

## INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND HOUSING SERVICES	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	15 JUNE 2022	8
<b>IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESOURCE AND WASTE STRATEGY (RAWS) AND THE ENVIRONMENT ACT – FOOD WASTE</b>			

### PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

This report considers the strategic and operational implications of the Resource and Waste Strategy (RAWS) 2018 and the Environment Act (EA) 2021 for fylde as a Waste Collection Authority (WCA).

### SOURCE OF INFORMATION

LARAC – Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee  
 DEFRA  
 Gov.uk

### LINK TO INFORMATION

Environment Act 2021 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk))  
 ons/resources-and-waste-strategy-for-england" Resources and waste strategy for England - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

This information is being provided to the Operational Management Committee for consideration as waste collection arrangements fall within the remit of the Committee.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

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### Information Note

The Government's ambitions for environmental protection post Brexit are outlined in the 25-year Environment Plan (2018) and the Resource and Waste Strategy (2018), with key legislation to implement the measures in the Environment Act (2021). The desire to encourage everyone to reduce, reuse and recycle is central which will fundamentally alter the amount of waste generated, the nature of waste and how waste management systems are operated and funded.

In December 2018 the Government published its national Resource and Waste Strategy (RAWS) setting out: 'how we will preserve our stock of material resource by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency, and moving

towards a circular economy. At the same time, we will minimise the damage caused to our natural environment by reducing and managing waste safely and carefully, and by tackling waste crime’.

RAWS will be delivered through policies, actions and commitments which adhere to at least one of five strategic principles:

- Incentivising people to do the right thing
- Prevent waste and manage it better
- Increased responsibility through polluter pays principle
- Lead by example
- Tackle waste crime

These strategic ambitions will contribute to the delivery of:

- All plastic packaging being recyclable, reusable, or compostable by 2025
- Eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030
- Eliminating avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25-year Environment Plan; and
- Eliminating all avoidable waste by 2050

The Environment Act aims to improve air and water quality, protect wildlife, increase recycling, and reduce plastic waste and looks to use 4 tools to deliver on these ambitions – setting minimum standards for all local authorities under a consistency agenda; a deposit return scheme; extended producer responsibility and the introduction of a plastic packaging tax. The Government has carried out consultations on these proposals and will be providing their response having considered all feedback however progress has been delayed due to the pandemic.

**Consistency** – the government is considering the viability of implementing the following standards:

- The collection of a consistent suit of core materials at the kerbside including glass bottles and jars; paper and card; plastic bottles, pots, tubs, and trays; steel and aluminium tins and cans
- Weekly separate food waste collections (not comingled with garden waste but potentially collected on the same, split bodied vehicle)
- Free garden waste collections

The government states that all material should be collected separately from others to preserve the quality of the material unless the Waste Collection Authority can demonstrate that separate collection would not be technically or economically practicable or has no significant environmental benefit (referred to as ‘TEEP’). Fylde currently collects all the materials required except for separate food waste. The currently collection method with glass, cans and plastics collected in the blue bin and paper and card collected in the brown bin has previously been subjected to the necessary cost/benefit analysis required to demonstrate TEEP. As such there is no current requirement to introduce separate collections of these materials under the new legislation except for food waste.

The implications of a separate weekly collection of food waste to all households, including flats and rural communities, are far reaching. A new collection regime will need to be carefully designed and introduced to ensure it is as efficient and cost effective as possible and is accessible to all residents including those currently in receipt of assisted collections. In accordance with the Council’s carbon neutral priorities all changes should be carried out with the best carbon approach possible to minimise the impact on the carbon footprint of waste collections. Moving to weekly collections for food waste will lead to a change in refuse collection vehicles and the Council should explore making use of new technology to reduce the carbon footprint across the fleet, for example hybrid or electric vehicles. This technology is in its infancy with regards to refuse collection vehicles with limited driving range and expensive charging infrastructure but there are other considerations, such as electric bin lifting equipment, that reduces noise pollution and the fuel burden on vehicles. The Council may also look to consider mitigation measures to accompany the introduction of food waste collections such as reduced residual bin capacity or decreased grey bin collection frequencies to encourage participation in food waste collections as residents may still be tempted to use grey bins for food to avoid smelly kitchen caddy issues, particularly in warmer weather. Partnership options with other local authorities should also be explored as Wyre and Blackpool will need to introduce food waste collections at the same time and there may be value in exploring a Fylde Coast food waste collection. Procurement of vehicles and containers will be challenging as demand will be high from many other councils introducing services at the same time and options should be investigated to provide as long a lead time as possible.

**Free Garden Waste collections** – a subscription based chargeable green waste service is currently in operation in Fylde. This was introduced in 2017 to address the £770k funding deficit from the withdrawal of the LCC recycling cost sharing payment in 2018, successfully meeting 70% of the shortfall. Under the Environment Act, WCAs are not permitted to charge for the collection of garden waste (subject to revision). Concerns have been raised at the financial implications if there is a return to a free service given the potential loss of income.

**Deposit Return Scheme** – this is aimed at tackling those materials that are commonly littered by placing a small deposit charge on them. Many glass, plastic and metal drinks containers purchased on the go end up littering the local environment and therefore if consumers can be encouraged to return them there should be less litter. From Fylde’s perspective this measure would help to deliver the Council’s objective to reduce littering, but it will also impact on the recycling rate as consumers may be incentivised to return containers for financial gain rather than disposing of them in the kerbside scheme, resulting in surplus capacity on the rounds. Fylde would be paying for ‘void’ space on the rounds that can only be resolved through time consuming and confusing round reorganisation. There is a lack of clarity with regards to any potential compensation for local authorities due to surplus capacity within the collection system.

**Extended Producer Responsibility** – aims to recover net costs from producers for the packaging they create by funding the collection, management, and disposal of packaging waste, including investment in capital infrastructure, at end of life. Funding may be passed on to local authorities to support their frontline collection services through Extended Producer Responsibility payments. Support costs including communication and provision of public information on waste prevention and recycling, data gathering, performance incentives and contract negotiations may also be provided as part of the scheme however it is likely that such payments will only be paid if the authority meets the minimum requirements in terms of material consistency, service standards and in relation to food collections.

Although the act has now received Royal Assent, the only provisions which immediately came into force are largely procedural, with the other provisions becoming law on approval of the Secretary of State. The Government recognises that contract renegotiation will be a big barrier to service change and is likely to accept a phased introduction of changes until around 2031 (subject to confirmation). The government have stated they will fully fund all new burdens on local authorities arising from the Bill and will ‘allow local authorities sufficient time to adapt their new duties and to communicate changes with householders’. The detail of available funding remains to be seen however the governments recently published Net Zero Strategy supports the elimination of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill from 2028, bringing forward £295 million of capital funding which will allow local authorities in England to prepare to implement free separate food waste collections for households from 2025 (New Burdens budget).

It is anticipated that an introduction of weekly food waste collections with new containers, crews and vehicles, together with the loss of income from green waste will have significant and far-reaching implications for Fylde. This will need to be accompanied by a robust communication campaign to mitigate against potential reputational damage from changes to the collection services and to educate residents to fully embrace the new weekly collection of food waste to maximise participation and support the diversion of biodegradable material.

Other changes that will impact local authorities include changes to enforcement powers to tackle waste crime and fly tipping and measures to address the plastic problem through the plastic packaging tax and charges for single use plastic items which may impact on future collection requirements to achieve recycling and diversion targets.