

**Report Title: Recycling & Waste Containment**

Date of meeting:	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2024		
Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration & Skills)		
Report of:	Assistant Director – Operational In-House Services		
Portfolio:	Cleansing & Street Scene		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

**Summary:**

To provide an update to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration & Skills) regarding the current Waste & Recycling Collection Service, waste containment, including project work underway.

To also outline impending national changes within the waste industry and the subsequent impact those changes will have upon the service within Sefton.

**Recommendation(s):**

- (1) Note the content of the report
- (2) Note the national changes within the waste industry
- (3) Note the impact of national changes within Sefton

## 1. Introduction

Sefton Council collect approx. 118,602 tonnes<sup>1</sup> of household waste from ca. 120,000 properties across the borough on an annual basis. This is a combined total from all waste streams. Approx 98,000 properties participate in the garden waste collection service delivered on a 3 weekly basis.

Sefton's 21/22 recycling rate was 33.2% and each household in Sefton generated 614.9 kgs of waste that year<sup>1</sup>. In comparison to the rest of the LCR, Sefton ranked around mid-table but was significantly below the national average for recycling performance which is approx. 45%.

*1 – Based on OfLOG published data, sourced from WasteDataFlow*

## 2. Drivers for Change

There are now a range of drivers to change the way waste is collected both in Sefton and as part of a wider LCR approach – to improve performance and environmental impacts as well as driving down costs, as follows:

- **Environmental:** All LCR councils have declared climate emergencies, made a Net Zero Carbon by 2040 commitment, and as part of this have signed up to the LCR Zero Waste Strategic Framework.
- **Financial:** The cost of waste is rising and, without intervention, will increase further from 2028 through a new tax (the 'Emissions Trading Scheme' [UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste - GOV.UK](#) – based on a simpler principle to landfill tax in the 1990's). Housing growth will further exacerbate the costs and carbon impacts of waste, so improving Sefton's recycling rate and lowering the amount of waste generated per household will be key to mitigating against Sefton's increasing waste disposal costs.
- **Local:** Sefton has an ongoing need to standardise how waste services are delivered across the borough, to ensure collections are the same for all wherever possible. Approx 8,500 properties still receive a weekly sack collection service. Properties that receive this service are able to present unlimited residual waste (whereas a standard household collection of residual waste is contained within a 240ltr wheeled bin every 2 weeks), also, many of these properties do not present recycling.

The majority of premises receiving a sack collection are terraced properties with some storage limitations for wheelie bins at the front of the property and rear yards accessed via a shared entry. The industry norm nationwide is

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often for rear entries to be utilised for bin storage (if infrastructure allows) with agreed presentation points for residents to adhere to.

### **3. Legislation**

DEFRA have made mandatory changes to how food waste and recycling are to be collected by councils from April 2026 through their announcement of; [Simpler Recycling](#) in October 2023.

In summary, this means that all local authorities will need to provide a kerbside food waste collection on a weekly basis. Additionally, there is a requirement for local authorities to collect a wider range of recycle.

However, before this can happen across the LCR, Merseyside Recycling & Waste Authority (MRWA) will facilitate a disposal process for any additional waste streams as they have responsibility for the operation of the waste transfer stations and household waste recycling centres across the region.

Local authorities are also being strongly encouraged to collect paper and cardboard separately (i.e. in a separate container from the brown bin). However, it is currently unclear whether this is the right approach for the LCR and on-going work is underway to ensure this option is costed in its entirety which includes the whole 'waste journey' from collection to disposal and the impact of the potential increased carbon footprint will be considered due to the deployment of additional collection vehicles if this method is adopted.

### **4. LCR Strategic Waste & Resources Partnership**

To harness the benefits of working collectively, Sefton are one of 7 partners in the Liverpool City Region Waste & Resources Partnership, comprising the 6 LCR Local Authorities and MRWA.

The Partnership provide a single voice on waste management affairs, including the implications of new waste management legislation, additional waste due to housing growth, and considerations such as the environment and climate emergency in addition to the financial pressure of regional waste management.

The Partnership are working collaboratively to prepare for the implementation of food waste collections across the LCR and shared procurement will be undertaken for the acquisition of resources such as food waste caddies and vehicles, where appropriate.

Collections of food waste will be undertaken by each local authority respectively to align with their existing methodology of collections – e.g. in-house or 3<sup>rd</sup> party provision.

### **5. Corporate Transformation Project – Sefton specific**

Within the Waste Management Service, a route optimisation project has recently begun. The purpose of the project is to review current resource utilisation such as vehicles and staff to ensure well balanced and efficient schedule creation. The rounds will also be developed with sufficient capacity for any pre-approved housebuilding sites within the Borough which are due to commence over the next 3 year period.

As part of the route optimisation work, there will be a transition of 'sacks to bins' for properties that can accommodate wheelie bins. These properties, once surveyed, will also be aligned with an alternative weekly collection (AWC) model. This will provide residents with the opportunity to recycle appropriate waste in addition to providing consistent waste containment which will deter vermin and seagulls in coastal areas.

The project for transition from sacks to bins (where appropriate) will be undertaken during 2025 on a staggered basis with appropriate engagement with relevant ward councillors followed by comms to residents ahead of any planned change.

## **6. Standardised -v- Bespoke collection arrangements**

Wherever possible, standardised collection arrangements will be implemented boroughwide. At present, a standardised collection is via a 240ltr wheelie bin on an alternative weekly collection model for residual and recycling waste streams. There is the addition of the green waste bin for premises with gardens, this bin is collected on a three weekly basis.

There are, of course, a variety of premises who do not fit the standardised model. They may range from HMO's, high rise blocks, or shops above commercial premises who do not benefit from outside storage space – there are many different reasons why residents find it challenging to present waste consistently and the crews can find it equally as challenging to gain access and deliver a high quality service.

Moving forward, each location that requires a bespoke collection arrangement / presentation point will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## **7. Education and Behavioural Change**

Sefton have recently appointed a Waste Minimisation Officer. The main duties of this role are as follows;

- Promoting waste minimisation, reuse and recycling to the residents and businesses of Sefton.
- Assist in developing waste and recycling improvement campaigns. Provide promotional and educational communications in liaison with the Council's Communications Team to encourage a high level of waste minimisation in

the Council's waste collection services to meet Council objectives and government legislation.

- Engaging with the public to encourage behaviour change that reduces waste arising and increases recycling.
- Monitor refuse and recycling collections regarding problems such as excessive waste, non-participation in recycling, recycling container contamination or misuse and other problems caused by residents' lack of understanding of refuse and recycling collection services.
- Communicate with residents through letters, e-mails, phone calls and visits and provide supportive literature to help them use the service correctly. Actively take part in promotional events such as roadshows and talks to encourage residents to become more "waste aware", minimise their waste and increase recycling.
- Identify areas and households of low recycling performance in liaison with the refuse and recycling collection crews and waste officers; target those households with education and support to improve their recycling performance.
- Engage with residents via door-to-door canvassing in areas identified as having lower than average participation levels in kerbside recycling, raising awareness and understanding of the refuse and recycling collection service and motivating them to participate.
- Work with the Council's Environmental Protection Team to bring about appropriate enforcement action where education, advice and encouragement has failed.

## **8. Corporate Risks**

Although significant planning is underway, it should be appreciated that the Council will be procuring products (food caddies and vehicles) in a saturated market as all local authorities that don't currently offer a food waste collection service will be undertaking the same steps.

Although there is no expectation of delay at present, procurement delays could mean failure to achieve the DEFRA deadline for the implementation of food waste collections within the borough.

## **9. Financial**

Sefton has been awarded £2.6m capital monies from DEFRA for the acquisition of food caddies (for both inside and outside use) plus vehicles.

## **10. Conclusion**

There is considerable change on the horizon for residents across the Borough, significant engagement and comms will be delivered timely and through a variety of forums to ensure a wide reach. All partners and

stakeholders will have a role to play in disseminating information and promoting consistent messaging as we prepare for change.

<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> Waste containment provides a cleaner environment for all
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b> The recommendations within this report will have a positive impact

### **What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

#### **(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 7846/24.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5946/24.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

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