

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Customer and Digital) Introduced by (Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment))	Council	Tuesday, 30 January 2024

## Recycling and Waste Strategy

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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### Purpose of the Report

- To present a new Recycling and Waste Strategy for approval.

### Recommendations

- To approve the strategy and action plan
- To approve the budget requirement for local priority actions.

### Reasons for recommendations

- To satisfy the requirement for a new strategy to drive the council towards its waste reduction and recycling targets and comply with new legislation and national waste policy.
- To support the council's green agenda and climate change strategy objectives.

### Other options considered and rejected

- To not adopt and publish a strategy would fail to provide strategic direction at a time when there are significant national waste reforms including statutory requirements.

### Executive summary

- A new and innovative Recycling and Waste Strategy for Chorley has been drafted for approval by Council.

8. The strategy is designed to drive Chorley towards meeting waste reduction and recycling targets as required in the Environment Act 2021 and the Resources and Waste Strategy for England.
9. The strategy supports the ambition set in Chorley's Climate Change Strategy to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030.
10. There are some new statutory waste collection obligations that will require significant changes in the coming years.
11. Our target is to achieve 65% recycling by 2035.
12. There are five strategic objectives and an action plan.
13. The success of the strategy will be monitored and measured through corporate and service level indicators.
14. Planning and development of major service changes will proceed once further clarification is confirmed by Government on specific waste collection obligations and funding allocation.
15. In the short to medium term, there are a range of local priority actions which will require investment of £110,000.

### **Corporate priorities**

16. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	<b>A green and sustainable borough</b>
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

### **Background to the report**

17. A new and innovative Recycling and Waste Strategy for Chorley has been created, and it was agreed by the Executive Cabinet on 7 December 2023 to go to full council for final approval.
18. The strategy is designed to drive Chorley towards meeting waste reduction and recycling targets as required in the Environment Act 2021 and the Resources and Waste Strategy for England. It is also designed to support the ambition set in Chorley's Climate Change Strategy to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030.
19. The strategy has been in development for some time but there have been delays to Government waste reforms and policies which will have a significant influence on waste collection services, and has consequently delayed the strategy.
20. Government announced on 23 October 2023 the new waste collection obligations for all local authorities, which provided some long-awaited clarity on new requirements and timescales, and that guide our local strategy.
21. New statutory requirements are:

- 'Simpler Recycling' – collect a consistent set of recyclable materials, specifically paper and card, plastic bottles/pots/tubs/trays, glass, metal, cartons and garden waste, by 31 March 2026
  - Weekly food waste collections to all households by 31 March 2026.
  - Collect plastic film packaging by 31 March 2027.
22. Our target is to achieve 65% recycling by 2035 which matches the national target set within the Resources and Waste Strategy (RAWS) for England. The latest recycling rate for Chorley is 46%.
23. This means an increase of nearly 20% is required to reach this ambitious target, which equates to an additional 8,500 tonnes of waste being diverted from the residual waste stream and into recycling bins annually.
24. Significant changes are required over the coming years to fulfil statutory obligations, and to realise our targets for waste reduction and recycling and wider corporate climate goals. To deliver these changes, there are five strategic objectives:

*Table 1: Strategic Objectives*

<b>Encourage and improve behaviour and communication</b>	We will encourage everyone to be responsible for their waste, make full use of their recycling collection services, and provide access to all the information they need about recycling and reducing waste.
<b>Engagement activities and partnerships</b>	We will work with partners, schools, businesses and community groups to deliver projects and initiatives that aim to reduce waste and recycle more.
<b>Changes and improvements to collection systems</b>	We will enable residents to recycle more of the waste they generate by offering easy-to-use services and opportunities to recycle a wider range of materials.
<b>Leading by example</b>	We will lead by example by ensuring waste minimisation, recycling and net-zero carbon principles and best practice across council services and facilities.
<b>Other waste reduction and recycling initiatives</b>	We will support reuse, refill, repair schemes and explore opportunities for materials that are harder to recycle.

25. An action plan has been drawn up to support delivery of the strategy. Actions correspond to one or more of these three themes:
- Optimise our local potential for recycling and waste reduction;
  - Prepare our services for future changes linked to emerging policy and legislation;
  - Support residents, community groups and other stakeholders to become a waste-free borough.
26. Our initial focus will be on the more readily achievable local priorities and making improvements to existing services.

27. Planning and development of major service changes expected in the future will proceed once further clarification is confirmed by Government on specific waste collection obligations and funding allocation.
28. The strategy may be subject to review and changes when there is further clarification of Government waste policy, new statutory guidance, and confirmation of funding and financial settlements for any new burdens.
29. The success of the strategy will be monitored and measured through corporate and service level indicators (Table 2), which aim to reflect the improvements to the service.

*Table 2: Key performance measures:*

No.	Description	Target
1	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting	65% by 2035
2	Residual waste per household per year	<400 kg/hh/yr
3	% households participating in kerbside recycling	A 10% increase from baseline
4	% of primary schools with recycling facilities and engaged with education events	80%
5	% of council facilities with access to recycling points/collections for a range of materials, including council events	100%

30. To realise a significant and sustained increase in recycling will require some fundamental changes or additions to household waste collection services and come with significant capital and revenue costs. The action plan outlines some service change options that would be required to achieve higher recycling rates with some estimated costs and implications.
31. The strategy does not include detailed waste collection service changes given the significant costs and the operational, technical, legal, budgetary and political uncertainties. However, the action plan includes achievable and affordable actions in the short to medium term timescale which can begin the journey towards our targets.
32. Costs for the delivery of the new strategy will be contained within existing budgets where possible. However, additional investment will be required for several of the proposed actions, with cost estimates included in the action plan.
33. In the short to medium term, there are a range of local priority actions which will require investment of £110,000, as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Budget requirements (not including major service changes)

Action	Total costs estimate	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Improve communal recycling facilities: new bins, bin repairs, new signage and labelling	£25,000	£10,000	£10,000	£5,000
Improve communication with residents: materials and advertising	£10,000	£3,000	£4,000	£3,000
Tackling contamination in recycling: communication materials	£5,000	£2,500	£2,500	
Digital engagement: app development	£5,000		£5,000	
Recycling incentives/rewards	£20,000			£20,000
Support recycling in schools: recycling bins and boxes	£5,000	£2,500	£2,500	
Deliver schools education events programme	£15,000	£7,500	£7,500	
'On-the-go' recycling: dual litter bins	£25,000	£5,000	£10,000	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£110,000</b>	<b>£30,000</b>	<b>£40,000</b>	<b>£40,000</b>

34. The costs identified for any major service changes will likely be significant and subject to an appropriate report which will be submitted where the need for budget allocation becomes clear. Some headline figures are indicated in the action plan.
35. New waste collection services will be funded through a combination of the following measures:
- **New Burdens funding** to local authorities to provide weekly food waste collection from households, which will include capital costs (such as vehicles and containers), as well as resource costs (such as vehicle re-routing, communications and project management) and ongoing service costs (such as collection and disposal costs). Funding allocation is still to be confirmed.
  - **Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging payments** will be provided to local authorities, with packaging producers responsible for the full net costs of collecting and managing packaging waste through efficient and effective services. This includes the collection of additional packaging materials for recycling, such as plastic films and flexibles. Payments are expected from 2025/26.

- It remains the case that under section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012, waste collection authorities may, as they can now, recover a reasonable **charge for the collection of garden waste**.

### **Climate change and air quality**

36. The work noted in this report has an overall positive impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.
37. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
  - a. net carbon zero by 2030,
  - b. waste and the use of single use plastics,
  - c. sustainable forms of transport.

### **Equality and diversity**

38. There are no equality and diversity implications of this report.
39. An Impact Assessment for the new strategy has been completed.

### **Risk**

40. The recycling rate target of 65% is ambitious and it is unclear what, if any, implications there will be on local authorities that fail to achieve this level of recycling. Introducing new weekly food waste collections to all households will make a significant contribution towards our target. A key consideration for the council will be whether to simultaneously restrict residual waste by reducing the frequency of collections, which drives higher recycling and waste reduction, and can also provide service cost savings. However, Government has stated that they expect a minimum service frequency for residual waste of at least fortnightly, and preferably weekly. It is hoped that council's will be afforded the freedom to choose the most suitable collection system which can meet our goals and provide best value services. This will be confirmed in forthcoming statutory guidance on waste collections.
41. The precise level of Government funding allocation arising from the Environment Act 2021 regarding consistent collections and extended producer responsibility to cover additional costs, is not yet confirmed. However, Government has affirmed that local authorities should receive their allocation of New Burdens funding for food waste collections, and under EPR the full net costs of managing packaging waste where they have taken all reasonable steps to establish effective and efficient waste collections systems. The definition of 'effective and efficient systems' is not yet confirmed.
42. There are many interdependencies with Lancashire County Council (LCC) as the waste disposal authority. Many waste disposal authorities have raised concerns about the infrastructure and agreements needed to manage new waste streams, particularly food waste. Waste collection authorities in Lancashire are reliant on sufficient food waste recycling capacity being put in place by LCC, although they have indicated

facilities at Farington Waste Park should be ready to accept the county's food waste by July 2025.

43. LCC's Materials Recovery Facility, which is the destination for all kerbside collected household recycling, will require reconfiguration to accept additional material streams such as cartons and plastic films, which could impact on the timescales for implementing service changes.
44. A new national Deposit Return Scheme will see several thousand reverse vending machines placed within supermarkets and in public spaces. This could remove a significant volume of materials from household recycling bins, therefore impact upon the efficiency and effectiveness of recycling collections and adversely impact the local authority recycling rate. It is currently unclear if and how the DRS materials could be captured within our waste and recycling data calculations and therefore still contribute to our recycling rate.

#### **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

45. There is no existing budget for these works. In the short to medium term, there are a range of local priority actions which will require investment of £110,000 over the next 3 years. A budget of £40k per annum for this has currently been assumed within the Council's proposed MTFS to be approved in February 2024.
46. The costs, as yet to be identified, for any major service changes in the future are likely to be significant; such changes will be subject to separate reports as necessary, which will be submitted for review and approval, including associated budget requirements.

#### **Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

47. The report is seeking Cabinet approval for a new Recycling and Waste Strategy. This new Strategy is designed to help us meet legislative requirements and achieve our own environmental targets. Ultimately the Strategy will be referred to Full Council for formal adoption.

#### **Background documents**

- Recycling and Waste Strategy 2024-2030
- Recycling and Waste Strategy Action Plan
- Executive Cabinet report, 7 December 2023

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