



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 3 March 2026

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Food Waste Collection Update

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on the progress of the roll out of weekly food waste collections. The collections are scheduled to begin on Monday 13 April 2026 and this report provides an update on progress against planned activities and deadlines.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note the contents of the report and the progress made to date.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The funding for the capital and revenue elements of the weekly food waste collection service has been agreed in previous reports. There are no additional financial requirements at this stage of the service roll out.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer.

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications which are not already referenced in the body of the report. Key legislation relating to domestic food waste collection is the Environment Act 2021.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Climate Change

- 1.3 Food waste makes up around one third of residual waste bins, it is also a major contributor to carbon emissions via its current disposal route. The new food waste collection service will ensure that food waste is taken out of the residual waste stream (black bins) and disposed of through anaerobic digestion, which is a more environmentally friendly way of disposing of this waste stream.
- 1.4 Introduction of a new way of separating and disposing of food waste will reduce carbon emissions associated with their current disposal route, as well as improving the recycling and reuse opportunities of other materials in the waste stream. Nevertheless, the operation of an additional 12 vehicles has the potential to increase fuel consumption overall for the fleet and therefore carbon emissions associated with the operation of the Council's vehicle fleet.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. On 29 November 2024 the Government announced the new default requirements for business and household waste collections under the Simpler Recycling collection reforms. These reforms form part of the updated Environment Act 2021.
- 2.2. The reforms are designed to simplify the rules and make recycling easier for people in England; they enable consistent, more streamlined collections from all households and businesses. The approach is designed to ensure the same set of materials are collected everywhere in England. The reforms aim to reduce confusion, end the postcode lottery of bin collections and ensure the correct materials are captured for recycling.
- 2.3. The legislation introduces multiple changes with various deadlines. The new default requirements for collection authorities include four separate containers for:
 1. Residual (non-recyclable) waste,
 2. Food waste,
 3. Paper and card,
 4. All other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass).
- 2.4. The legislation mandates that collection authorities must implement a weekly food waste collection for all households from 31st March 2026. It is because of these mandated changes that the Council will introduce a weekly food waste collection service.
- 2.5. The Council's service will commence on Monday 13th April 2026, although this is slightly later than 31 March deadline, it is in line with the Lincolnshire Waste Partnerships roll out timetable and DEFRA have been made aware of the date. The Council have received no indication from DEFRA that the slight delay to roll out is a concern.
- 2.6. Across Lincolnshire, South Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council, City of Lincoln Council and North Kesteven District Council will start collections in March and April of 2026. East Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council are planning to proceed with food waste collections in Autumn – Winter 2026. South Holland District Council are planning to proceed with food waste collections in Spring 2027.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Table 1 outlines key project milestones and progress against them. At the time of publication of this report, the food waste project is progressing as scheduled, within budget and is projected to complete on time.

Table 1: Key Project Milestones and Progress

Programme Summary		
Action	Progress	Comments
Vehicle delivery	All 12 vehicles received	No further action required
Household Starter pack assembly (caddies, liners and leaflet)	Assembly and delivery commenced w/c 2 February	Expected completion by 31 March 2026
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Recruitment of drivers	6 of 10 driver vacancies filled from external sources. An additional 6 operatives are undertaking their HGV apprenticeships and sit their practical in March 2026.	No further action required
Recruitment of loaders	All 20 vacancies filled	Further recruitment currently being undertaken
Establish new rounds	Establishment of new rounds to be completed by 28 February	Rounds will align with current schedule
Food waste go live	Monday 13 April	No delays expected at the time of report publication.

- 3.2. A key action included a successful recruitment drive at the new Operations Depot in December 2025. This drive enabled the Council to fill around 26 of the 30 service vacancies.
- 3.3. In addition to the six drivers recruited at this event, a further six are currently undertaking an HGV apprenticeship and will sit their practical exam in March. It is the Council's intention to use the apprentices to fill vacancies within the food waste service (alongside driver positions for other waste services e.g. Bulky Waste).
- 3.4. Should unfilled positions remain within the service due to apprenticeship failure, the recruitment team have retained the details of suitable candidates from the recruitment day as reserve candidates. Furthermore, the service can run an additional recruitment exercise if required before service launch.
- 3.5. Recruitment was a key risk in project roll out; however, this is no longer considered a high risk due to the actions highlighted in this report which have

been designed to mitigate service failure through an inability to staff the new service.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. No other options have been considered, the roll out of a weekly food waste collection service has been mandated by the Environment Act 2021 with an implementation deadline of 31 March 2026. The timelines suggested in this report will enable the Council to deliver the service from Monday 13 April 2026.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The recommendation is that the Committee note the contents of the report and the progress made to date in preparation for the domestic food waste collection service. The timeline proposed will allow the Council to deliver the new service in line with the legislative requirements of the Environment Act 2021.