste should be collected separately.
- 2.5 It has also been intimated in government announcements that dry recyclables could be collected together i.e. Paper and card in the same bin as tins, glass and plastic. This currently takes place in Merseyside and other areas. This would have the benefit of reducing the total number of collections and save money by removing the paper rounds. It does however reduce the quality of recycled materials. Our ability to provide these collections will depend entirely on the County Council being able to process them. Currently County are suggesting they will not be able to process dry recyclables that include paper and card and are not planning to upgrade facilities accordingly. We are yet to get final confirmation of this and continue to lobby for the option. A further update on County's proposed disposal/recycling solution is expected in March 2024.
- 2.4 The collection of food waste from business premises comes in to force a year earlier in March 2025. County will not be in a position to receive food waste at that date, however it could possibly be mixed with garden waste for disposal. We are unlikely to have acquired the dedicated food waste vehicles at this point, making collection by ourselves difficult. A business case will be developed for the options, which will include the possible use of commercial providers collecting the food waste for our existing customers.
- 2.5 GOVERNMENT FUNDING
- 2.6 The government have indicated that they will provide funding for the changes required. For food waste this will be in three allocations. The first allocation is for implementation costs to cover the capital costs of vehicles and bin caddies. This allocation has been confirmed as a one off payment of £588,541. Working on the basis of us needing 5 new vehicles, this allocation appears to be too low and has been appealed. We are suggesting an increase of £124,800. The second element of funding is for one off revenue implementation costs, possibly bin liners, technology, communications etc. The third element will be new burdens funding which will cover annual running costs for staffing, fuel etc. We are told that we will be notified of our allocations for the revenue elements later this calendar year.
- 2.7 A further uncertainty regarding funding comes in the form of new legislation for Extended Producer Responsibility. In essence this will charge businesses for using non-recyclable packaging and distribute part of this funding to Local Authorities to cover the costs of collection. We are awaiting details on how this will work and indicative amounts. Amounts are likely to be determined partly on the quality of recycling taking place. This provides an incentive to Councils to promote and improve recycling rates. This could be factored in to our revenue allocations mentioned above in the form of new burdens funding, but no confirmation has been forthcoming.
- 2.8 In a bid to create a circular economy and minimise waste, a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) is due to be introduced nationally on 1st October 2025. This will require suppliers of drinks containers (Plastic and cans only) to charge a small deposit for containers

which is refunded on return of the container. The use of reverse vending machines at supermarkets etc is being considered but the actual method needs to be finalised and may vary.

- 2.9 It is expected that the Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme will help to reduce waste being collected by ourselves and then going to be processed by Lancashire county Council.

FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

- 2.3 The priority for the Council is to ensure that food waste collections are in place for April 2026.

- 2.4 In assessing the collection of food waste from households, a number of factors have been considered, such as:

Take-up – Not all households will decide to separate their food waste. Take up rates have been as high as 60% and as low as 30%. Estimates for Ribble Valley have been based on fifty percent. All premises will be provided with a small kitchen caddie and a larger kerbside caddie.

Quantity of food waste – It is uncertain as to exactly how much food waste will be presented for collection. We have worked on an average of 1.75 kg per household per week. This equates to approximately 52 tonnes per week for the Borough if everyone takes part. In reality its expected that about 30 tonnes per week could be presented at most.

Type of Refuse Vehicle and Availability – Food waste requires far lower capacity than our standard refuse vehicles. It is expected that specially adapted 7.5 tonne vehicles will be used with a payload of 3 tonnes. For estimations, we have worked on the vehicles emulating the current paper rounds which would require four vehicles. A spare has also been requested as part of the funding allocation. Currently it is expected that vehicles will be available in time for a March 2026 launch if ordered in the next three to six months. The option of procuring vehicles on a Lancashire wide basis is being considered.

Provision of bin liners – The majority of Councils collecting food waste provide biodegradable bin liners. These cost approximately £2.50 per roll. Providing all households in Ribble Valley would cost approximately £75,000 per annum. Other options are available such as not providing bin liners or using plastic bags which are removed and recycled. These options are being examined.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 As details and options are firmed up, further reports will be presented to committee. At this time, there are a number of uncertainties which are highlighted in this report. An officer group has been established to implement the changes and we are active in a County Wide Strategy Group along with a separate subgroup of only Districts.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

For further information please ask for Adam Allen, extension 4461.