

Addition of budget to Capital Programme 2025/26 for the procurement of vehicles and containers for a weekly food waste collection service.	
Executive Summary	This report is being presented to seek approval from full Council for the capital expenditure to be added to the Capital Programme for 2025/26 for the purchase of vehicles and caddies required for the introduction of food waste collection services within the area of North Norfolk District Council. This service is to be delivered by Serco on behalf of the Council.
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allocating capital budget for this project at this time would allow the Council to make arrangements for purchase of vehicles, equipment, and caddies, so as to be in a position to comply with the legislation, and to avoid delays in the supply chain in making these purchases. 2. Not to allocate capital budget to this project at this time would hinder progress to procure vehicles or equipment associated with the delivery of a food waste service. This option is not recommended as it is in breach of the legislation and could result in legal action being taken against the Council.
Consultation(s)	Not applicable
Recommendations	It is recommended that Council approves a budget of £1.956m be added to the capital programme for 2025/26 which will be funded by the new burdens funding provided by Government of £1.456m and the use of the Environmental Health reserve (to fund the balance) to allow the procurement of vehicles and equipment to commence.
Reasons for recommendations	To ensure compliance with the introduction of a new legislation
Background papers	None

Wards affected	All
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr C Ringer
Contact Officer	Emily Capps – Assistant Director Environmental and Leisure Services – 01263 516274

Links to key documents:

Corporate Plan:	Our Greener Future.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	The vehicle and equipment purchase is funded through central government new burdens funding linked to the introduction of Food waste. The balance of any funding required above this to cover the capital expenditure will be covered by the use of the Environmental Health Reserve.
Council Policies & Strategies	None

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	Yes
Has the public interest test been applied	Yes
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	None

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to add the capital expenditure required for the procurement of vehicles and equipment to deliver a separate weekly food waste collection service in the area of North Norfolk District Council to the capital programme for 2025/26.

2. Introduction & Background

- 2.1. In November 2021 the amended Environment Act was enacted laying a foundation for enhanced waste management and recycling across the UK. In alignment with this the Government released the Simpler Recycling requirements in May 2024. These requirements outline consistent waste collection methods aimed at reducing landfill waste and supporting sustainable resource recovery. Under this legislation, all Councils in England (unless transitional arrangements have been requested and agreed) are now mandated to implement a separate, weekly food waste collection service from households by 31 March 2026.
- 2.2. To support this transition, DEFRA allocated a capital funding payment of £1,097,527 to NNDC in January 2024 to facilitate the purchase of essential equipment including food waste caddies, bins and dedicated collection vehicles.

Kitchen Caddies (plus spares)	Kerbside Caddies (plus spares)	Communal wheeled bins (plus spares)	Vehicles (plus spares)	Total
£115,584	£265,843	0	£716,100	£1,097,527

2.3. Additionally in March 2025 DEFRA has allocated a further £358,867.50 for the project management, procurement, communications and caddy delivery.

Container Delivery	Project Management	Procurement	Communications	Total
£192,381	£67,000	£2,000	£97,485	£358,867

2.4. An internal food waste caddy (approx. 5 litres) will need to be provided to householders for use in the kitchen. This provides the householder with somewhere to store food waste in the short term and helps improve collection yields. Householders will empty their food waste into an external food waste caddy of approximately 23 litres (approximately 10% of the size of a wheelie bin) which can be placed either on top of or beside their existing bins. Residents in flats etc. where larger communal bins are provided will have larger external bins to empty their food waste into.

2.5. The Council's contractor Serco will then empty the material from these external caddies or communal bins into a specific food waste collection vehicle. These vehicles are smaller than a normal refuse collection vehicle (RCV) and weight around 7.5tonnes, they have a leakproof body which is essential for the collection of food waste, to the high-water content of the waste.

2.6. Whilst the number of vehicles is yet to be confirmed, our contractors (Serco) are currently working on a project proposal and round planning, early indications suggest that we will require between 12-14 vehicles. Indicative costs suggest these vehicles will be somewhere in the region of £105,000.00 to £112,000.00 per vehicle and a further report will be submitted to Cabinet regarding procurement and purchase of these vehicles.

3. Proposals and Options

3.1. Separate weekly food waste collections are a legal requirement for NNDC from April 2026, doing nothing is not an option that can be considered due to potential legal challenge, government sanctions and reputational damage.

- 3.2. Options have been explored around how we could incorporate separate weekly food waste collection into our current service delivery model; however, it would be too problematic from an operational perspective, and a waste disposal perspective.
- 3.3. Utilising split bodied vehicles that have an additional compartment for food waste meaning more than one material could be collect at a time, has been considered. This would require significant investment in new 26t vehicles, along with a full re-routing exercise. Our current fleet was purchased in 2019 and will remain viable and fit for purpose for a good number of years to come. In addition, compartments will fill at differing rates meaning multiple trips to the disposal point would be required.
- 3.4. Collecting food waste separately increases yields and ensures that there is full visibility on the amount of food waste collected, which enables us to understand capture rates across the district. This information will enable NNDC to deliver targeted communications and educational material and monitor their impacts.
- 3.5. Food waste that is collected separately can be treated through anaerobic digestion which efficiently captures methane for energy production. Keeping food waste separate ensures it is managed in the most environmentally friendly and efficient way.

Option 1

Allocating budget for this project at this time would allow the Council to make arrangements for purchase of vehicles, equipment, and caddies, so as to be in a position to comply with the legislation, and to avoid delays in the supply chain in making these purchases

Option 2

Not to allocate budget to this project at this time would hinder progress to procure vehicles or equipment associated with the delivery of a food waste service. This option is not recommended as it is in breach of the legislation and could result in legal action being taken against the Council.

4. Corporate Priorities

- 4.1. The introduction of food waste collections helps to contribute to the corporate plan objective of “Our Greener Future” particularly the objective “Using the National Waste and Resources Strategy implementation and any additional funding available to maximise recycling and reduce waste through the introduction of new streams, such as food waste collections for every household”

5. Financial and Resource Implications

- 5.1. Simpler Recycling which includes the mandatory introduction of food waste aims to significantly improve recycling services as well as introduce nationwide consistency. Government has committed that the additional requirements will be funded in two ways:
 - All costs relating to packaging waste and recycling costs will be met through packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) payments from packaging producers.
 - All other new requirements on councils will be funded by Government under the New Burdens doctrine.
- 5.2. DEFRA has allocated NNDC an initial £1,097,527 in new burdens funding towards the cost of caddies, communal bins and vehicles.
- 5.3. At this stage it is predicted that the DEFRA capital funding currently allocated will not meet the full implementation costs. Further information is required from Serco particularly information about the required numbers of RCVs before the full cost is known. Initial indications are that an additional £500,000.00 could be needed allowing for inflation and the demand in the market place
- 5.4. There is a shortfall in funding awarded by successive Governments under the new burdens scheme. The allocation has been appealed with DEFRA and raised as a concern through the District Councils Network but no additional funding has been awarded. It is proposed that the shortfall would be met from the Environmental Health Reserve.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

The Council must introduce this service and approval is being sought to add this to the capital programme now so that the order for the vehicles and caddies can be placed so NNDC secures it's build slot for the vehicles.

Funding to cover the expenditure will be grant funding and use of the Environmental Health Reserve. .

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. The amended Environment Act was enacted, laying a foundation for enhanced waste management and recycling across the UK. Under this legislation, the Council is now mandated to implement a separate, weekly food waste collection service from households by 31 March 2026.
- 6.2. Failure to comply with the new regulation may result in the council being sanctioned or penalised by Government.
- 6.3. Failure to comply with the new legal requirement may result in significant reputational damage to the organisation

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

There is a legal obligation to provide a food waste service by 31 March 2026. This is a national obligation and so there is likely to be a demand from local authorities at a similar time to purchase the vehicles and equipment needed. So as to avoid delay and ensure we can meet our legal obligations to have the food waste collection in place by 31 March 2025, the Council would need to ensure there is funding in the budget and then provide details of the procurement and purchase process at Cabinet at the earliest opportunity

7. Risks

- 7.1. There are reputational risks associated with the introduction of a food waste collection service. Service changes must be carefully designed and planned, comprehensively and clearly communicated to residents, and implemented and operated to a high standard to ensure resident satisfaction.

- 7.2. Shortfall in financial funding, DEFRA has provided a contribution to some capital, with ongoing resource and revenue costs to be available from 1 April 2026, although specific allocations of this are still pending.
- 7.3. There is a high likelihood of procurement bottlenecks given the national implement of food waste. This could create supply delays and impact the implementation timescales of a new service. The council should act quickly to determine requirements and to proceed with procurements as early as possible

8. Net Zero Target

- 8.1. In 2021/22, 6.4 million tonnes of food (and drink) waste was generated from UK households, of which 4.7 million tonnes is categorised as edible and 2 million tonnes inedible or unavoidable. This equates to 95 kg per person per year or 227 kg per household per year or 247 kg per household of four.
- 8.2. Producing food requires significant resources including land, energy and water. Globally, 25–30% of total food produced is lost or wasted, and food waste is estimated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to contribute 8-10% of total man-made greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- 8.3. The specification of the food waste vehicles would mean that they are able to run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).
- 8.4. Whilst the purchase of new vehicles and containers will have a negative impact arising from the embodied carbon (i.e. the energy and emissions arising from the manufacturing process), such negative implications can reasonably be assumed to be offset within a short period of time with the increased diversion of food waste from landfill.

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 9.1. There are no equality, diversity or community implications which directly result from the recommendations within this report, as these are only to consider the need to commence procurement of vehicles, caddies and bins due to the extended lead in times of the supply chain.
- 9.2. The Government's requirement for councils to introduce a separate weekly collection of food waste from all households by 31st March 2026 will affect daily life in North Norfolk and it's imperative that the Council considers the impact of this on all residents. The equality, diversity, and community implications of the implementation of a domestic kerbside food waste collection service will be considered as part of the planning

and development of the service implementation plans required to successfully comply with the Government requirements.

10. Community Safety issues

- 10.1. There are no Community Safety implications which directly result from the recommendations within this report, as these are only to consider the need to commence procurement of vehicles, caddies and bins due to the extended lead in times of the supply chain.

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 11.1. Government has legislated for major reforms to waste collection and packaging, requiring councils to align their waste and recycling services with new nationwide Simpler Recycling requirements.
- 11.2. This will mean the NNDC will need to add a new weekly collection of food waste to the existing waste services
- 11.3. Due to what are expected to be extended lead times on the manufacture and supply of vehicles, caddies and bins it is considered prudent to undertake the procurement of these as early as possible and ensure that orders are placed which ensure that deliveries of vehicles and equipment can be placed.
- 11.4. Government has stated it is committed to providing reasonable new burdens funding where local authorities are required to deliver food waste collections from households.
- 11.5. The introduction of a food waste collection service in North Norfolk is one of the biggest changes within the waste service over the last 25 years. Further information will be supplied to members as the project progresses and key milestones are met.
- 11.6. It is recommended that Council approves a budget of £1.956m to be added to the capital programme for 2025/26 which is in excess of the new burdens funding provided by Government to allow the procurement of vehicles and equipment to commence. The balance of funding will be met from the Environmental Health Reserve.