

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

---

meeting date: 28 MAY 2024  
title: WASTE REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTATION - UPDATE  
submitted by: ADAM ALLEN DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: ADAM ALLEN DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Committee with a further update on changes to future waste collections following a response from DEFRA to their national consultation.
- 1.2 To also recommend to committee that we write formally to County Council as our waste disposal authority to request that in light of the clarifications by DEFRA that they facilitate the disposal of comingled recyclables and comingled organic waste to minimise the number of bins required per household.
- 1.3 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 launched a national consultation on proposals for waste collections as part of its "Simpler Recycling" initiative. This provided certainty regarding the waste streams that need to be collected from all households from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. These can be summarised as follows:
  - A weekly food waste collection – This is currently not provided in the Ribble Valley.
  - 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 April 2027.

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

2.3 For waste other than paper and cardboard, bins are used in all but approximately 1000 premises in the Ribble Valley. Where access or space does not allow for bins, lilac sacks are used.

2.4 Ribble Valley are one of a few councils that have been offered free consultancy support from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme). This work will analyse our waste streams and consider the most efficient method of introducing the new regulations. This work is likely to be completed by September and reported to committee in October 2024.

### 3 FURTHER GOVERNMENT CLARIFICATIONS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

3.1 Government consultation took place in Autumn 2023 to seek feedback on possible flexibilities regarding the collection of different waste streams. A response was sent by Ribble Valley along with an agreed collective response on behalf of all Lancashire Council Leaders.

3.2 In response to the consultation DEFRA have agreed to support the following in the final legislation which is expected to be presented to parliament before the summer recess:

- a. There will be an exemption that will allow Councils to collect all dry recyclables in one bin. This could include plastic, tins, glass, paper and cardboard. Currently Ribble Valley have a separate paper collection service which consists of two vehicles and four staff.
- b. There will be an exemption that will allow for the collection of food waste and garden waste (organic) in the same bin. Crucially Councils will still be able to charge for the collection of garden waste even if it is collected with food waste.
- c. Statutory Guidance will be issued stating that domestic residual waste should be collected at a minimum fortnightly frequency. There will be no compensatory funding for those councils currently collecting three weekly.
- d. The collection of food waste from non-domestic premises (with over 10 employees) is to commence in April 2025 rather than 2026 as per domestic premises. Many councils objected to this earlier start date due to systems not being in place for either collection or disposal. DEFRA will continue engagement with Councils as to how they meet this requirement.
- e. Bin Liners will not be mandatory at this stage and its is not expected that government will fund councils for the use of bin liners. This could incur additional costs of approximately 75k per annum if supplied.

### 4 IMPLICATIONS FOR RIBBLE VALLEY

4.1 Officers have worked on the principle that residents would like to have as few types of bin as possible.

- 4.2 The response to the consultation supports this approach, allowing a minimum of three bins. These would be a residual collection, a mixed dry recyclable collection and an organic waste collection (food and garden waste).
- 4.3 Ribble Valley Council is the waste collection authority and Lancashire County Council are our waste disposal authority. Discussions have been taking place with Lancashire County Council to try and establish a service that minimises the number of bins. Currently it appears that the County Councils preference is to receive paper separately and garden waste separately from food waste. This would require Ribble Valley to have five separate collections. County have not clarified their position formally.
- 4.4 The rationale for separating food waste from garden waste is that pure food waste gives a higher calorific yield and therefore provides heat energy for the waste processing plant at Farrington through an anaerobic digestion plant. This results in significant energy cost savings for the County Council. When garden waste is mixed with food waste it requires a composting process which results in less energy and lower savings. Other District Councils in Lancashire previously opposed mixed organic collections due to an expected loss of income from their garden waste service. All Lancs authorities other than ourselves charge for garden waste. DEFRA have now confirmed that garden waste can still be charged for even if comingled with food waste. This removes the initial objection from other districts and consultation will take place with them to understand their current position.
- 4.5 The rationale for separating paper is that this provides higher quality paper for recycling, increasing the potential income for County Council. Paper quality can reduce when mixed with broken glass and fluids from cans and bottles. Our paper collection service currently employs four staff and two vehicles. Significant savings could be achieved if paper and cardboard could be collected with bottles and cans.
- 4.6 It is very important to note that future government funding for waste will rely partly on a new scheme called Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). This scheme charges producers of packaging etc and then distributes this funding to councils. The amount given to each council will depend on the efficiency of their waste and recycling service and may in future depend on the quality of the recyclables collected. The scheme is still being designed and final values and details are unlikely before the end of this year.
- 4.4 The collection of food waste from business premises is now confirmed to come into force a year earlier than domestic premises in March 2025. This is only for companies with more than ten staff. We are unlikely to have acquired the dedicated food waste vehicles at this point, making collection by ourselves difficult and costly. An options appraisal will be undertaken which will include the possible use of commercial providers collecting the food waste for our existing customers. The results of this will be reported to committee in October 2024.

## 5.0 GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- 5.1 The government have now provided a payment of £588,541 for capital items such as vehicles and bin caddies. An appeal against this payment was submitted and a further 127k has now been paid. This funding will cover the purchase of five smaller 7.5 tonne vehicles along with a kitchen caddie and kerbside caddie for every household.
- 5.2 The government are also to provide additional revenue funding for the implementation of a food waste service. Notification of the amount is likely to come late this calendar year and will be influenced by the Extended Producer Responsibility calculations referred to in 4.6.
- 5.3 In conjunction with all the changes to waste collections outlined, the government wishes to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS). This is due to be introduced

nationally in 2027. 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 with businesses.

- 5.4 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.

## 6.0 FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

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

- 6.2 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. We are currently working on the principle that all premises will be provided with a small kitchen caddie and a larger kerbside caddie to encourage take up of the service.

**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.

**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.

## 7 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 The government have provided further clarity regarding proposed future guidance. This should be presented to parliament before summer recess with detailed final guidance provided late summer 2024. There remain many uncertainties, in particular the funding and how Extended Producer Responsibility funding calculations may impact the Council.

- 7.2 As a result of our strong partnership with WRAP we have been able to secure free consultancy support to help us in designing a future food waste collection service. This work will be crucial in advising members of the most effective future model.

- 7.3 National Government have expressed a desire for as few different types of bins as possible. It is believed that this approach is shared by local residents. We have worked to this principle and expressed this wish to our waste disposal authority,

Lancashire County Council. We have yet to receive a formal response as to whether it will be possible to comingle recyclables or organic waste to reduce the number of bins. It is only by examining the costs and implications for both the collection and disposal of waste that this decision can be made. It is understood this work could take place later this year, however this is likely to be after contracts have been signed which could lock us into a five bin system.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended that a formal request be submitted to Lancashire County Council requesting that:

8.1.1 All options continue to be considered for a co-mingled recyclables disposal service allowing paper waste to be collected with bottles and cans.

8.1.2 That options for a co-mingled organic waste service be fully considered, allowing garden waste and food waste to be collected together.

8.1.3 That a formal response be provided as soon as possible regarding the above.

ADAM ALLEN  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

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