

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



20/09/22

Our Ref    Overview                      and                      Scrutiny  
                 Committee/28/09/22  
Contact.    Committee Services  
Direct Dial. (01462) 474655  
Email.      [committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk)

To:    Members of the Committee: David Levett (Chair), Val Bryant (Vice Chair), Adam Compton, Alistair Willoughby, Carol Stanier, Claire Strong, Ian Moody, Nigel Mason, Phil Weeder, Raj Bhakar, Tamsin Thomas and Tony Hunter

Substitutes: Councillors Kay Tart, Lisa Nash, Sean Nolan, Terry Tyler, George Davies, Gerald Morris and Richard Thake

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A  
MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,  
LETCHWORTH**

On

**WEDNESDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2022 AT 7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Community

**\*\*MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL  
AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION  
ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING\*\***

## **Agenda**

### **Part I**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting.  Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b> Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency.  The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>CALLED-IN ITEMS</b> To consider any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of decision. At the time of printing the agenda, no items of business had been called-in.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b> To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>MEMBERS' QUESTIONS</b> To receive and respond to any questions from Members either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>FUTURE SERVICE DESIGN OF WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES</b>	(Pages 5 - 106)

This report seeks the authority to proceed with a Competitive Dialogue procurement for the waste & recycling collection and street cleansing contract due to expire in May 2025. The report is based on outcomes from the Member lead joint working group between East Herts Council (EHC) and North Herts Council (NHC) and identifies key service changes affecting the contract specification drafting. The key drivers for the services changes are set in the context of the pending national Resources and Waste Strategy and the financial challenges authorities are facing which is exacerbated by inflationary pressures. The report covers details of both EHC and NHC changes in order to fully identify the impacts across the shared service.

- 8. CALL TO ACCOUNT OF DELEGATED DECISION TAKEN ON 13 AUGUST 2021 IN ACCORDANCE WITH 'SPECIAL URGENCY' PROVISIONS CONTAINED IN THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION** (Pages 107 - 128)

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND STRATEGIC HOUSING MANAGER

- 9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**  
To consider passing the following resolution:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

- 10. CALL TO ACCOUNT OF DELEGATED DECISION TAKEN ON 13 AUGUST 2021 IN ACCORDANCE WITH 'SPECIAL URGENCY' PROVISIONS CONTAINED IN THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION** 129 - 264

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND STRATEGIC HOUSING MANAGER

This page is intentionally left blank

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY 28<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022

### PART 1: PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Future Service Design of Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Services.

**REPORT OF:** *Chloe Hipwood – Shared Service Manager – Waste & Recycling*

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** *Councillor Amy Allen for Recycling and Waste Management*

**COUNCIL PRIORITY:** SUSTAINABILITY / A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This report seeks the authority to proceed with a Competitive Dialogue procurement for the waste & recycling collection and street cleansing contract due to expire in May 2025. The report is based on outcomes from the Member lead joint working group between East Herts Council (EHC) and North Herts Council (NHC) and identifies key service changes affecting the contract specification drafting. The key drivers for the services changes are set in the context of the pending national Resources and Waste Strategy and the financial challenges authorities are facing which is exacerbated by inflationary pressures. The report covers details of both EHC and NHC changes in order to fully identify the impacts across the shared service.*

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the recommendations from the Joint Cross-Party working group attached in Appendix 1 be noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision.
- 2.2. *That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee attached in Appendix 12 be noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision.*
- 2.3. That the responses from the public consultation as summarised in Appendix 2 be noted and considered prior to making a new substantive decision.
- 2.4. To approve a Competitive Dialogue procedure for the procurement of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract.
- 2.5. To approve a joint project board to include the Executive Members for Finance as well as the Executive Member for waste, recycling and street cleansing services for both EHC and NHC to monitor the progress of the procurement project.
- 2.6. To approve to a Contract length of 8 years with the possibility of up to an 8 year extension.
- 2.7. To approve the provision of customer services and contact handling being delivered in-house and a future report detailing how this will be delivered be provided in 2023.

- 2.8. To note the introduction of a new weekly separate food waste collection service in 23L caddys for houses and in wheeled bins for flats in East Hertfordshire from 2025.
- 2.9. To approve residual waste collections occurring on a three weekly collection cycle from 2025. The implementation date confirmation to be delegated to the Director of Place/Head of Operations in consultation Project Board. As referenced in 8.11 to 8.46.
- 2.10. To note the standard receptacle for residual waste being 180L in size and that all new and replacement residual waste containers for houses will be 180l as soon as is reasonably practicable and phased in commencing no later than from 1st April 2023 in East Hertfordshire.
- 2.11. To approve the transition to a standard bin colour across East and North Hertfordshire as outlined in 8.47 to 8.56 as soon as is practicable and no later than 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.
- 2.12. To approve the inclusion of plastic film in the mixed dry recycling collections from 2025, the implementation date confirmation to be delegated to the Project Board and subject to the outcomes of Resources & Waste Strategy consultation on consistency.
- 2.13. To note the cessation of bring bank services for paper and textiles in East Hertfordshire no later than the end of 2023.
- 2.14. To approve the cessation of kerbside textiles collections in North Hertfordshire with the shared waste service proactively engaging with the charity-sector to promote alternative outlets for expired textiles by the end of 2023.
- 2.15. To approve the cessation of kerbside battery collections in North Hertfordshire from May 2025 with the shared waste service proactively promoting alternative recycling outlets.
- 2.16. To approve the service policy statements as outlined in Appendix 3 and for these to be further updated in advance of the contract start in May 2025 and be delegated to Head of Operations/Director of Place in consultation with the Executive Members.
- 2.17. To agree to the principle of aligning the garden waste collection charge from 2025.
- 2.18. To agree in principle to the service design described in 8.94 to 8.93, should the outcomes from the Resources and Waste Strategy Consistency consultation mandate the separate collection of fibre, subject to the constitutional requirements for decision making.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. These recommendations are in accordance with the Aim and Principles of the shared service detailed in Appendix 4 and offer an opportunity to ensure that services are financially and environmentally sustainable in the medium term. In particular it is an opportunity for the service to mitigate its carbon impacts and encourage a more sustainable lifestyle for residents.
- 3.2. It is necessary to ensure that any contract being procured is attractive to the market and by aligning services with EHC this will allow for greater efficiencies in the contract.

- 3.3. Increasing costs associated with contract inflation (9.92% in 2022/23) also require us to proactively seek alternative ways of delivering services and ensure we maximise the efficient of our operations.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. A contract extension for a further seven years was considered, however given the Councils aspirations for environmentally and financially sustainable services and the anticipated changes required by the governments Resources and Waste Strategy this was not considered appropriate.

- 4.2. A procurement in line with the existing service specification was considered, however given the Councils aspirations for environmentally and financially sustainable services and the anticipated changes required by the government's Resources and Waste Strategy this was not considered appropriate.

#### **5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1. In some areas, legislation (or statutory guidance) expressly imposes a duty on a public authority to engage in some form of consultation before taking a particular decision or exercising a particular function. Statutory provisions exist in the areas of:

- Health
- Environment
- Equality

- 5.2. Even where there is no express duty to consult, the courts may imply a duty to consult as part of a public authority's general duty to act fairly, for example if nature and impact of the decision may mean that fairness requires it.

- 5.3. The doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law) is rapidly becoming the most important aspect of the law of consultation. It is now seen as common law, whereby the courts recognise consultees' rights to expect a fair process which incorporates guidance and management promises.

- 5.4. A public consultation was carried out between 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022 and 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022. The results of the consultation can be found in Appendix 2.

- 5.5. A joint cross-party working group was established under the recommendations of a report presented to Cabinet/Executive on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 respectively. The terms of reference for the working group can be found in Appendix 1. Elected Members attended a series of workshops over two months looking at all aspects of the service design.

- 5.6. The working group supported the recommendations for transitioning EHC to 180L residual waste bins and supported a three weekly collection cycle for residual waste for houses. The outcomes and full details of the recommendations from the working group can be found in Appendix 1.

- 5.7. A series of walk abouts were held in the major towns and ward councillors were invited to meet officers and contractor staff to discuss the current needs and/or improvements in relation to street cleansing. Only minor contractual non-conformities were identified and no major changes to existing working practices were identified.
- 5.8. Invitations were sent to all Parish Councils to attend online meetings with officers from the shared waste service. A summary of comments from Parish Councils can be found in Appendix 9.
- 5.9. Officers from the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership were informed of our proposed service changes and a specific request was made to Hertfordshire County Council, their comments can be found in Appendix 10.

## **6. FORWARD PLAN**

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1. East Herts Council (EHC) and North Herts Council (NHC) entered into a Shared Service arrangement in 2017 and a joint contract was let beginning in May 2018.
- 7.2. A Councillor led Joint Partnership Board for waste meets twice per year and monitors the performance of the contract.
- 7.3. The service comprises a 'client' management structure located at the Buntingford Depot and two operational hubs comprising separate management teams and separate workforces for East and North Herts Councils.
- 7.4. The current contract covers the requirements for the collection of waste and recycling from approximately 124,000 households and over 1920 commercial customers as well as street cleansing services across East and North Hertfordshire.
- 7.5. In 2014 the Councils agreed to progress from a Strategic Outline Case to an Outline Business Case for the shared service specifically exploring potential additional savings in joint contracts, savings in client overheads including depot costs, governance and management proposals and jointly agreed policies to form the basis of a joint specification.
- 7.6. Prior to the formation of the shared service client team in December 2017, both Councils made unilateral decisions on the service offering to residents for waste, recycling and street cleansing services which formed the basis of the joint contract with Urbaser.
- 7.7. The independent decision making at each authority led to different decisions being made by North Herts Council and East Herts Council regarding the provision of services to residents, despite an original commitment to joint policies.
- 7.8. At the respective Executive/Cabinet meetings on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 a new aim and principles for the shared service were agreed focusing on efficient services



which are environmentally and financially sustainable. The aim and principles are attached in Appendix 4.

- 7.9. To improve the service opportunities for operational efficiencies have been considered. If the service is aligned across both authorities bidders have an opportunity to fully optimise collection and cleansing operations and keep costs down.
- 7.10. The client would also benefit from these operational efficiencies by freeing up capacity for planning consultations, procurement, marketing and campaign work, tonnage allocation and complaint and performance management.
- 7.11. In addition, further efficiencies would be found if wider administrative functions were aligned in their delivery mechanisms such as customer services and the financial management of services through one Financial Management System (FMS). It is proposed that options for future administrative changes be presented in a separate report in Spring 2023.

#### Resources and Waste Strategy

- 7.12. In December 2018 the government released its Resources and Waste Strategy. There have subsequently been a number of government consultations linked to this strategy. The industry is currently waiting for the outcomes of these consultations and any subsequent policy or legislative updates.
- 7.13. It is expected to significantly change the way Councils operate waste collection services. The final strategy launch has been delayed following the pandemic and specific timescales for the implementation are yet to be determined. This creates difficulties in shaping the Council final service specification as there are still a number of unknowns. The two key areas of the strategy that affect collection services are the consistency agenda and the deposit return scheme (DRS).
- 7.14. The consistency agenda is a key topic in the government's resources and waste strategy and has so far been the subject of two government consultations. It is clear that there is a driving desire from central government to see consistency across service provision with the primary aim of ensuring that services provided to the public are simple to use and a core set of materials are collected at the kerb side. Providing an aligned service across EHC and NHC will ensure a greater consistency over a wider area with both Councils collecting the same consistent set of materials at the kerbside.
- 7.15. The proposals in this report outline a key opportunity for both Councils to make a step change in their delivery of services and making these changes at the point of contract change will be the most financially viable solution. Experience with our own recent mid-contract changes has shown that these can be between 55% and 120% higher costs than at tendering.
- 7.16. At the time of writing this report; the outcomes from the governments consultations on deposit return schemes and the consistency agenda have not been published and it is anticipated that some outcomes will impact on the current services and change the way services will need to be delivered in the future. E.g. the separation of street litter and litter bin waste for the purposes of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding.

- 7.17. This report is based on changes which are expected to be mandated and seeks to provide a service solution which also meets the long term financial and environmental sustainability aims of the authorities.
- 7.18. Until the final outcomes are announced some risk exists in deciding on changes to service design. The procurement timeline however means that we have no choice but to progress with our procurement of a new contract. It is expected that should the outcomes be published during our procurement exercise (rather than prior) that any outcomes which conflict with our proposals can be discussed and redesigned during the competitive dialogue procedure. Given the anticipated changes in service delivery and changes in market prices a contract extension would not be appropriate to ensure best value for the Council.

#### Climate Change

- 7.19. In July 2019 EHC made a declaration on climate change and amongst a number of things committed to:- Join with other councils in recognising and declaring formally the necessity to do everything within the authority's power to reduce its impact on the climate and moreover do everything we can in supporting the whole of East Herts District to become carbon neutral by 2030 and develop an ambitious sustainability strategy for reducing the council's own emissions, with an objective that the council becomes carbon neutral by 2030.
- 7.20. Both Councils have developed a Climate Change Strategy to ensure that the Councils are doing all that they can to reduce their impacts on our climate. Waste, recycling and street cleansing services are a significant contributor to the Councils own carbon footprints due to the size and configuration of the fleet required to undertake those services.
- 7.21. It should be noted that the next waste & recycling collection and street cleansing contract will be in operation until at least 2033 and therefore decisions made now in relation to this contract will impact on how the council reaches it's objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- 7.22. The service also has a wider responsibility and role to play in reducing the carbon impact of individuals living in the districts. Reducing waste, in particular food waste, reusing more and recycling more all help to reduce the overall environmental and carbon impact individuals have.
- 7.23. During pre-engagement work we will be looking at all options in relation to reducing the Councils carbon footprints, and how reductions in carbon emissions can see continuous improvement during the life of the contract. We will also be exploring scenarios around transitioning to zero or ultra-low emission vehicles and any necessary infrastructure changes with consultants.
- 7.24. This report seeks to reduce or mitigate its service related carbon impact and enable the shared client team to proactively promote waste minimisation, reuse and recycling solutions.

#### Financial Outlook

- 7.25. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the financial outlook for the Council, and the likely actions that will need to be taken to achieve a balanced budget. This report highlights the significant financial uncertainty in relation to a new waste contract, the Government's upcoming waste strategy and any potential new burdens funding that may be attached to mandated service change. For the future financial sustainability of the Council it is important that available actions are taken to keep down the costs of the new contract.
- 7.26. The Council will need to make some challenging decisions in order to mitigate the pressures of mandated changes. This comes at a time when we are experiencing inflationary pressures significantly above projections, in the case of the waste contract over double the budgeted figure for 2022/23. Any proposals to reduce services, increase efficiencies (e.g. through better service alignment) or generate income are not expected to provide savings on the contract budget; but help to mitigate some of the financial pressure of a new contract including inflation and changes from expected government legislation.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

### Procurement Route

- 8.1. A competitive dialogue tendering exercise is recommended due to the technical complexities of the proposed service changes and the impacts that any yet unknown legislative requirements resulting from the outcomes of the Resources and Waste Strategy consultations which are yet to be published.
- 8.2. Both Competitive Dialogue and A Competitive Procedure with Negotiation were considered. Dialogue refers to the discussion between the department and bidder to discuss any aspect of the procurement, e.g. the service requirements or proposed solution. Negotiation is the discussion between the department and bidder with a view to improving the content of tenders e.g. performance issues.
- 8.3. The current availability of technologically suitable fleet to reduce the services impacts on the Councils carbon emissions is also unclear and bidders are likely to propose differing solutions to deliver the services. It is hoped that a Competitive Dialogue will ensure we are fully able to understand the offer from prospective providers and understand the pros and cons of new and emerging technology.

### Project Board Formation

- 8.4. The formation of a joint Member led project board to oversee the management of the project will ensure a consistent approach for both authorities; and allow an opportunity for discussion at early stages minor changes or decisions are required related to the procurement. It will also provide a conduit for Members on the project board to report back to the wider elected Membership outside of the committee cycles on the progress of the project.

### Contract Length

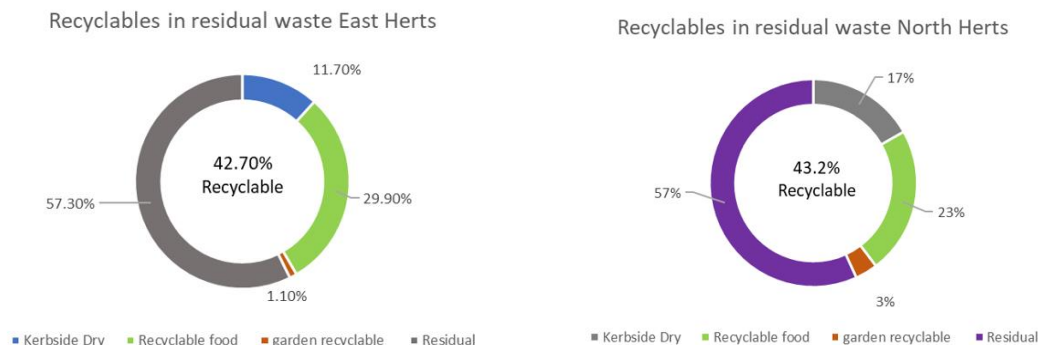
- 8.5. Early discussions with our consultants Eunomia and early indications from soft market testing indicate a general preference for a minimum contract length of 8 years, with extension possibilities. Our current contract is 7 years with an extension option and the increase in length is not anticipated to negatively impact on the councils.

### Customer Services

- 8.6. Customer service at each Council is currently delivered under different models, with differing administrative responsibilities, processes and key performance indicators (KPIs). EHC manage contacts related to waste and street cleansing services in-house as part of a corporate customer service team. At NHC contacts for these services are managed by the current collection contractor with a small proportion of contacts also being handled by the corporate team.
- 8.7. At the joint cross party Member workshops, members explored options regarding the provision of customer services. Pros and cons were identified for both a council led customer service solution and an out-sourced customer service solution. In addition, indicative costs were provided for both council led and out-sourced solutions. The preference from the working group was for a joint council led customer service solution as it was felt this fits better with aspirations around an improved customer journey.
- 8.8. The staffing costs for customer services are broadly similar, whether provided in-house or out-sourced. The calculation of on costs for each authority and how on costs are allocated by any bidder will differ and therefore present differing costs between the two service models. Costs from potential bidders cannot be fully estimated without going out to tender as the variations present too great a difference to reasonably estimate.
- 8.9. Some potential benefits of in-house customer service provision are identified below:-
- a) Knowledge of all Council related processes and can therefore advise on other queries as a single point of contact
  - b) Greater resilience from a larger staff pool
  - c) Call handling procedures can be controlled and adjusted swiftly
  - d) Monthly quality monitoring in line with other in-house customer service provision.
  - e) Training in line and consistent with council core values and objectives
  - f) Increased transparency over contact types and complaint logging
  - g) Direct control over phone lines, IVR and email auto replies.
  - h) Perceived greater level of trust in reporting direct to the Council.
  - i) Service efficiencies (cost savings) can be realised more easily when channel shift is implemented and working effectively.
  - j) Direct control over payments to the Councils.
- 8.10. The customer services and call handling not being included in the specification of the next waste contract and it is therefore recommended that a further report be presented to Executive/Cabinet in due course covering non contractual elements of the management of the services. This will include proposals on governance (as recommended by the report to Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022) and the financial management arrangements as well as proposals for a council led customer service solution.

### Weekly food waste collection and 3 weekly Residual waste collection

- 8.11. A waste compositional analysis undertaken in late 2020 provided an insight into the composition of the residual waste bins at each authority. The graphs below show details of the recyclable proportions of the residual waste bin



- 8.12. The The proportion of food waste in EHC residual waste bins is significant at 29.9%. Food production, according to an article in the professional magazine 'New Scientist' contributes 37% of global greenhouse gases and a report by the UN's Environment Programme estimates that between 8% to 10% of greenhouse gas emissions are from food which is wasted. Campaign work to encourage behaviour change in EHC and NHC over recent years and ongoing is only part of the solution to managing food waste.
- 8.13. According to a report by WRAP, (The impact of food waste collections on household food waste arisings); separate food waste collection schemes are significantly associated with lower total food waste arisings amongst householders.
- 8.14. In our public consultation 69% of respondents in EHC said that they were likely or quite likely to use a weekly food waste service.
- 8.15. This coupled with a government mandate for the weekly collection of separated food waste for 2025 leads to the recommendation that they be included for EHC in the new waste collection specification for implementation in 2025, despite confirmation of the mandated start date not being clear from central government.
- 8.16. The implementation costs for the food waste service change for East Herts are anticipated to be in the region of circa £150k for one-off revenue implementation costs. Circa £400k for initial capital costs and circa £1.5m ongoing revenue costs associated with the collection. As with the mid-contract change for the introduction of chargeable garden waste services in East Herts it is anticipated that the introduction of a separate weekly food collection service later than the start of the contract (should the Government push back the date further) will significantly increase the price of the service putting further pressure on the EHC Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). From the experience of the garden waste service this has resulted in costs which are over 54% higher for East Herts than the original tender price. It is therefore recommended to provide a separate weekly food collection service early in the contract alongside a three-weekly residual bin collection service.
- 8.17. There is an inevitable negative carbon impact for EHC from the introduction of food waste recycling in terms of the EHC fleet emissions. The current North Herts service produces approximately 94 tonnes of CO2 per year. At this stage we are not clear on the methodology a new contractor would use for the collection of food waste and this would impact on the carbon emissions. However, based on the NHC service and extrapolating for higher property numbers it is likely additional fleet will be required. The carbon impact could therefore be in the region of 130 tonnes of additional CO2 per year.

- 8.18. Removing food waste from the residual waste stream will however have a positive carbon impact. It is estimated using the governments conversion factors that treatment by EfW (Energy from Waste) results in 21.3kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per tonne or 626.9kg CO<sub>2</sub>e when landfilled. Whereas treatment by anaerobic digestion or composting produces 8.9 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e and therefore can result in a minimum net saving of 12.3kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per tonne. Based on 79 kg per household (based on capture rates from 21/22 NHC data) this could see a district wide carbon saving linked to disposal of approximately 65 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Mitigating in part the negative fleet impact.
- 8.19. The waste hierarchy requires a consideration of waste minimisation before recycling however it is clear that residents still have a significant proportion (around 43% of the residual waste bin) of recycling which could be recycling at the kerbside.
- 8.20. In addition the waste compositional analysis showed a significant proportion of food waste in the residual waste bin nearly 30% in EHC and 23% in NHC despite the provision of a weekly separate food waste collection service in a 23L caddy.
- 8.21. In our public consultation. 45% of residents in EHC and 49% of NHC residents in said their residual waste bin was ½ full or less at the time of the fortnightly collection.
- 8.22. In order to reduce the amount of residual waste collected by both authorities it is proposed to extend the emptying cycle from fortnightly to three weekly for houses. This change has already been implemented by a number of authorities across the United Kingdom. A summary of local authorities known to have undertaken a change to a three weekly collection cycle are shown in Appendix 6.
- 8.23. The demographics of both the EHC and NHC districts mean that with the proposed change and a reinvigorated communications campaign that an increase in recycling rate could be seen. However, based on the results of the public consultation where a high proportion residents stated that their residual waste bin was ½ full or less. It is also possible that a significant proportion of residents will cope with the residual waste change without a need to change either their buying or recycling behaviour.
- 8.24. In addition we asked a number of questions around extending the frequency of collections and the ability for resident to cope with an extended frequency. 75% of resident did not think that reducing the frequency of collections would reduce waste. However, when Daventry District Council adopted a three-weekly residual waste service in 2018 they had the highest fall in residual waste of any local authority in the country at a drop of 13%.
- 8.25. The table below shows an example of three Welsh Councils performance over a number of years following extended frequency collections and a change to three-weekly residual waste collections. These are not direct comparator Councils as they offer slightly different services and have a different demographic however demonstrate that total waste arisings are likely to fall as a result of a change to three weekly residual waste collections.

Residual Waste Service Frequency	Authority	Year	Recycling rate (%)	Waste Arisings per person (kgs)	Percentage Drop in Per Person Waste	Residual Waste Per	% decrease Residual Waste
----------------------------------	-----------	------	--------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------

					<b>Arisings (kgs)</b>	<b>Person (kgs)</b>	
4 weekly	Conway	20/21	70	452	18.12%	135	43.98%
3 weekly in 2016 and 4 weekly in Jan 18		13/14	56	552		241	
3 weekly	Gwynedd	20/21	65	494	21.71%	117	59.65%
		13/14	54	631		290	
3 weekly	Pembrokeshire	20/21	73	455	17.12%	112	48.62%
		13/14	60	549		218	

8.26. When asked whether residents agreed or disagreed with the statement; 'I would be able to manage my waste effectively with three weekly residual waste (refuse) collections by recycling more and squashing items.' The majority of residents disagreed. However, 24% agreed or strongly agreed.

8.27. Of those residents who either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 26.5% had previously answered that their residual waste bin was ½ full or less. With 54% previously stating that their residual waste bin was ¾ full or less. Demonstrating that of those that indicated they could not manage three-weekly collections a significant proportion of previous answers suggest this would be possible and that fear of change is an influencing factor in consultation answers.

8.28. Data from other local authorities is mixed but data does indicate that some level of recycling rate improvement can be expected. In particular in EHC where there would be the addition of food waste recycling options to support a positive behaviour change in recycling habits.

8.29. Based on data shown in the graphs in 8.11 and 21/22 residual waste tonnage, it is estimated that potentially a further 16,500 tonnes of recycling could be captured by diverting it from the residual waste stream. Although fully capturing this tonnage is unlikely even capturing an additional 20% would have a significant impact on the recycling rate for both authorities.

8.30. Reducing the emptying cycle as well as encouraging residents to recycle more and participate fully in services such as weekly food waste collections, will also help to mitigate the costs of service provision during the next 8 years of the contract. It is anticipated that a three weekly cycle would enable a reduction of approximately three vehicles from the fleet across both EHC and NHC. The estimated direct cost of this is anticipated to mitigate whole contract cost increases by circa £550k annually.

- 8.31. The associated reduction in fuel consumption (based on current housing densities) is anticipated to be circa 40k litres which has a direct positive carbon saving of approximately 122k tonnes carbon annually based on our current whole contract diesel fleet.
- 8.32. There are alternative ways the councils could consider reducing their carbon footprint through this contract procurement, such as the use of HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) as fuel, however the current cost is approximately 20p per litre more than diesel and consequently could see annual contract cost rises in the region of circa £130k based on 2021 fuel usage data.
- 8.33. In the public consultation 82% of respondents described themselves as either a proactive environmentalist or caring about the environment and doing their bit. With a further 16% describing themselves as residents who recycle and don't drop litter but not much else in support of the environment. 84% of respondents also said that the Council should do more to make people recycle more and reduce waste, with 74% of people agreeing the council should invest or change services to reduce their carbon footprint. These outcomes all support the proposals in this report.
- 8.34. Comparison with other local authorities introducing three weekly residual waste collections is difficult as many will have introduced other changes at the same time. For example changes to what can be recycled at the kerbside or moves from box collections to bin collections. Many Councils undertaking this change are also lower performing Councils at the point of change and so behaviour change is more prominent.
- 8.35. Gwynedd Council predicted that its recycling rate would increase by 5.2 percentage points. In 2013/14, Gwynedd's recycling rate (calculated in line with Welsh Government targets) was 54.0%. By 2015/16, when the switch to three weekly collections had been fully rolled out, the reported recycling rate had risen to 58.7%, and in 2016/17 it increased further to 61.1%. The total increase has therefore been 7.1 percentage points, significantly more than expected.
- 8.36. Bracknell Forest's recycling rate has increased by 13% to 56%. This is a monumental achievement, in comparison, in 2020 to 2021 the largest increase recorded by a local authority in England was 5.2% however this was coupled with other changes like the introduction of food waste and chargeable garden waste collections.
- 8.37. Rochdale, predicted the increase in recycling that was anticipated from going three-weekly (39% in 2015/16, 45% in 2016/17), but did not set out the underlying waste flows. In practice, they achieved 42% in 2015/16 and 47% in 2016/17, exceeding expectations. With a further increase to 53.7% in 2017/18.
- 8.38. Based on the information we have been able to find from other Councils improvements in performance are both a step change and improvements over an extended period. The step change occurs with an immediate behaviour change, e.g. residents recycling more with new recycling services. The extended improvement in recycling rates could be attributed to more lasting changes in behaviour such as buying habits with services having a greater focus on recycling than residual waste services. Residents learn over time that the vast majority of waste is recyclable so use these services rather than continuing to use the residual waste bin because items still fit in it.



- 8.39. Our Contract Officers (including the mobilisation Contract Officers) and proposed Waste Awareness Officer will have a suite of tools to guide and support residents and help them identify items which they perhaps did not realise were not recyclable to help prevent any increases in contamination of recycling. Officers will also be able to support residents in understanding items which can be recycled at the kerbside but are sometimes forgotten.
- 8.40. It is likely that at the start of the service change we will see a slight uplift in the number of fly tips. However, this is expected not to be significant as those residents who would consider fly tipping are a very small minority. We will work with the enforcement teams at both authorities to ensure we have a planned approach to the management of fly tipping of household waste expected to be as a result of the service change.
- 8.41. Following the NHC transition to 180L wheeled bins there was no attributable long-term impact on fly tipping. Fly tipping numbers in the first year of the service actually reduced when compared with the previous year and longer terms trends are consistent with the wider Hertfordshire districts. Therefore, a significant uplift in instances of fly tipping is not expected. Those residents who may initially struggle with a change to a three weekly collection cycle will be supported with advice on how to manage their waste and where appropriate will be supported by other policies. For example, the provision of extra capacity for larger households or households with two or more children in nappies and households producing healthcare waste such as incontinence wear. The proposal being for these households to continue to receive fortnightly collection services.
- 8.42. At the Members workshops an option for four-weekly residual waste collections was considered. There are a handful of Councils in the UK who have adopted this model, but Members felt this was too large a service change at the current time. Members were keen to ensure that a transitional option to four-weekly residual waste collections be drafted for the contract.
- 8.43. There is a risk that central government will mandate a requirement for fortnightly residual waste collections as a minimum. It is hoped that our need for fortnightly residual waste collections can be mitigated by supporting policies which can effectively manage the additional needs of some residents. This includes additional frequency collections of residual waste for those residents who require additional capacity for waste such as incontinence waste or nappy waste. The practicalities of this policy decision will be discussed as part of pre-market engagement with bidders.
- 8.44. Should the government mandate fortnightly residual waste collections and we are unable to mitigate this requirement with supporting policies for those who need additional waste collection support, we will have no alternative but to defer to our current residual waste collection model and provide collections fortnightly.
- 8.45. The provision of residual waste collections at flats will remain largely unchanged. Capacity provision at flats is based on per person calculations and as a consequence flats already have less capacity over six weeks of collection cycles than houses. Each flat block will be re audited and where flats participation in recycling services has been difficult, with high levels of contamination, advice and guidance will be given in liaison with the managing agents, to ensure that all flat blocks have access to recycling.
- 8.46. All flats will receive a review of residual waste collections alongside this audit, however it is not anticipated that flats will receive three weekly residual waste collections.

It is possible that some flats currently receiving weekly collections may be able to receive fortnightly collections, as a result of a refocus on recycling. This is most likely in East Herts where flats will receive weekly food waste collections in wheeled bins alongside the service for houses.

#### Bin Colours and Size

- 8.47. Both authorities combined spent £377k on new bins and bin replacements in 21/22. The currently global shortage of plastic polymer and continued impacts of Brexit and the pandemic have also significantly increased the cost of bins and the availability and lead times. Our depot facilities have extremely limited storage space for wheeled bins, meaning stock has to be delivered in small quantities and we are housing multiple colours and sizes of bins to maintain stock levels.
- 8.48. The proposal is for all future bin replacements to have the standard 'grey/black' body with a coloured lid to depict the material type. This will provide a greater resilience in bin stock levels and reduce necessary storage space at both depots.
- 8.49. The standard 'grey/black' bin body is cheaper to procure and can often contain a higher proportion of recycled plastic polymer supporting our aspirations for a circular economy solution for broken and redundant plastic wheeled bins.
- 8.50. It is also proposed that in EHC the standard residual waste bin size be changed from 240L to 180L. This will apply to all new build houses and any replacement bins.
- 8.51. Reducing the residual waste bin size supports waste minimisation principles and is known to impact on the waste produced with NHC seeing a drop of 4,600 tonnes of residual waste when making a wholesale change to 180L residual waste bins. This being a gradual change; it will not impact as significantly on recycling rates until a larger proportion of residual waste bins are 180L. It is expected that the majority of bins will have been replaced over a 15 year life through wear and tear and damage.
- 8.52. It is not expected that new build properties will find the change problematic as services are generally accepted and managed well by new home owners. Individual households who struggle to manage on a smaller bin size will be supported in their waste management and where appropriate our policy on additional capacity will be applied.
- 8.53. It is recommended that replacement recycling bins have a blue lid, replacement residual waste bins have a purple lid and replacement garden waste bins have a brown lid. Details of the proposed bin colours are shown in Appendix 5.
- 8.54. The additional benefit of aligning bin colours across the contract is consistency in the long term over a wider area and more effective joint communications. It is already the case that residents moving from EHC to NHC are contaminating the recycling bin which is currently the 'grey/black' bin in North Herts but in EHC this bin colour is used for residual waste.
- 8.55. Collection staff will also find less confusion working across the boundary if bin colours are consistent.
- 8.56. The estimated cost saving annually for a coloured lid only bin purchasing model is circa £9,000 annually.

#### Plastic Film

- 8.57. The summary response to the consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility stated the following:- 'With plastic film and flexible packaging comprising around a third of the plastic packaging placed on the UK market each year, we proposed that these materials should be added to kerbside recycling collections across the UK by 31 March 2025 for businesses and 31 March 2027 for households'.
- 8.58. Given our contract start in May 2025 we propose the introduction of plastic film to our commingled recycling bin at the start of our major service changes. This will not only help transition residents to a three weekly collection service by removing a material from the residual bin, but it will also ensure we have secured processing capacity when the current processing capacity in the UK is not sufficient to support all proposed local authority collections.
- 8.59. It can also be anticipated that with mandated changes around extended producer responsibility some manufacturers will shift their packaging to lighter weight materials such as plastic film.
- 8.60. Early discussions with our existing Material Recovery Facility (MRF) supplier will be had post decision. This is a separate contract to our waste & recycling collection and street cleansing contract and officers will determine the steps in relation to this contract following this report.

#### Bring Banks and Textiles Collections

- 8.61. NHC has not operated bring bank collections since the introduction of commingled recycling and a roll out of recycling at flats. An audit of services in EHC demonstrated that all flat blocks located near to the existing bring bank network have recycling collections and therefore there is no longer a need for paper bring sites, with all residents having access to this service at the kerbside. The public consultation indicated that 2.7% of residents still use the bring banks however any residents who do not currently have a box can request one via our online forms.
- 8.62. We have in recent months experienced a number of issues associated with our bring banks, this includes fly tipping, significant levels of contamination meaning paper loads had to be disposed of as residual waste and we have also had a fire at one of the sites.
- 8.63. The collection costs associated with the paper bring bank service are currently circa £22,000 and are provided by Welwyn Hatfield Council. We anticipate that we will still capture paper currently entering the bring bank scheme via the kerbside services and therefore anticipate this being a whole cost saving for EHC.
- 8.64. In addition to paper bring sites there is also a network of textiles bring sites in EHC. These sites suffer from similar issues to those identified in 8.62 above.
- 8.65. In our public consultation over four times the number of people using our textiles banks donate their textiles to charity in East Herts with over 92% of respondents saying that had used either charity doorstep collections or charity shops.

- 8.66. The cleansing of bring sites currently has a core contract cost of £27k and additional ad hoc costs associated with the clearance of larger fly tips. There is therefore a direct saving from the removal of bring sites although careful management will be required as material will be dumped at the sites once the bins are removed. It is therefore proposed to remove the bring banks as soon as is reasonably practicable and before the end of 2023 but maintain the cleansing requirements to the end of the current contract.
- 8.67. In North Herts 42% of residents indicated they were not aware of the textiles service despite recent promotion of the service on social media and in Outlook magazine. Over six times the number of residents indicated they donate textiles to charity rather than use our kerbside service. with 82.5% saying they had recycled their textiles via charity doorstep collections or charity shops.
- 8.68. Under the Extended Producer Responsibility changes it is expected that textiles producers will face requirements to make their products more sustainable. A number of brands are now offering reuse options and some stores are offering take back solutions too.
- 8.69. The recommendation therefore is to remove the textile bring bank and kerbside collection service in favour of more proactive support for charity textile banks and promotion of specific local charity shops which accept textiles and which will also accept textiles of poor quality for rags.
- 8.70. With additional promotional work it is expected that we can ensure that textiles are kept to a minimum in our residual waste stream and also ensure that a greater proportion of textiles in East & North Hertfordshire heads for reuse rather than industrial recycling.
- 8.71. NHC also operate kerbside battery collections where residents can place batteries out in a plastic bag on top of their recycling bin lid for collection. These material must be collected separately, both from a legislative point of view and also a health and safety point of view.
- 8.72. A small quantity of batteries end up in the mixed dry recycling as contamination. If struck or cracked open during collection or transfer station operations these can present a fire risk. Additional fire risks are associated with batteries exploding in extreme heat, such as we have experienced this year.
- 8.73. The quantity of batteries collected at the kerbside has been extremely low with only 0.9 tonnes being collected since the start of the contract in 2018. Sellers of batteries are required to provide collection locations and therefore every supermarket will have the facility to take batteries for recycling. It is therefore proposed to remove the kerbside collection of batteries from the NHC service at the same time a removing the textile collection service and promote alternative recycling points across the district.

#### Parish Litter Picking Grants

- 8.74. The EHC street cleansing service currently operates with a historical parish grants scheme which provides 25 parishes with a regular payment for either litter picking and/or litter bin emptying over and above the existing street cleansing contract. This grant does not operate in NHC.

- 8.75. In May 2021 EHC introduced a new grants policy and the current parish grants scheme falls outside of the requirements of this policy in a number of areas. A wholesale review was therefore required.
- 8.76. All streets covered by the litter picking grants are also included in the waste and street cleansing contract with all complaints coming direct to the Council for investigation and rectification. In essence this means that some parishes are benefiting from an enhanced standard of cleansing paid for by EHC where other parishes are not.
- 8.77. Some parishes empty litter bins under the parish grant and it is proposed to bring all litter bins situated on the street into the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract to ensure a consistency of approach across the districts. The client team will utilise WRAPs 'Right bin right place' guidance to determine the most appropriate location of litter bins across the district and will include existing street parish bins in plans for enhanced online reporting for residents. The net position for EHC is a saving of circa £36,900.
- 8.78. Once the grant ceases and from 1st April 2023 Contract officers will be inspecting the streets currently in parishes in the receipt of the grant to ensure that the standards of litter picking are achieved in accordance with the current contract.
- 8.79. The joint cross-party Members working group explored the current perceived strengths and weakness of the existing street cleansing service which predominantly operates on need based scheduling. Elements such as town centre cleansing and high-speed road cleansing were discussed.
- 8.80. The working group were clear that there should be a continuation of the continuous presence in town centres and expansion of the use of recycling litter bins with support for WRAPs 'right bin, right place' approach to the siting of litter bins. There was also a keenness for contract wording to be strengthened around liaison around grass cutting schedules.
- 8.81. The working group also endorsed the continuation of the 'Adopt An Area' scheme introduced in 2021 as a way for the local community to be supported in enhancing the streetscape and other non-council maintained areas of the district.

#### Mobilisation, Communication and Policy

- 8.82. During the Members workshops there was a clear steer to ensure that there is a simple customer journey for all residents who wish to report street cleansing issues. Further work will be completed over the next year to work with the grounds teams from both authorities to ensure we can accurately provide an online reporting solution facilitated by the use of QR codes on bins.
- 8.83. Service change of this magnitude and type will require sufficient time and mobilisation resource to ensure a smooth transition to new services for residents. An extensive communications campaign will therefore be planned and residents currently in receipt of additional special services will be reviewed and informed of the change and impacts of the service changes. In particular, residents in receipt of additional capacity residual waste on medical grounds will continue to receive additional capacity suitable for their individual needs.

- 8.84. In order to support residents through the transition it is proposed to recruit, 2 FTE additional Contract Officers for a period of 6 months. The cost of additional officer resource is estimated to be £29,200 based on appointing at the bottom of the pay scale.
- 8.85. In the public consultation residents ranked an increase in communications more favourably than service changes like more recycling bins or extended residual waste frequency. This; coupled with the proposals for a major service change for both authorities means we are recommending the addition of a new 'Waste Awareness Officer' post to the client team from April 2024 to ensure adequate communication resource is available for the mobilisation and promotion of the service changes on an ongoing basis supporting waste minimisation, promotion at schools and face to face events. The annual cost of this additional post is circa £33,500 based on appointment at the bottom of the pay scale.
- 8.86. This post will have direct responsibility for providing content for web pages and social media channels. As well as providing service related content they will be responsible for running specific campaigns around waste minimisation and proactively undertaking targeted campaigns to increase the participation in our recycling services. This officer will also be expected to deliver school talks and attend events including events outside of normal office hours to promote waste minimisation and our services.
- 8.87. The policy statements surrounding the existing service have not been updated since prior to the start of the contract in 2018. These policies were reviewed as part of the work undertaken by the Joint Cross-Party Members Working Group and an updated version to support the current services in operation is proposed and provided in Appendix 3. This seeks to align some of the minor differences in policy and/or service operations now, prior to the contract change in 2025. This will facilitate the streamlining of processes in the back office.
- 8.88. A new proposed set of policies to support services in 2025 will be drafted following completion of our pre-engagement exercise. This will ensure that our policy proposals are considered practicable by providers and operational considerations have been taken into account when drafting the specification.

#### Garden Waste

- 8.89. It is expected that a new contract will mean that both Councils will have the same contract costs for the servicing of garden waste collections. During the joint cross-party Member working groups options for aligning the garden waste service were explored. Members agreed that we should seek to therefore have an aligned price for garden waste as we currently do for bulky waste and commercial waste collections which have the same contract costs.
- 8.90. There is some difference between the authorities pricing at the current time and a future report will outline the options and the core benefits of an aligned charge. These include the potential for realigning the start date of the service to 1st April, which in turn would also introduce the possibility of operating the service with one online portal rather than two, which would have an overall cost saving to the service.
- 8.91. It is therefore recommended that the principle of aligning the charge for the two authorities is approved.

- 8.92. As previously mentioned, we are still waiting for the outcomes of the Resources and Waste Strategy consultation on consistency. One area where we may see a possible change is in relation to the ability for Councils to charge for garden waste.
- 8.93. Under the principles of 'New Burdens' it is anticipated that the government would face significant costs if they were to change the ability for local government to charge for this service. It is therefore recommended that we continue with our current chargeable garden waste service. Should the ability to charge be removed we will manage the implications of this at the time of announcement and bring forward recommendations in accordance with our constitutional requirements.

#### Mandate on Separate Fibre

- 8.94. The consultation outcomes on consistency may also require the separation of additional materials at the kerbside. Currently, councils are already required to separately collect paper/card, plastic, glass and metals when separate collection is deemed necessary to ensure that the waste is recovered or recycled. This is subject to the separate collections being Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP).
- 8.95. Our new service design will be subject to a TEEP assessment however based on previous TEEP assessments and a recent review of our separate paper collection service we do not consider it to be economically practicable to design our services with additional separation of material.
- 8.96. If however we are mandated to separately collect all 'fibre' materials (paper and cardboard), then it will be necessary to change our service design during our procurement exercise. We therefore propose to ensure bidders are clear on our plans in the event that this is mandated.
- 8.97. Options regarding the separate collection of fibre were discussed with Members at the join cross-party Members working groups and the outcomes can be found in Appendix 1.
- 8.98. At the current time officers consider it unlikely that we will be able to capture all paper and cardboard for recycling in the existing 'paper' box which has 45-55l capacity. Data from our waste compositional analysis, our existing tonnage capture and data from the waste compositional analysis of Hertfordshire authorities who collect paper and cardboard in a box shows that our 'bin and box' collection currently captures significantly more tonnage than 'box' only collections for paper and card. Providing an additional bin may therefore be necessary for the majority of households.
- 8.99. The provision of an additional bin would significantly increase the capacity at each household and therefore, this, combined with the knowledge that there are plans for a Deposit Return Scheme to be introduced; which will remove material from the kerbside stream, mean the current recommendation if separate fibre is mandated, would be for a three-weekly collection of a 'fibre' (paper and cardboard) bin and a three weekly collection of a 'containers' (cans/tins, glass, plastic bottles pots tubs and trays) bin, alongside the three-weekly collection of residual waste.

- 8.100. An expansion of a three-weekly cycle for all bins (except food and garden) will help to mitigate the costs of an additional service as well as minimising the additional carbon impacts of the introduction of a new service.
- 8.101. A more detailed summary of this proposal is provided in Appendix 7. In the event of a mandate for separated fibre, further work will be undertaken with bidders to determine whether a hybrid approach to receptacles can be considered for paper and cardboard. For example, this might mean that smaller terraced houses with less storage space continue with collections using a box, but that larger semi-detached or detached houses with more storage space are provided with bins, with the expectation that smaller houses will also often produce less waste than larger houses, which may have higher occupancy.
- 8.102. The introduction of an additional bin would enable EHC to make a whole scale change to 180L residual waste bins. In EHC a new purple lidded residual waste bin would be provided. The existing grey/black bin would become the 'containers' bin and the blue lidded bin in EHC would become the fibre bin. For NHC a new blue lidded fibre bin would be procured. Appendix 5 shows details of the proposed bin colours.
- 8.103. Any further decision regarding necessary service design changes will be presented to project board for agreement and subject to any further constitutional requirements. At this stage it is recommended that Executive/Cabinet agree to the principle of a three- weekly cycle for a 'fibre' bin and 'containers' bins to provide an early indication to bidders of what an alternative plan may look like.

#### Commercial Waste & Recycling Collections

- 8.104. The new legislation resulting from the Resources and Waste Strategy on consistency is expected to require providers of commercial waste collection services to offer recycling solutions consistent with those offered to residents. It is therefore proposed to expand food and garden waste services to the business community, in particular offering services to rural SMEs where the private sector often make waste and recycling collections more costly.
- 8.105. The existing client team currently administers commercial waste and recycling on behalf of each authority but does not have the resources necessary to expand the services and market to new businesses. It is therefore proposed to recruit a new 0.5 FTE Commercial Waste Officer who will be directly responsible for increasing the commercial waste customer based and delivering new customers for new commercial food and garden waste collection services. It is also expected that this resource will provide sufficient capacity within the team to increase the customer base of other commercial waste and recycling services. The cost of this resource is anticipated to be £14,600 based on appointing at the bottom of the pay scale.
- 8.106. It is also proposed to introduce commercial clinical waste customers to the North Herts area. These services are predominantly provided to beauty salons or tattoo shops.
- 8.107. A cost benefit analysis has been undertaken which demonstrates this post should be fully self-funding with an estimated net surplus being generated circa £14k for each authority.
- 8.108. The mobilisation of a new contract is a critical period for securing the ongoing success of a contract. It is an opportunity to communicate with residents on a mass scale



provide support and reassurance and it's an opportunity to ensure the systems, processes and data are all accurate set up and tested for a seamless transition.

8.109. The reality of mobilisation is that there will be some inevitable service disruption. Our priority is therefore to keep this disruption to a minimum by ensuring a sufficient lead time into the new contract. This is particularly important for vehicle purchasing, with many vehicles required for our services having lead times of over 12 months.

8.110. Appendix 8 shows our current planned timeline and anticipates contract award in advance of May 2024.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The Cabinet has authority to decide to proceed with a Competitive Dialogue procurement for the waste & recycling collection and street cleansing contract. . Cabinet terms of reference at 5.6.36 states that Cabinet may exercise the following functions: "To determine those procurement matters reserved to Cabinet by the Contract Procurement Rules." The Council's Contract Procurement Rules at 12.4 states that the approval of Cabinet "must be obtained in advance" if the method is selected.

9.2 As highlighted in the report, there are several aspects of the proposals that are dependent on the outcome of the government's consultations on its Resources and Waste Strategy, and any subsequent policy or legislative updates that may be forthcoming thereafter. This is particularly pertinent with regards three-weekly collections, the separate collection of fibre and the ability to charge for garden waste. Should the government mandate something that is contrary to the current recommendations then it will be necessary for the Councils to adhere to those requirements at that time.

9.3 The current contract allows for an extension of seven years; however, it is likely that the variations that would be required as a result of the government's Resources and Waste Strategy as well as the Councils' commitment to reaching Carbon net zero by 2030 would fall outside the remit of permissible modifications under The Public Contracts Regulations 2015, it is therefore not recommended that an extension be sought under the terms of the current deal.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Section 8 provides indications of the financial impact of the decisions that Cabinet/ Executive are being asked to make. For amounts that relate to items that will be contained within the new contract, these are best estimates from knowledge of pricing of the current contract. The actual impact of these will be determined by bids for the new contract, and it may never be possible to determine the exact impact of any particular decision. The amounts quoted do give an indication as to whether a decision will lead to an increase or decrease in cost, and the expected scale of that change.

10.2 Some of the costs mentioned will be a split between revenue and capital costs. Savings on bin purchases will be a reduction in capital costs, as the majority of bin purchases are now treated as capital expenditure. Savings from moving to three-weekly residual collections would be a combination of revenue and capital costs, although the majority will be revenue savings. The Council generally treats the vehicles that are used to deliver

the waste contract as the Council's capital assets, as they are predominantly used in the delivery of Council services.

- 10.3 The Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial outlook for the Council, and the likely actions that will need to be taken to achieve a balanced budget. This highlights the significant financial uncertainty in relation to a new waste contract, the Government's upcoming waste strategy and any potential new burdens funding that may be attached to mandated service change. For the future financial sustainability of the Council it is important that available actions are taken to keep down the costs of the new contract.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. There is a risk that the outcomes from the governments Resources and Waste Strategy are not in line with our service design. We anticipate that these risks can be mitigated through a competitive dialogue process and subject to any constitutional requirements will be considered by the joint project board if required.
- 11.2. There is a risk that central government will mandate a requirement for fortnightly residual waste collections as a minimum. It is hoped that any need for fortnightly residual waste collections can be mitigated by supporting policies which can effectively manage the additional needs of some residents. This includes additional frequency collections of residual waste for those residents who require additional capacity for waste such as incontinence waste or nappy waste. The practicalities of this policy decision will be discussed as part of pre-market engagement with bidders.
- 11.3. There is a risk that the government will mandate the separation of more material at the kerbside. It is our expectation that the most likely material would be fibre (paper and cardboard) and therefore we have explored options around the full separation of this material with members at the joint cross-party working group. The provisional recommendation in this instance being described in 8.94 to 8.103 and Appendix 7.
- 11.4. There is a risk that if services are not aligned that the contract is not considered favourable by the market. This is mitigated by proposing service changes which bring the most alignment for both authorities.
- 11.5. There is a risk that the contract costs are significantly higher than anticipated at tendering because of providers being exposed to more operational risks over recent years and high inflation.
- 11.6. There is a risk that carbon savings and cost mitigation are not considered sufficiently reasonable reasons by the public for a major service change and that this creates a negative public reaction. This is mitigated for by the creation of a new Waste Awareness role, and extensive communications plan and temporary additional Contract Officers who will support the transition for residents.
- 11.7. There is a risk that a minority of residents choose to fly tip or use illegal waste disposal options when struggling to manage their waste collections. This will be mitigated with supportive policies for those with genuine additional needs.
- 11.8. There is a risk that the proposed services do not adequately mitigate the carbon impacts of the Councils operations and that additional carbon saving initiatives are

required. This is being mitigated by early pre-engagement conversations with the market to consider all carbon saving options for the contract.

## **12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found in Appendix 11. Households producing large quantities of child or adult nappies will be supported by the provision of policies allowing for these properties to remain on fortnightly residual waste collections.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1. As the recommendations in the report relate to a contract above the WTO GPA threshold, Social Value has been included by an evaluation model allocating 10% weighting for social value. This will result in a sufficiently high consideration of social value at tendering.

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.2. Overall, there is forecasted to be positive environmental impacts from changes to the waste contract for North Herts. These come, amongst other things, as a result of proposals to reduce frequency of general refuse collections from fortnightly to three-weekly, meaning a reduction in emissions resulting from refuse freighter journeys, and an anticipated increase in resident recycling rates over time.
- 14.3. The proposed introduction of a Waste Awareness Officer will also allow us to run more campaigns and events to support residents to reduce their waste and develop greater understanding of which items are recyclable. This will help residents to adapt to the contract changes which include a proposal to introduce plastic film into the recycling bin.
- 14.4. An Environmental Impact Assessment containing more details has been carried out. Please see this at Appendix 13.

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1. Additional pressure will be put on the joint client team to manage the current services whilst procuring then mobilising a new contract. The procurement exercise is being supported by Procurement Officers at NHC and Stevenage Borough Council who operate a shared service with EHC.
- 15.2. A part time project management resource is being employed to assist in the management of project documents and to facilitate internal conversations between the two authorities surrounding the procurement.
- 15.3. A specialist waste consultant will support on our pre-engagement exercise and provide due diligence throughout the procurement process.

- 15.4 Legal support will be provided by the EHC Contract Lawyer or external legal support.
- 15.5 During mobilisation it is proposed to employ 2 x additional customer service advisors for 4 months at a cost of £16,900 and 2 x Contract officers for 6 months at a cost of £29,200 to support residents through the transition to new services.
- 15.6 A permanent full-time 'Waste Awareness' resource is proposed at a cost of £33,500 to support a robust communications campaign for the service and continue to provide proactive engagement with residents across the districts on waste minimisation and recycling.
- 15.7 A permanent 0.5 FTE resource is proposed at a cost of £14,600 to deliver new commercial waste services for food and garden waste to businesses across the districts and increase take up of commercial waste services in particular recycling services.
- 15.8 All costs are based on current staff costs at the bottom of the pay band.

## **16. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference and Recommendations from joint cross-party working group

Appendix 2 – Outcomes from the public consultation

Appendix 3 – Proposed Current Service Policy Statements

Appendix 4 – Aims and Principles of the Shared Service.

Appendix 5 – Proposed Bin Colours.

Appendix 6 – List of Councils operating 3 or 4 weekly residual waste collection cycles

Appendix 7 – Summary of separate fibre collection service

Appendix 8 – Procurement Timeline

Appendix 9 – EHC Parish Council comments - TBC

*Appendix 10 – Hertfordshire County Council comments - TBC*

Appendix 11 – Equalities Impact Assessment

*Appendix 12 – Recommendations and Comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee - TBC*

Appendix 13 – Environmental Impact Assessment

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

17.1 Chloe Hipwood – Shared Service Manager – Waste Management  
[Chloe.hipwood@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Chloe.hipwood@north-herts.gov.uk)

17.2 Ian Couper – Director of Resources

- 17.3 Sarah Kingsley – Director of Place
- 17.4 Isabelle Alajooz – Legal Commercial Team Manager
- 17.5 Georgina Chapman – Policy Officer

## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Food production emissions make up more than a third of global total | New Scientist](#)

[UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2021 | UNEP - UN Environment Programme](#)

[The impact of food waste collections on household food waste arisings | WRAP](#)

[UK and England's carbon footprint to 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Technical report templates \(wrap.org.uk\)](#) – Carbon conversion factors

[WRAP-Right bin in the Right Place Final.pdf](#)

[Extended Frequency Residual Waste Collections \(ricardo.com\)](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Terms of Reference – Waste Cross Party Joint Working Group**

1. Identify the core aims and priorities in terms of service performance, identifying our current performance levels and how these are benchmarked, considering the long-term objectives of both Councils.
2. Consider the impending changes to legislation, including environmental and financial pressures. Reviewing the current service design in relation to these factors.
3. Identify best practice and where opportunities may exist to transition towards best practice where this is both financially and environmentally sustainable.
4. Seek to achieve consensus and greater consistency of services endeavouring to benefit from greater stability and efficiencies from a common contract.
5. Identify opportunities for financial efficiencies and cost reduction in service design and delivery.
6. Consider and identify the optimal long term service design options for the Councils and how these will deliver the Councils objectives and aims and principles of the shared service.
7. Specifically, the working group will focus on:
  - a. Customer Services
  - b. Street Cleansing Non-Core Services
  - c. Street Cleansing Core Services
  - d. Waste & Recycling Non-Core Services e.g. textiles collections
  - e. Waste and Recycling Core Services
  - f. Chargeable Garden Waste Collections
  - g. Chargeable Waste & Recycling Services

### **Recommendations from the joint cross-party working group on waste**

Workshops were held with members from both East Herts Council and North Herts Council from 24<sup>th</sup> June to 24<sup>th</sup> August. These workshops focused on the recommendations for the waste and street cleansing service design from 2025. Detailed minutes were taken at the time and this document provides a short summary of the key outcomes and recommendations.

Information presented to the workshops pertinent to any recommendations for Executive/Cabinet will be provided in the Executive/Cabinet report, information or figures may be updated to reflect any new information available.

The term 'consensus' is used where all Members were in agreement

The term 'majority' is used where a consensus was not agreed but only one or two Members did not.

The term 'no agreement' is used where opinion was split by three or more Members or where members did not agree to an option.

Where there is a clear preference by one authority only this is also noted.

#### **Workshop 1 - Scene Setting**

The first workshop provided an overview of current services, performance, aims and principles and the financial position of the Council and contract as well as identifying needs and options regarding our carbon impacts.

- No specific service change options were discussed .
- Consensus for the service to explore Zero or Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) where practicable and seek further information during soft market testing.
- Consensus on a need to ensure a slick customer journey with improved online offering.
- Early indication of a willingness for aligned services
- EHC Members were keen to see an improvement in recycling performance.

#### **Workshop 2 – Customer Services**

The workshop explored the pros and cons regarding in-house and out-sourced customer service models. It identified aspirations for the future provision of services and channel shift.

- Consensus that residents should experience a 'great' standard of customer service.
- Consensus that the focus should be in reducing the number of calls coming in
- Consensus that the customer journey should be simple and effective with supporting SLAs for contact handling
- Majority for in- house customer service provision – provided that the cost differences are not hugely different and therefore prohibitive.
- Majority for a joint customer service provision – subject to a future cost benefit report
- Consensus for more proactive service led communications not just service information.
- Consensus for all contacts which could be fully managed online to have a route to do online.
- Consensus on a joint comms plan for waste services
- Request to explore viability of comms lead authority for waste
- No agreement for the Contractor to lead on comms
- Consensus felt a 'waste awareness' officer would be beneficial to the service.



### Workshop 3 – Street Cleansing

This workshop explored the strengths and weaknesses of the current service provision and explored options for change.

- Consensus support for continuation of ‘continuous presence’ requirement in town centres.
- Consensus felt there was confusion relating to reporting of litter bin issues due to multiple ownership
- Consensus support for current project asset mapping streets and parks bins with use of QR codes for reporting.
- Consensus support for asset mapping of ‘non-council’ litter bins and Council to act as a reporting conduit.
- Consensus for WRAPs ‘right bin, right place’ approach to the siting of litter bins.
- Majority felt that more comms should be done on what we expect of residents
- Consensus for replacing some litter bins for dual litter and recycling bins
- Request that viability of combining litter bin management for all bins in the district come under one contract, be explored.
- Consensus for more joined up working to prevent grass cutting before litter picking

### Workshop 4 - Waste & Recycling

This workshop explored a number of options surrounding service change. This included continuing with similar services through to four weekly residual waste collections. Identifying future necessary changes as a result of the governments resources and waste strategy such as separate food waste collections as well as discussing options surrounding future potential outcomes from the government consultation on consistency.

- Consensus for the same specification across the contract for both authorities
- Consensus for introduction of separate food waste for EHC in line with the current NHC service
- Consensus for an alignment of bin sizes, meaning a transition to a 180l residual waste bin in EHC through the natural replacement cycle.
- Consensus for an earlier start time of 6am during the summer
- Consensus for an optional earlier start time of 6am all year
- Consensus on soft plastics collections for 2025 in advance of potential 2027 mandate
- Consensus on three weekly residual waste collections
- Majority wanted supportive policies for households with additional needs during the transition.
- Majority would like to explore a transition to four weekly residual waste collections mid contract – further information to be provided at conclusions workshop
- Consensus that the preferred option if fibre is mandated to be kept separate is for three weekly fibre (paper and cardboard) , three weekly containers (plastic and cans) and three weekly residual waste with fortnightly chargeable garden waste and weekly food waste.

### Workshop 5 – Non-Core Services

This workshop looked at the non-statutory elements of the services for both street cleansing and waste collections. Looking at the pros and cons of continuing with the existing non-statutory service provision.

- EHC Member consensus to cease the provision of paper bring banks
- EHC Member consensus to cease the provision of textile bring banks provided there is supportive comms for the charity sector.
- NHC Member consensus to cease kerbside textile collections provided there is supportive comms for the charity sector.
- Consensus that 5L kitchen caddies not provided as part of standard 'bin set' to all households.
- Consensus that 5L caddies be provided on request only via events etc. but not replaced as standard.
- Consensus a 'waste awareness' officer post would be beneficial to the service and contractor.
- Consensus on bin colours – purple lidded for residual waste, blue lidded for mixed dry recycling and brown lidded for garden waste.
- Consensus on 'fibre' separate bin colours - purple lidded for residual waste (new 180L purple lidded provided in EHC), existing grey/black bin for mixed dry recycling (formally residual waste bin in EHC), blue lidded for paper & cardboard (New for NHC residents – existing mixed dry recycling bin for EHC) and brown lidded for garden waste.
- No agreement from NHC Members on the removal of the leaf fall clearance service.
- Consensus for officers to explore out of contract options for setting up market stalls and salt bins
- Consensus to continue with 'Adopt an Area' scheme
- Majority of EHC members agreed to remove parish litter picking grants and bring parish street litter bins back into the contract.
- Consensus to agree to policy alignment where there are current minor differences. – updates will be provided as part of the Cabinet and Executive report.
- Consensus to remove policy 19 – relating to bin stickers

#### Workshop 6 – Chargeable Services

This workshop explored options regarding the chargeable services offered by both Councils and reviewed the differences between them. The workshop also looked at the pros and cons of an expansion of commercial waste services to include food waste and garden waste.

- Consensus to align the standard garden waste charge from 2025 based on future contract costs being the same.
- Consensus from NHC members that options need to be explored to manage the potentially big hit in 2025 when contract rise.
- Consensus to consider an aligned start date of 1<sup>st</sup> April if price is aligned
- Consensus from NHC members to keep a concession, EHC Members wish to ensure that concessions are not subsidised by other service users and therefore this should be a NHC funded element.
- Consensus that there should be an agreed mechanism for future uplifts when there is a shared price.
- Consensus that a solution should be found for online self-serve for bulky waste collections
- Some support for small WEEE as an 'add on' item to bulky service

- Consensus that commercial clinical should be provided in both districts on the assumption that it's no significant additional burden
- Consensus the domestic clinical should not be charged
- Consensus for the introduction of commercial food waste services subject to resources being available to administer new services.
- Consensus support a part time commercial waste post to support marketing of services and introduction of new services – subject to cost – benefit analysis
- Majority support a limitation of event cleansing and bin emptying offering. – income and costs to be provided at conclusions workshop

This page is intentionally left blank

# Waste Public Consultation Results

The survey for East and North Herts commenced on the 22nd July and ended on the 22nd August 2022. Both councils shared the details of the consultation via social media channels, via councillors and by notifying local parishes. Below is a summary of the questions asked and the responses. Where applicable connections have been made by linking respondents' answers to various questions.

## Survey response totals

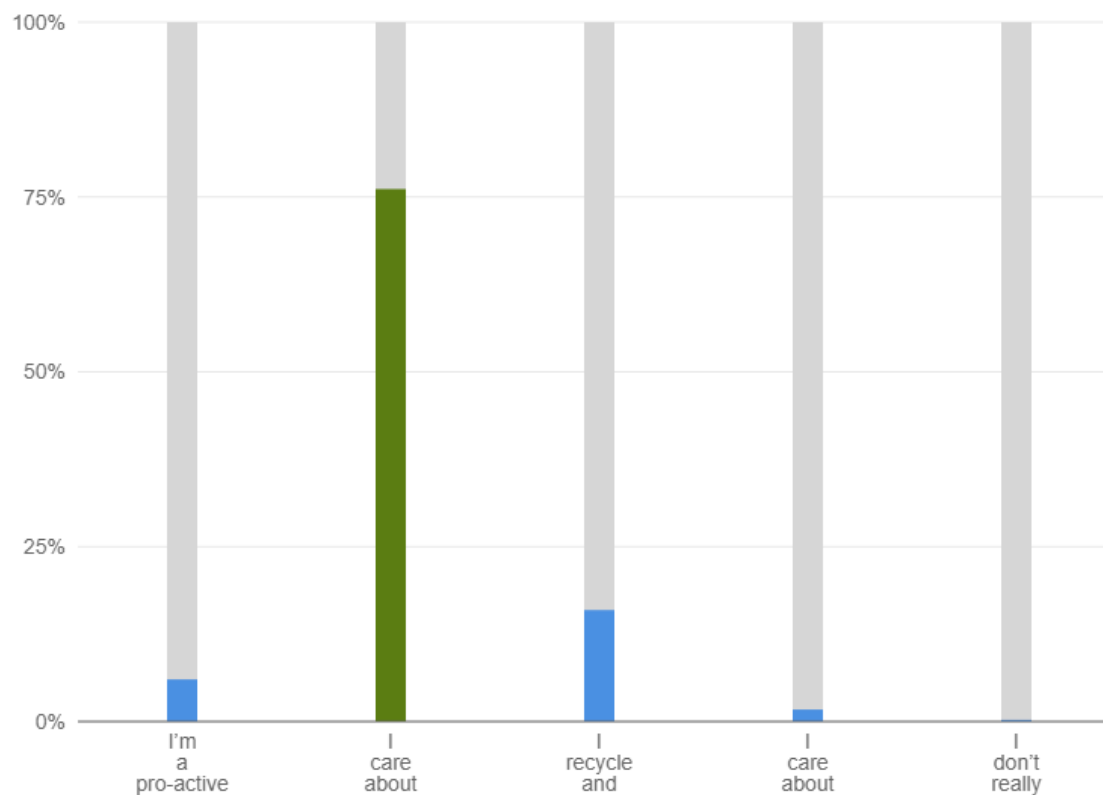
- Started: 4,082
- Completed: 3,396
- Questions Answered: 85,665
- Completion Rate: 83%

### 1. Which district are you a resident of (who do you pay your Council tax to)

Answer Option	%
North Herts Council (Hitchin, Letchworth, Baldock, Royston and surrounding areas)	60.17
East Herts Council (Buntingford, Bishop's Stortford, Ware, Hertford and surrounding areas)	39.83

### 2. How would you describe your thoughts on the environment?

Answer Option	%
I'm a pro-active environmentalist	6.02
I care about the environment and climate change and do my bit	76.11
I recycle and don't drop litter but don't think much more about the environment and climate change	15.92
I care about the environment but don't feel like I know where to start with making changes	1.71
I don't really care about the environment and climate change	0.24



### 3.What type of property do you live in?

Answer Option	%
House/Bungalow without a garden	2.1
House/Bungalow with garden	93.48
Flat/Maisonette without a garden	2.6
Flat/Maisonette with a garden	1.63
Other e.g. sheltered accommodation	0.18

#### 4.How full are your bins and boxes on the average collection week? North Herts

Please tick which answers most apply to you

Answer Option	Full/overflowing %	$\frac{3}{4}$ full %	$\frac{1}{2}$ full %	$\frac{1}{4}$ full %	Empty %	I don't have one %
Refuse - purple bin	18.52	28.83	27.89	21.51	0.8	2.45
Recycling - black bin	48.51	33.26	12.66	3.74	0.04	1.78
Paper box	7.64	16.04	25.29	31.72	5.75	13.57
Food waste caddy	16.02	25.41	24.03	16.06	9.66	8.81
Brown Bin	32.25	25.81	17.53	7.02	2.15	15.25
I have a sack collection	0.18	0.06	0.12	0.24	0.06	99.33
Shared refuse bin	2.4	0.99	0.42	0	0.14	96.04
Shared paper bin	1.28	0.57	0.99	0.85	0.28	96.03
Shared recycling bin	3.11	0.57	0.42	0	0.14	95.76

#### 4.How full are your bins and boxes on the average collection week? East Herts

Please tick which answers most apply to you

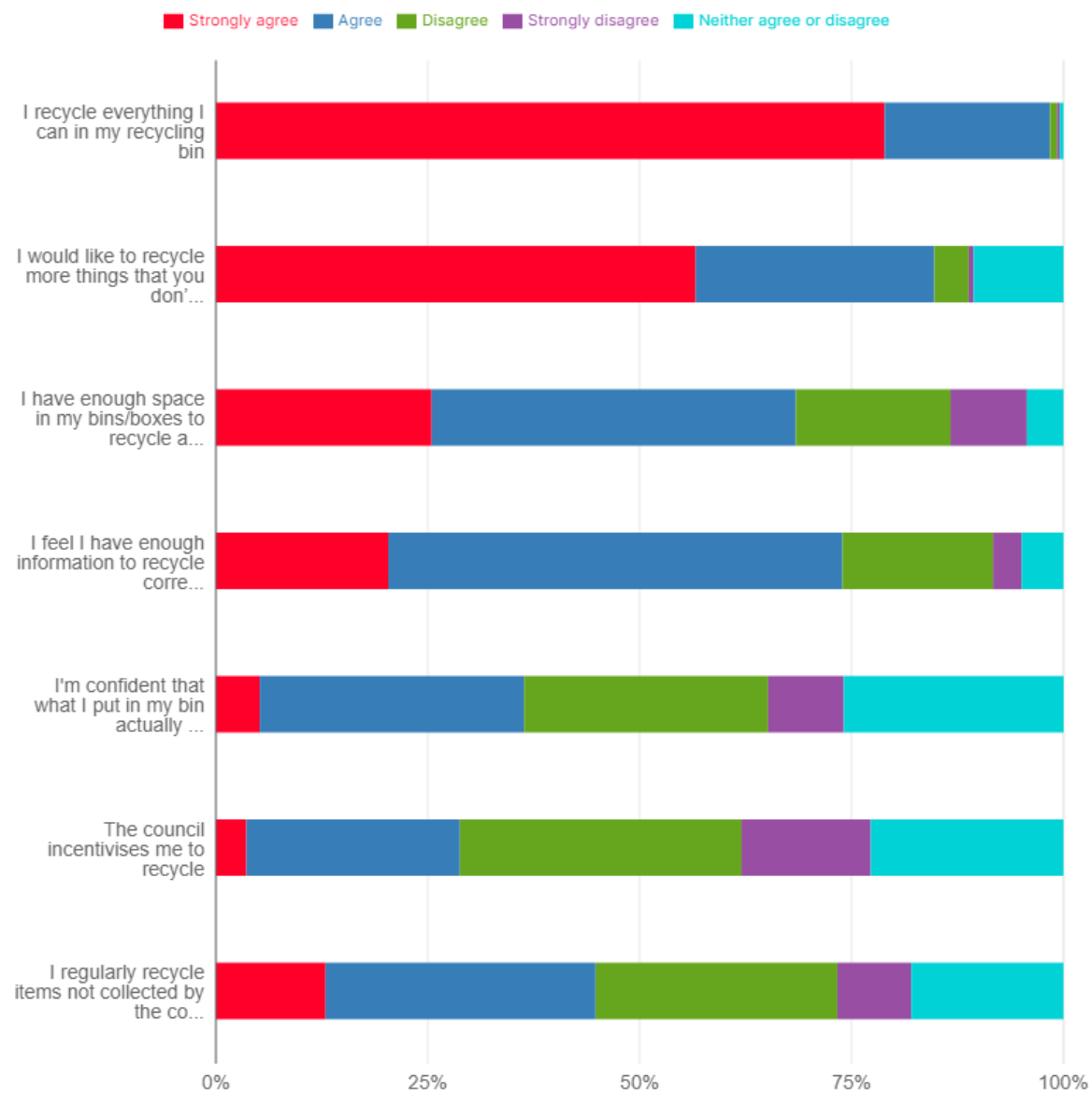
Answer Option	Full/overflowing %	$\frac{3}{4}$ full %	$\frac{1}{2}$ full %	$\frac{1}{4}$ full %	Empty %	I don't have one %
Refuse - black bin	25.72	27.13	24.65	20.28	0.67	1.54
Recycling - blue lidded bin	60.9	24.28	10.46	2.68	0	1.68
Paper box	14.22	17.21	22.31	19.12	2.38	24.76
Brown Bin	30.93	24.48	14.32	7.6	1.48	21.18
I have a sack collection	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.1	97.2
Shared recycling bin	2.06	0.59	0.29	0	0.29	96.76
Shared paper bin	0.59	0.88	0.29	1.18	0	97.06
Shared refuse bin	2.92	0.29	0.58	0	0	96.2

## 5.We want to understand your recycling habits

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements

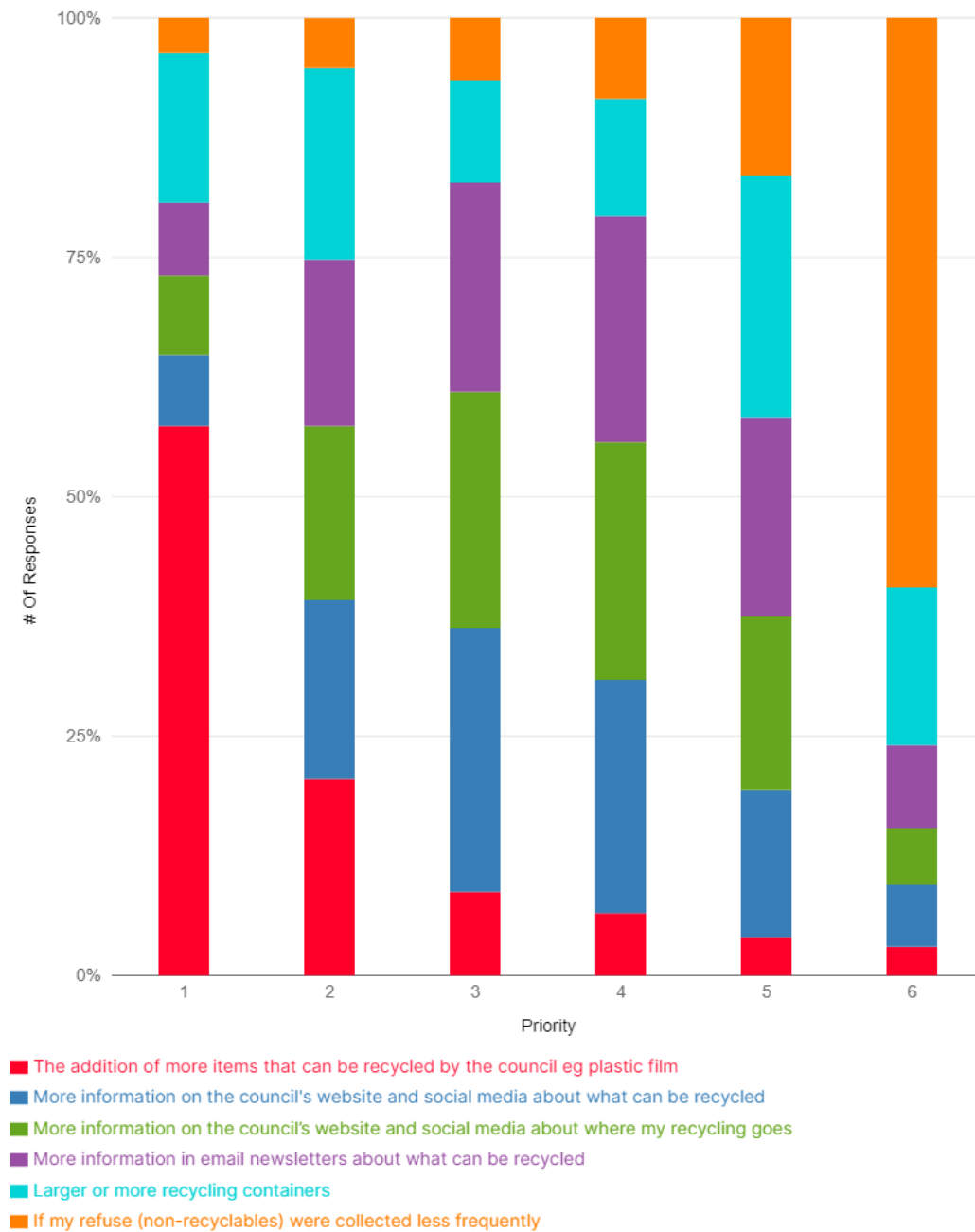
Answer Option	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Neither agree or disagree %
I recycle everything I can in my recycling bin	78.9	19.52	0.82	0.31	0.45
I would like to recycle more things that you don't currently collect	56.61	28.16	4.06	0.57	10.61
I have enough space in my bins/boxes to recycle all items	25.46	42.97	18.26	8.98	4.33
I feel I have enough information to recycle correctly	20.34	53.58	17.78	3.36	4.94
I'm confident that what I put in my bin actually gets recycled	5.18	31.2	28.78	8.92	25.94
The council incentivises me to recycle	3.6	25.2	33.22	15.25	22.73
I regularly recycle items not collected by the council in other recycling schemes e.g. Terracycle.	12.95	31.86	28.53	8.71	17.95





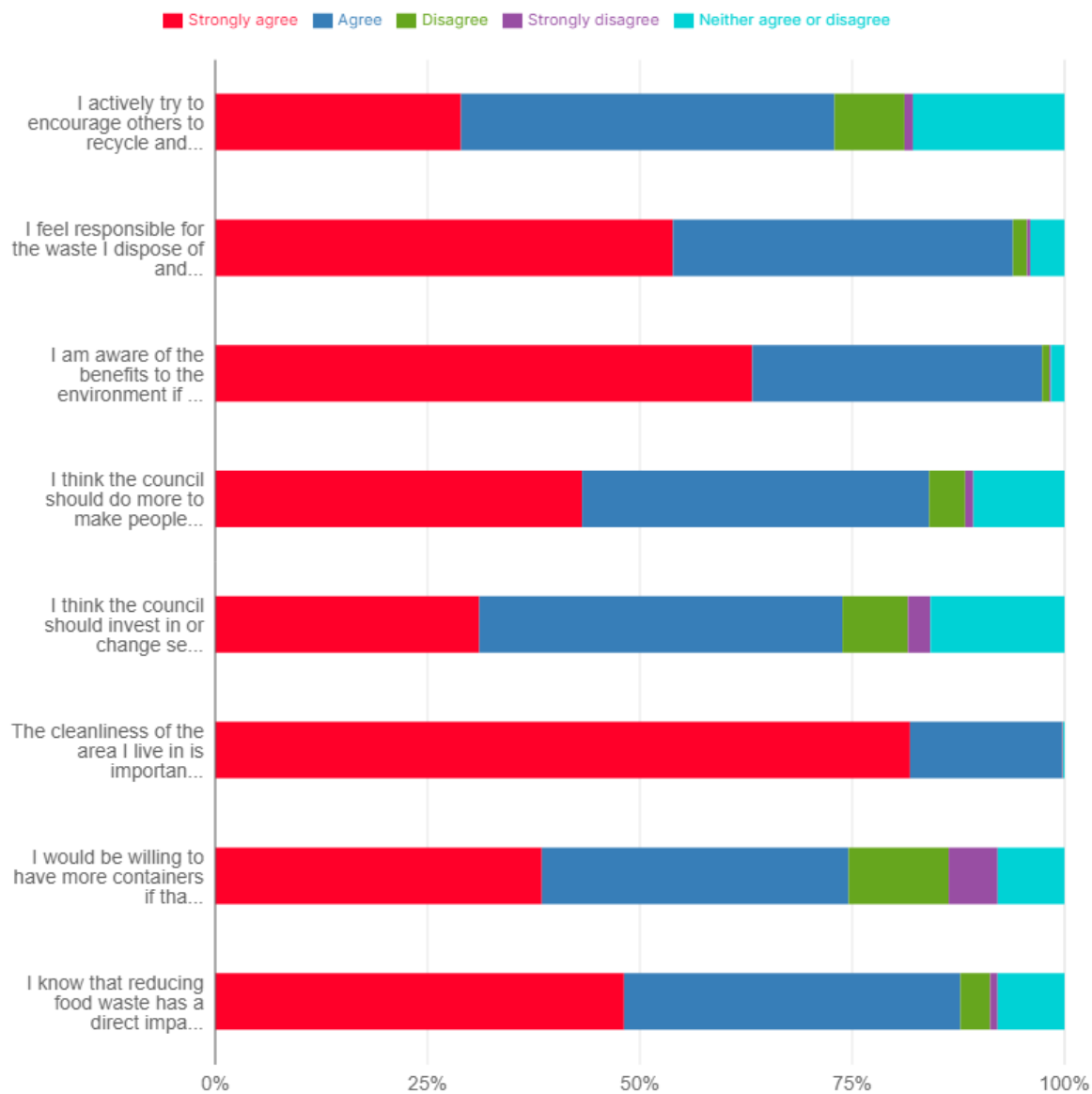
**6. What would encourage you to recycle more? Please order these statements in priority order, 1 being most important and 6 being the least important.**

<b>Answer Option</b>	<b>1st %</b>	<b>2nd %</b>	<b>3rd %</b>	<b>4th %</b>	<b>5th %</b>	<b>6th %</b>	<b>Score</b>
The addition of more items that can be recycled by the council eg plastic film	57.37	20.48	8.71	6.5	3.93	3.01	1.88
More information on the council's website and social media about what can be recycled	7.42	18.72	27.59	24.36	15.46	6.45	3.41
More information on the council's website and social media about where my recycling goes	8.34	18.16	24.64	24.83	18.08	5.94	3.44
More information in email newsletters about what can be recycled	7.62	17.35	21.9	23.63	20.84	8.65	3.59
Larger or more recycling containers	15.6	20.06	10.55	12.17	25.17	16.46	3.61
If my refuse (non-recyclables) were collected less frequently	3.66	5.22	6.61	8.51	16.52	59.49	5.07



## 7. Please tick to indicate how much you agree with the following statements

Answer Option	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Neither agree or disagree %
I actively try to encourage others to recycle and reduce their waste	28.94	43.97	8.25	1	17.84
I feel responsible for the waste I dispose of and care where it goes	53.9	40.04	1.65	0.4	4.01
I am aware of the benefits to the environment if I recycle and reduce my waste	63.24	34.14	0.83	0.2	1.59
I think the council should do more to make people recycle more and reduce waste	43.19	40.88	4.24	0.97	10.73
I think the council should invest in or change services to reduce their carbon footprint e.g. electric or ultra-low emission vehicles where possible (I understand this could cost more)	31.1	42.76	7.71	2.65	15.79
The cleanliness of the area I live in is important to me	81.82	17.89	0.03	0.09	0.17
I would be willing to have more containers if that meant I could recycle more material types	38.46	36.12	11.78	5.78	7.86
I know that reducing food waste has a direct impact on climate change	48.14	39.61	3.5	0.88	7.88



### 8. Please tick all the statements that apply to you “regarding paper recycling”

Answer Option	%
I recycle all of my paper separately via my paper box	50.73
I recycle most of my paper via my paper box	16.75
I use recycling banks for my paper (East Herts only)	2.26
I don't use my paper box and include my paper with my other recyclables	7.08
I don't recycle paper	1.66
I don't have a paper box	8.52
I don't have a paper box but would like one.	7.62
I don't have space for a paper box	1.75
I don't want to recycle paper separately	2.04
I don't produce any paper	1.58

### 9. Bagged textiles (North Herts)

Please tick all statements that apply

Answer Option	%
I have used the council's textile collection service within the last 12 months	9.63
I have used the council's textile collection service within the last 3 months	4.54
I dispose of my textiles via my purple bin	2.95
I was not aware of the textile collection service	21.71
I recycle my textiles via collection banks	15.7
I recycle my textiles via charity doorstep collections	14.69
I recycle my textiles via charity shops	27.86
Other (please specify)	2.92

## 9.Textiles - East Herts

Please tick all statements that apply

Answer Option	%
I have used the councils textile banks to recycle my textiles in the last 12 months	19.2
I have used the councils textile banks to recycle my textiles in the last 3 months	7.95
I dispose of my textiles via my black bin	8.23
I recycle my textiles via other textile banks	11.21
I recycle my textiles via charity doorstep collections	13.6
I recycle my textiles via charity shops	36.86
Other (please specify)	2.94

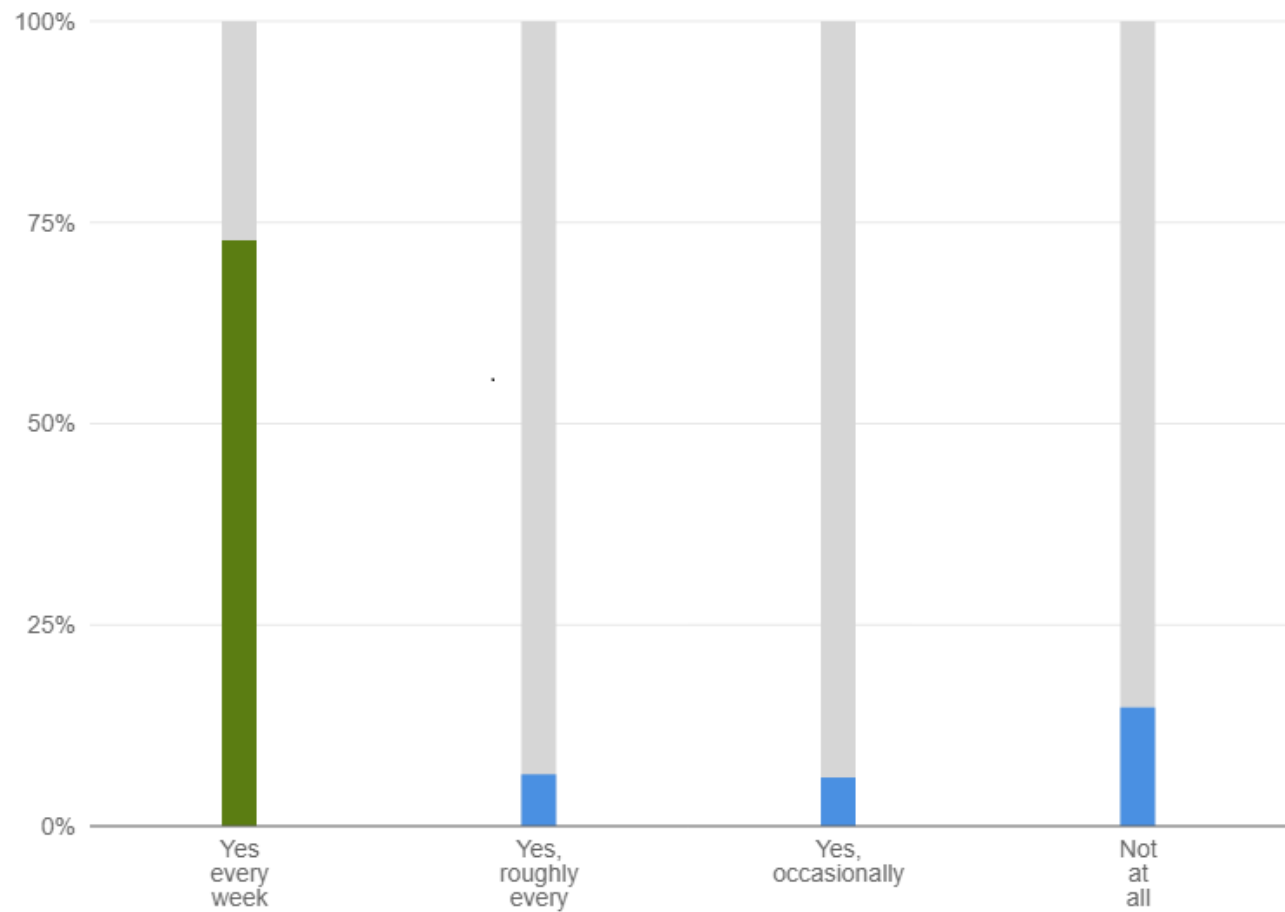
**9.1 If we were to offer a textile collection service on your recycling week, please indicate how often do you think you would use this? East Herts**

Answer Option	%
Regularly (every two weeks)	2.66
Once a month	17.78
A few times a year	65.73
I would not use this service	13.82

## 10 Food Waste - North Herts

Do you use the weekly food waste collection service?

Answer Option	%
Yes every week	72.81
Yes, roughly every two weeks	6.43
Yes, occasionally	6.04
Not at all	14.72

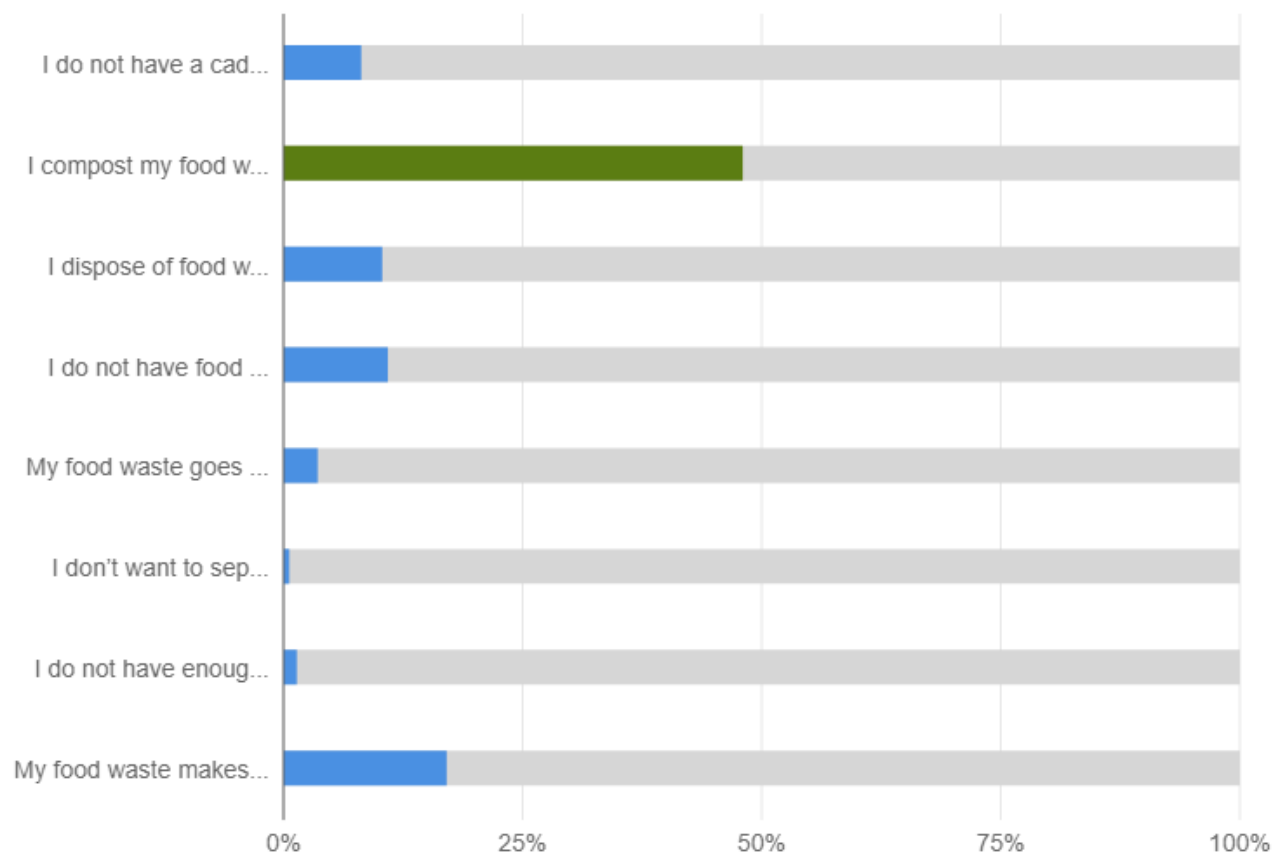




## 10 Food Waste - North Herts

If not, please tell why not?

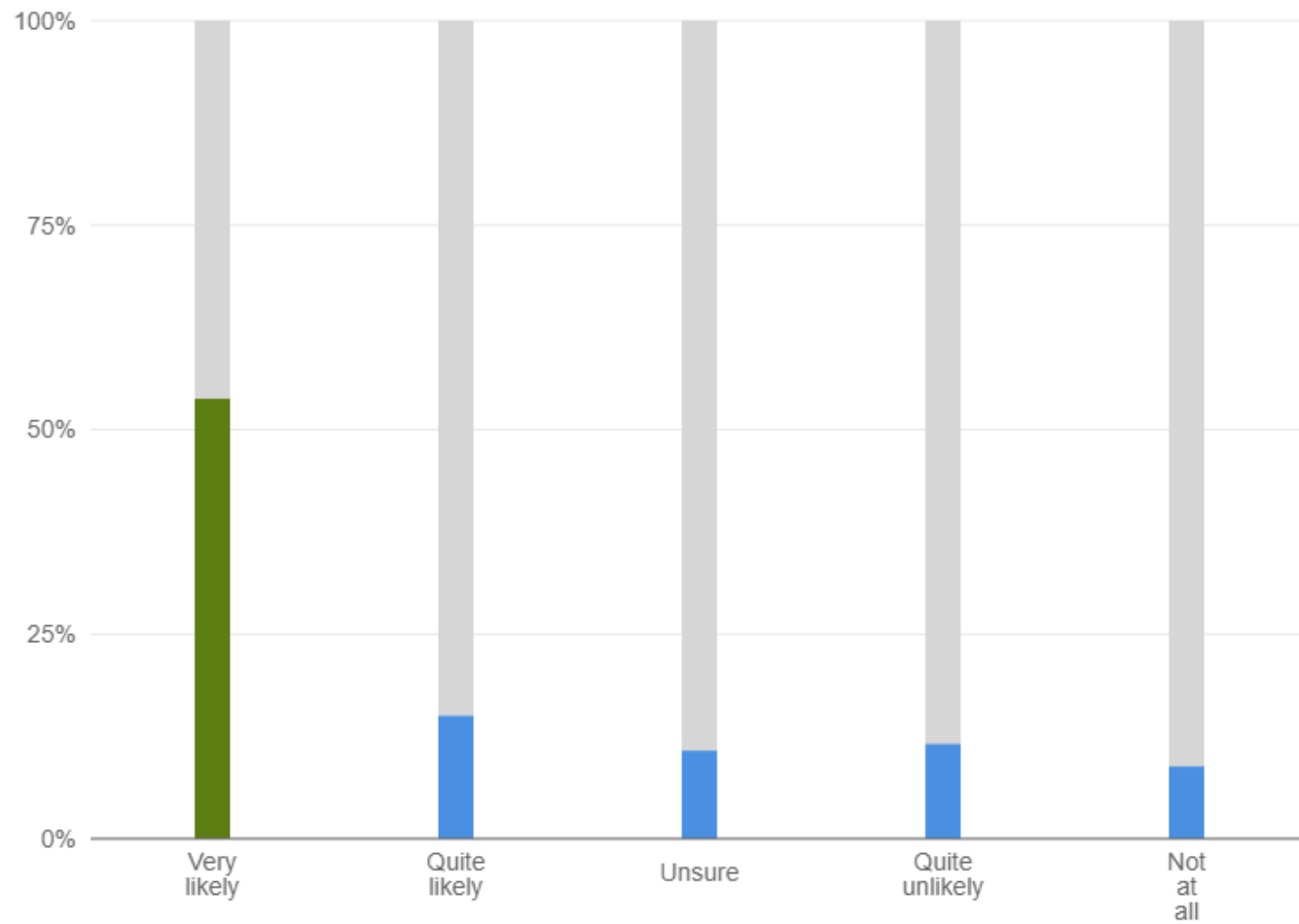
Answer Option	%
I do not have a caddy / container (hyper link to ordering page or instruction)	8.13
<b>I compost my food waste</b>	<b>48.02</b>
I dispose of food waste in my purple bin	10.32
I do not have food waste	10.91
My food waste goes to pets	3.57
I don't want to separate my food waste	0.6
I do not have enough information about how to recycle my food waste	1.39
My food waste makes my caddy smell and attract flies	17.06



## 10.1 Food Waste - East Herts

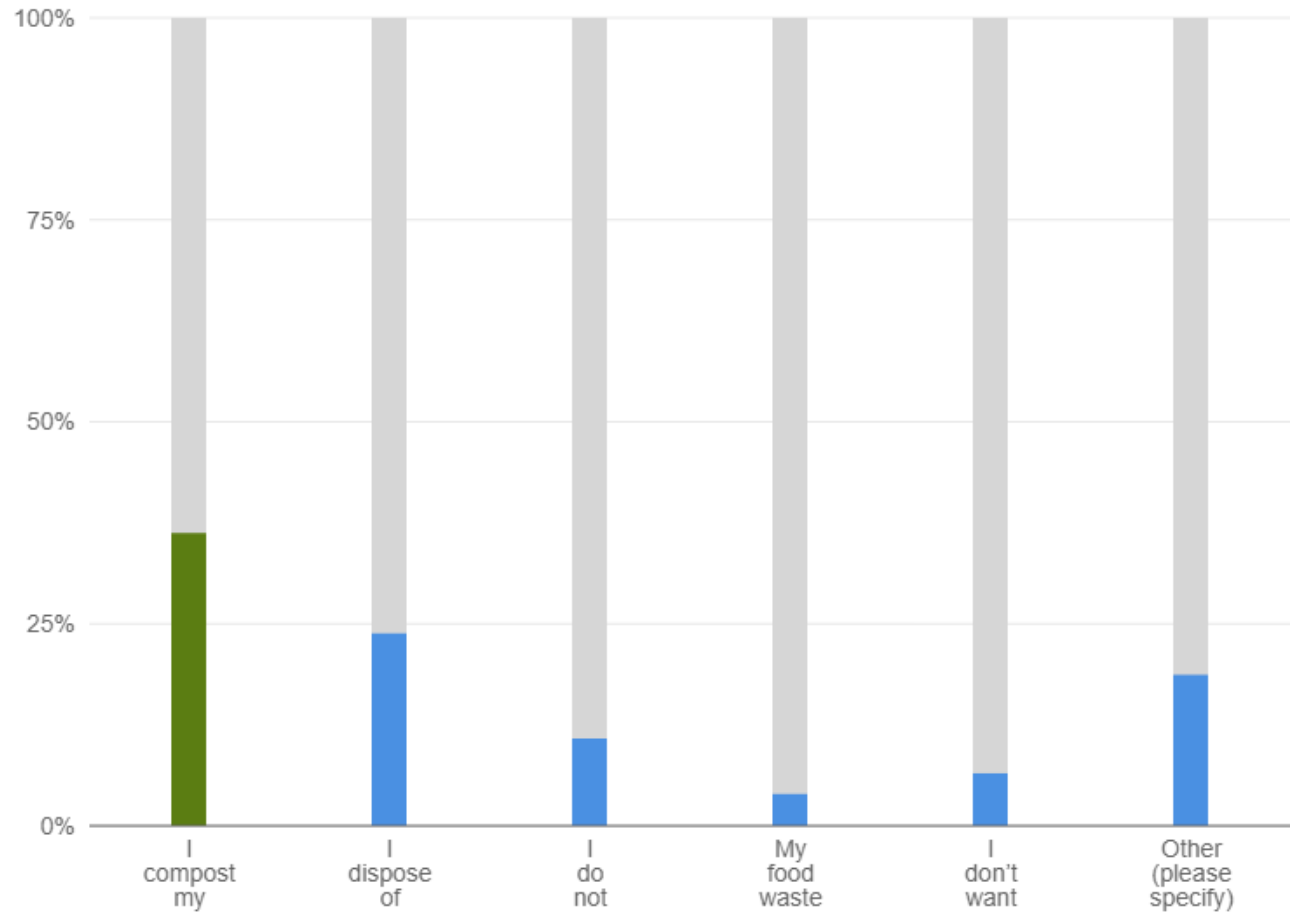
If the council introduced weekly food waste collections how likely would you be to use it?

Answer Option	%
Very likely	53.8
Quite likely	15.04
Unsure	10.77
Quite unlikely	11.57
Not at all likely	8.82



## 10.2 If you answered quite unlikely or not at all likely please tell us why?

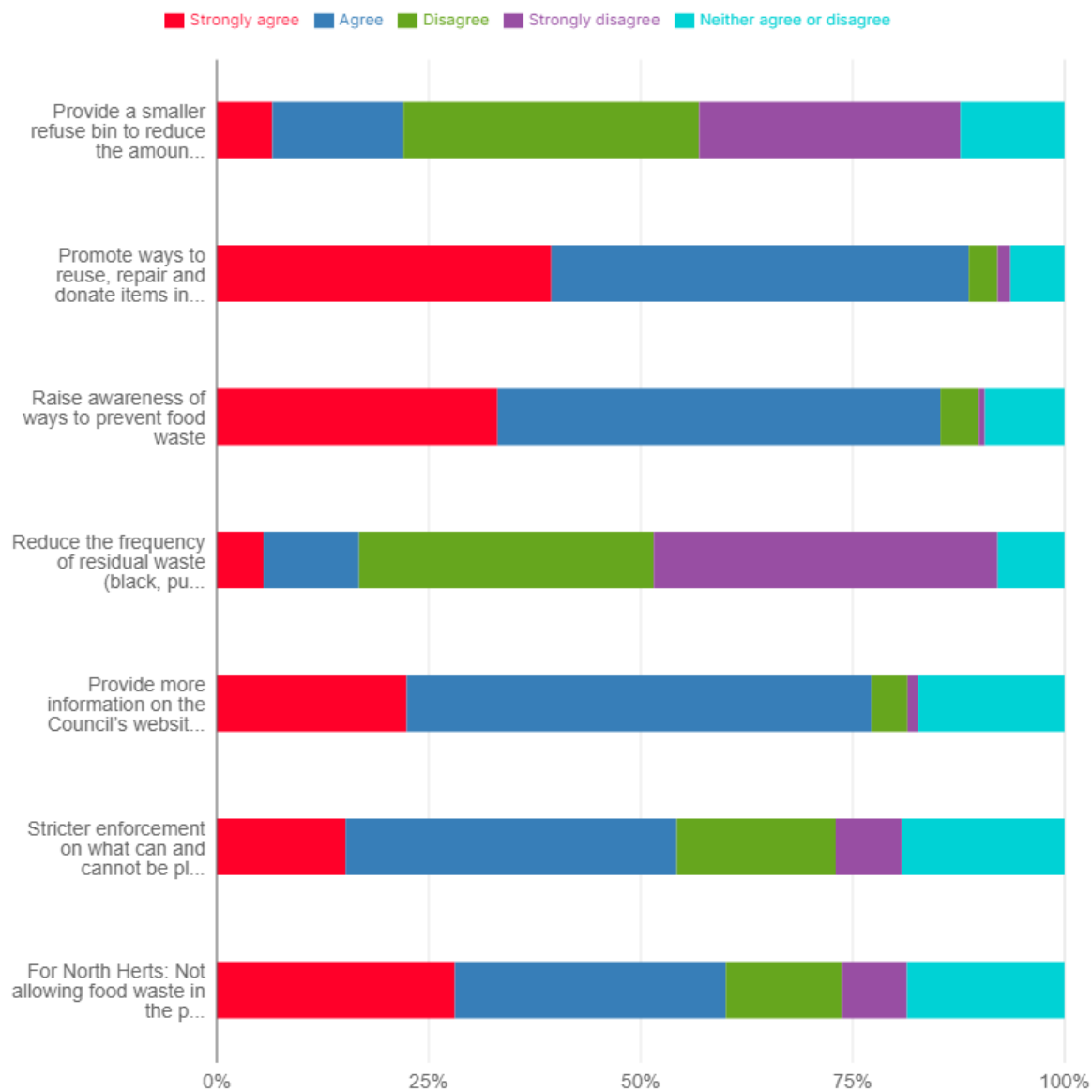
Answer Option	%
I compost my food waste	36.22
I dispose of food waste in my black bin	23.82
I do not have food waste	10.83
My food waste goes to pets	3.94
I don't want to separate my food waste	6.5
Other (please specify)	18.7



## 11.What action should the council take to help reduce waste?

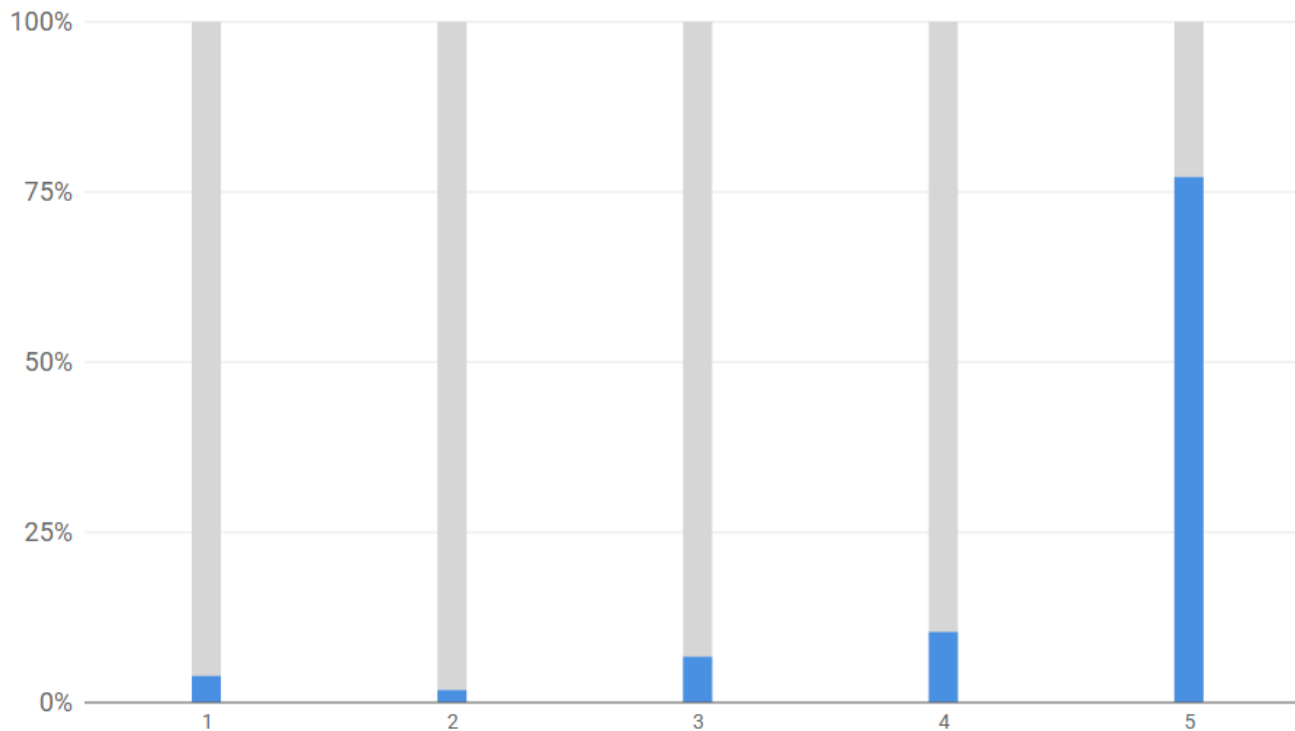
To what extent do you agree or disagree that these possible actions by the council would help to “reduce waste?”

Answer Option	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Neither agree or disagree %
Provide a smaller refuse bin to reduce the amount of waste residents can put out on collection day and encourage them to recycle more	6.56	15.47	34.87	30.82	12.28
Promote ways to reuse, repair and donate items instead of disposing of them in refuse collections.	39.46	49.25	3.39	1.52	6.38
Raise awareness of ways to prevent food waste	33.12	52.24	4.52	0.73	9.39
Reduce the frequency of residual waste (black, purple bins) collections to encourage people to think more about what they dispose of	5.51	11.28	34.75	40.58	7.88
Provide more information on the Council’s website and social media on waste minimisation	22.4	54.82	4.26	1.21	17.31
Stricter enforcement on what can and cannot be placed in waste and recycling bins.	15.2	39.06	18.75	7.81	19.19
For North Herts: Not allowing food waste in the purple bin to encourage residents to recycle more	28.08	31.97	13.68	7.69	18.58



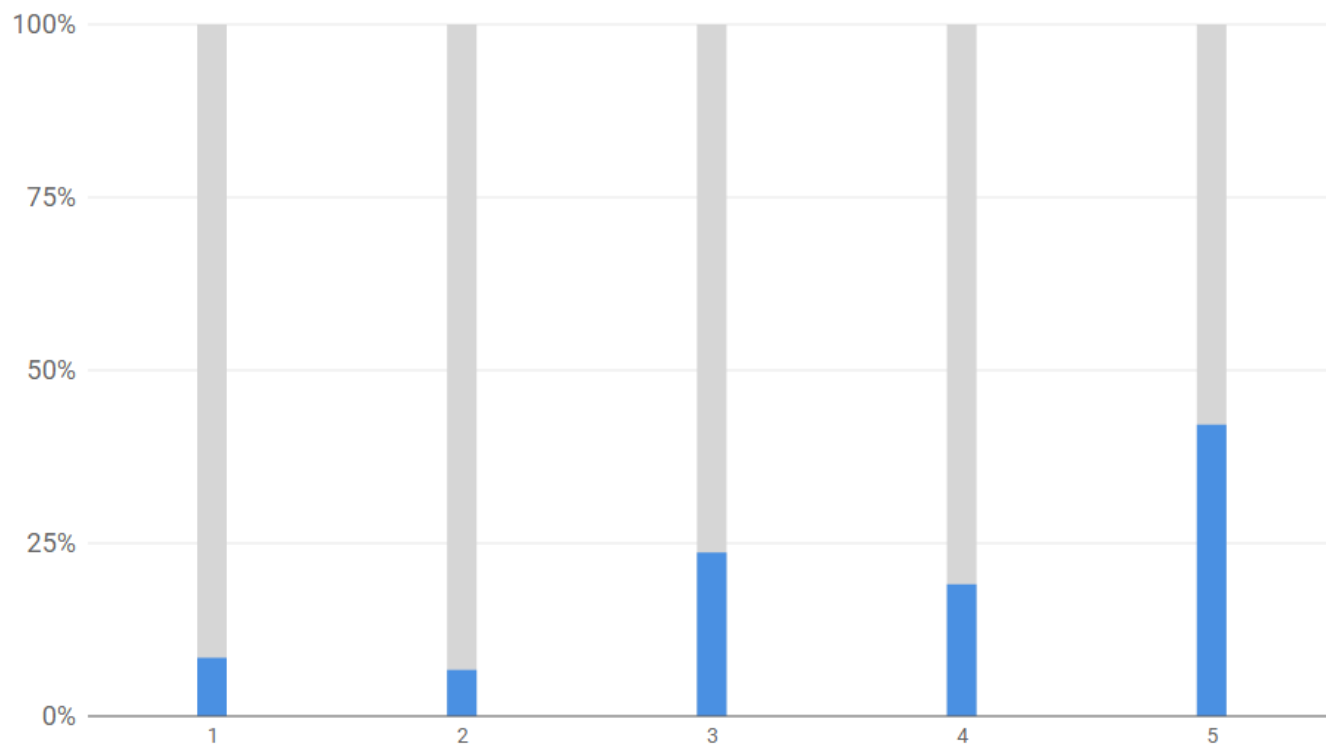
## The Council should continue to provide fortnightly collections of all waste and recycling

Scale	Percentage
1 – Strongly Disagree	3.90
2 - Disagree	1.82
3 - Neither disagree or agree	6.74
4 - Agree	10.35
5 - Strongly Agree	77.18



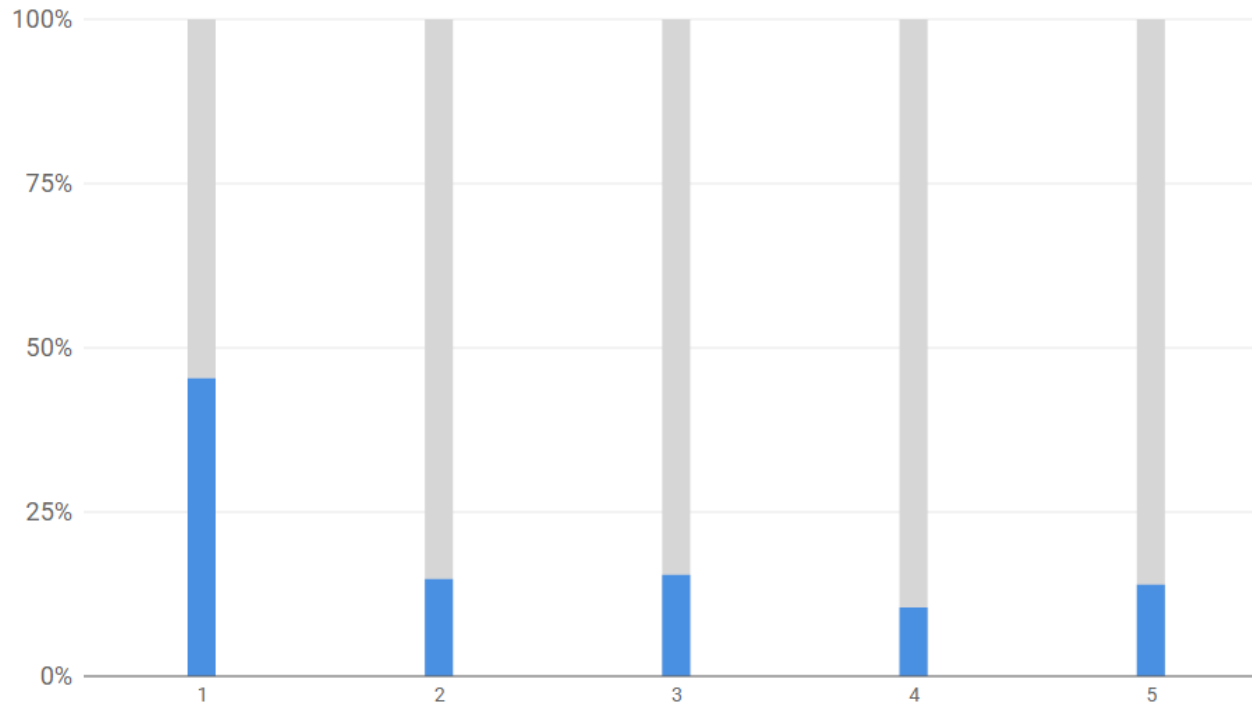
**The Council should provide additional collection capacity for those who may need it e.g. larger families, households with large quantities of adult or child nappies**

Scale	Percentage
1 – Strongly Disagree	8.44
2 - Disagree	6.69
3 - Neither disagree or agree	23.64
4 - Agree	19.08
5 - Strongly Agree	42.15



I would be able to manage my waste effectively with three weekly residual waste (refuse) collections by recycling more and squashing items.

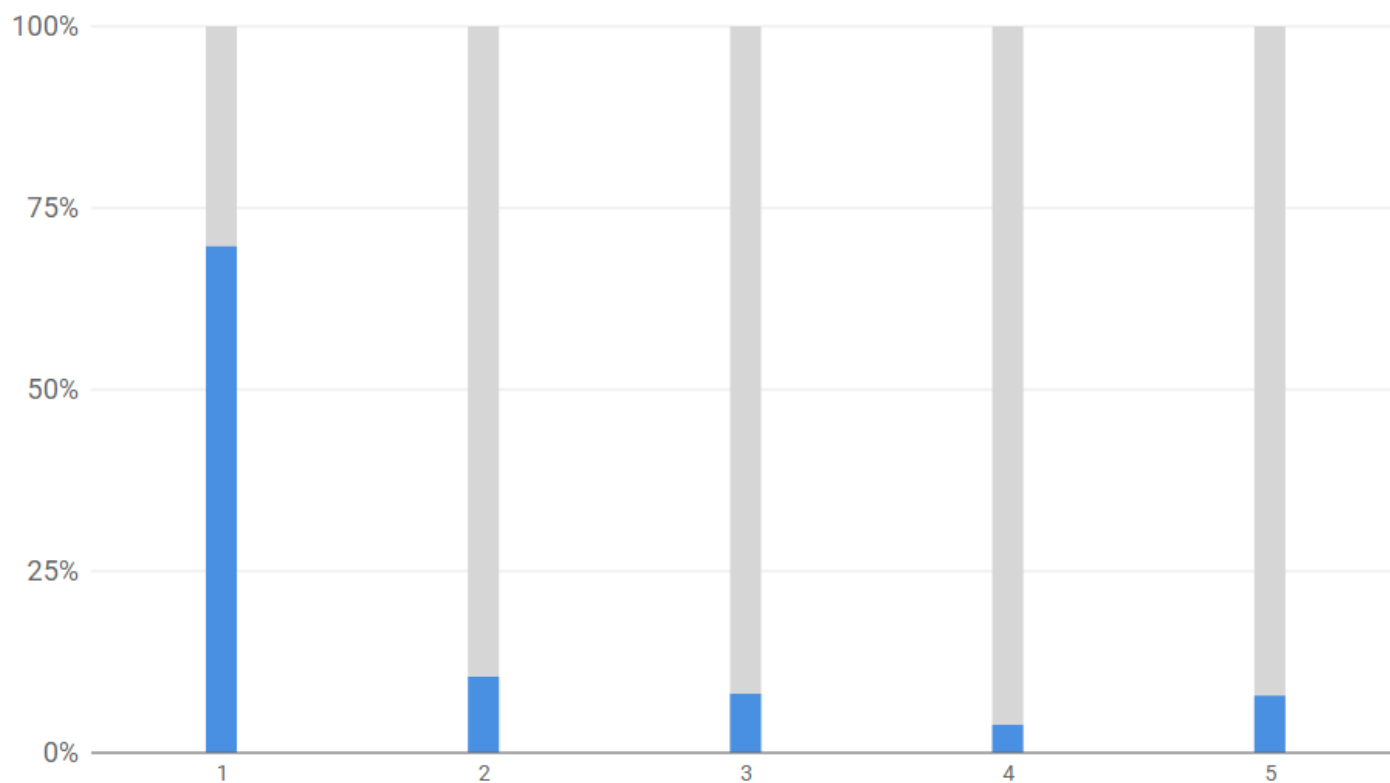
Scale	Percentage
1 – Strongly Disagree	45.36
2 - Disagree	14.81
3 - Neither disagree or agree	15.43
4 - Agree	10.45
5 - Strongly Agree	13.95





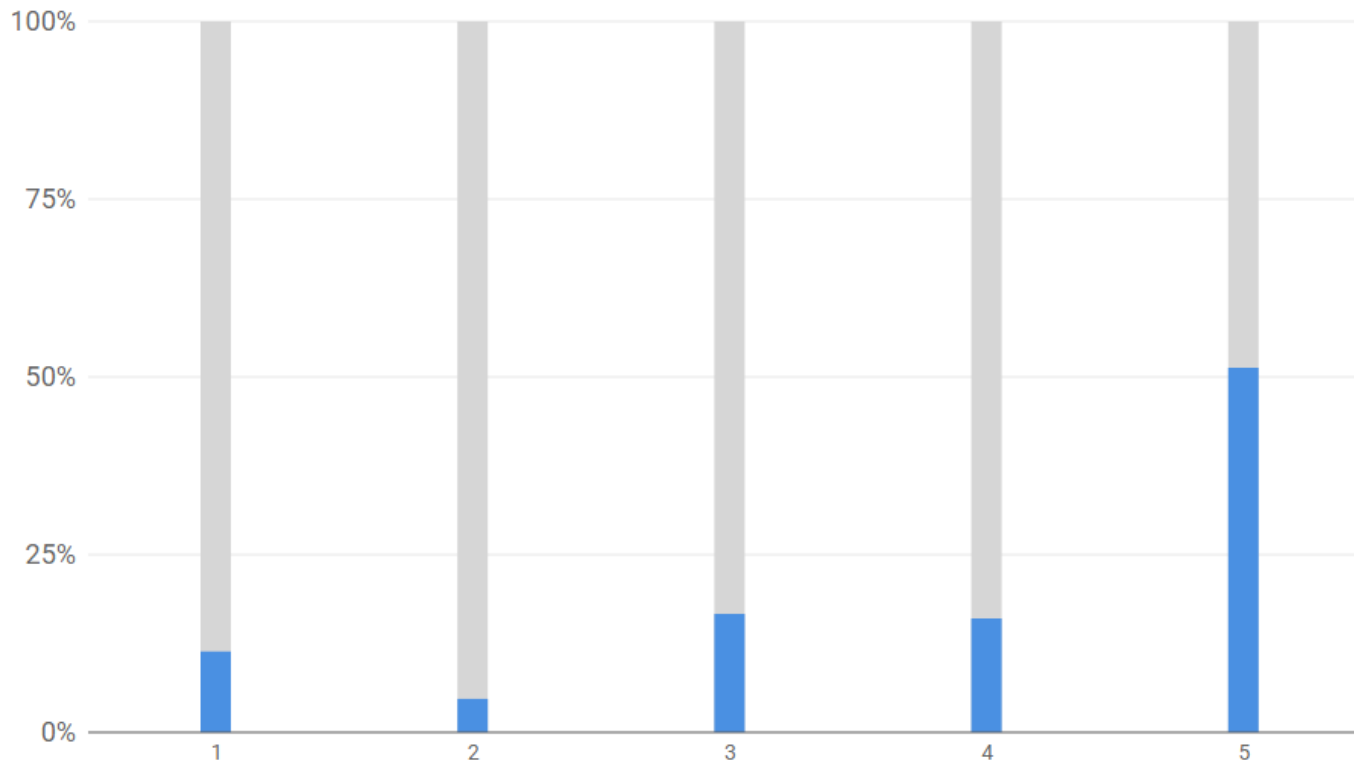
**I would be able to manage my waste effectively with four weekly residual waste (refuse) collections by recycling more and squashing items**

Scale	Percentage
1 – Strongly Disagree	69.72
2 - Disagree	10.49
3 - Neither disagree or agree	8.09
4 - Agree	3.84
5 - Strongly Agree	7.85



### I would like to be able to put out extra recycling next to my bin

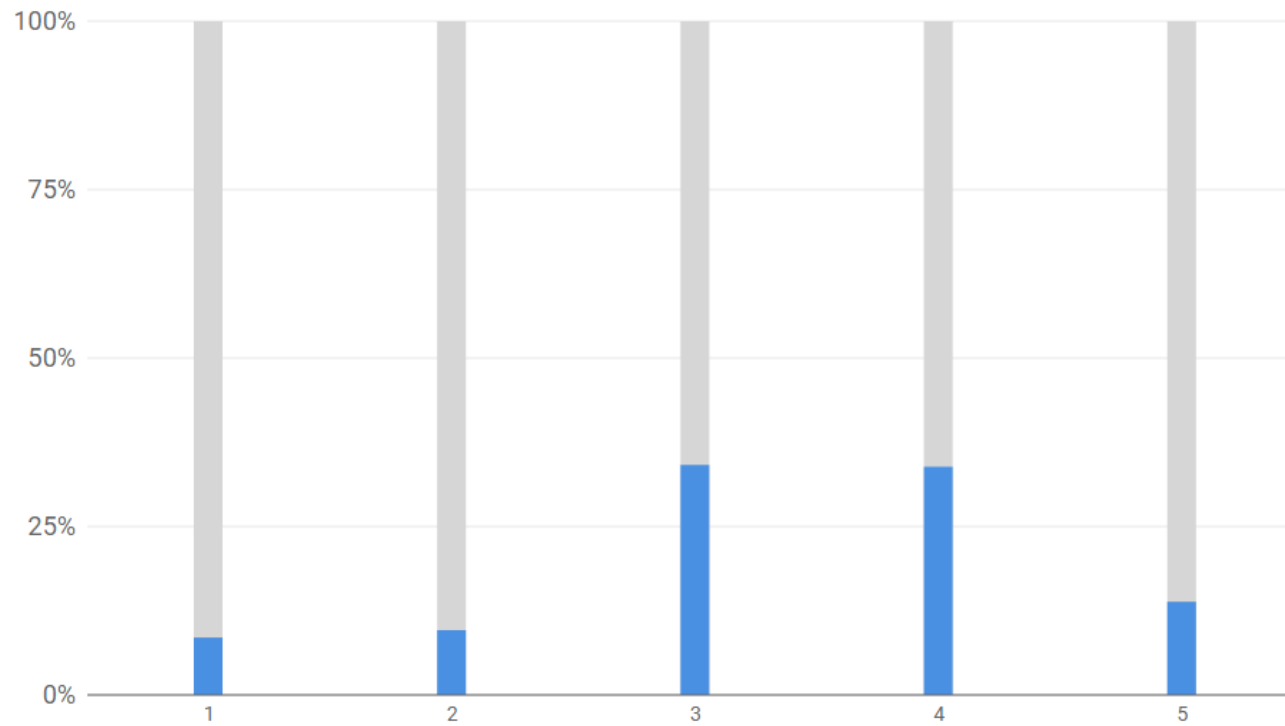
Scale	Percentage
1 – Strongly Disagree	11.36
2 - Disagree	4.71
3 - Neither disagree or agree	16.66
4 - Agree	16.01
5 - Strongly Agree	51.26



## Street cleansing

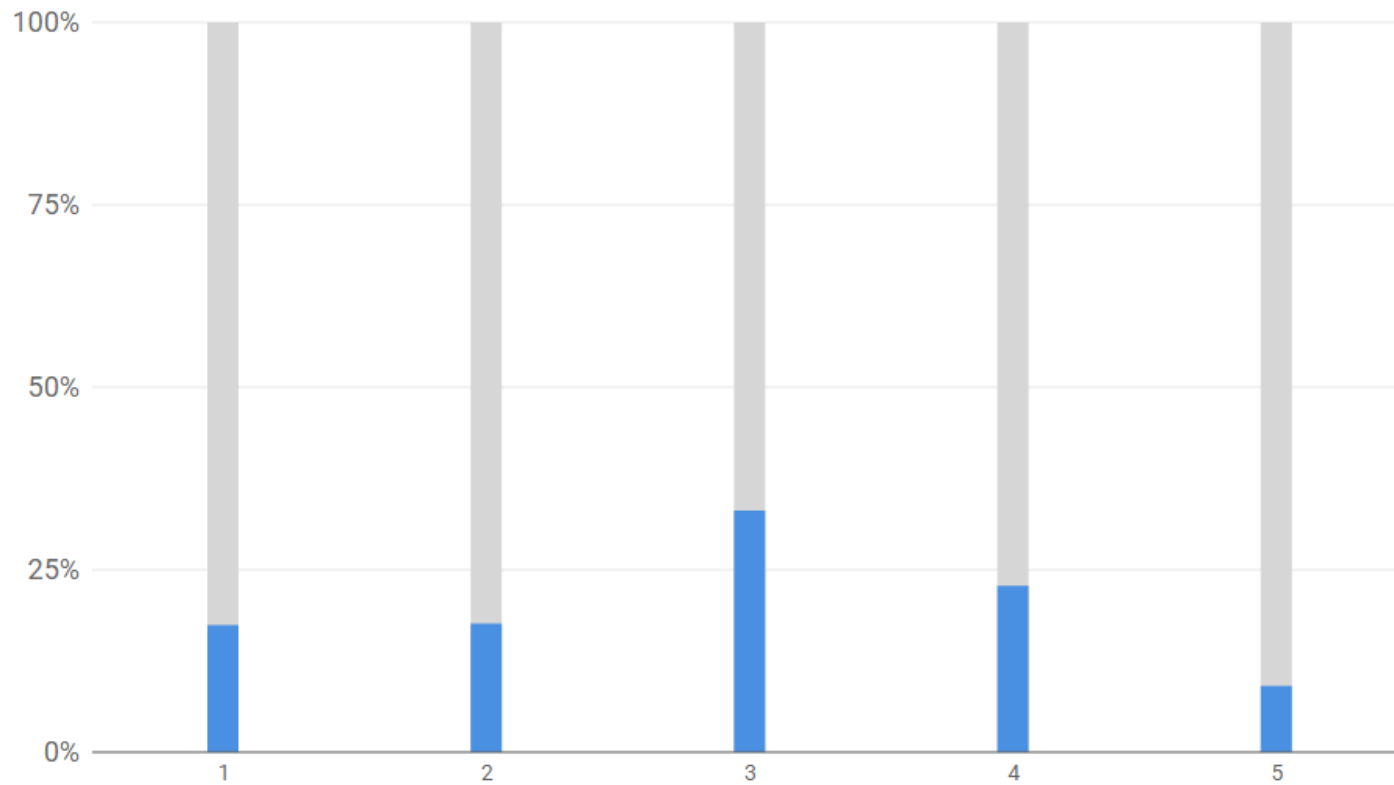
The standard of street sweeping and litter picking in town centres

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	8.51
2	9.62
3	34.15
4	33.88
5 (Excellent)	13.84



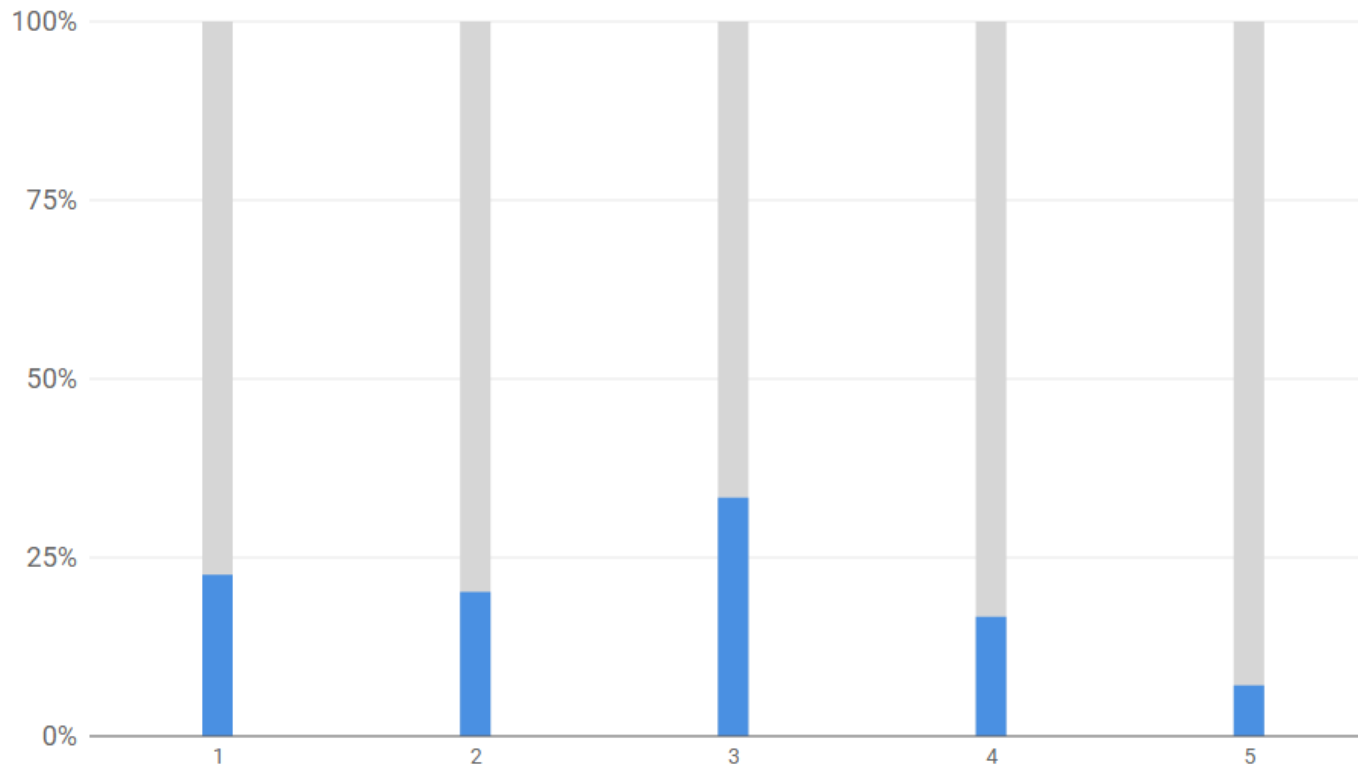
## The standard of street sweeping in residential areas

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	17.40
2	17.61
3	33.13
4	22.79
5 (Excellent)	9.06



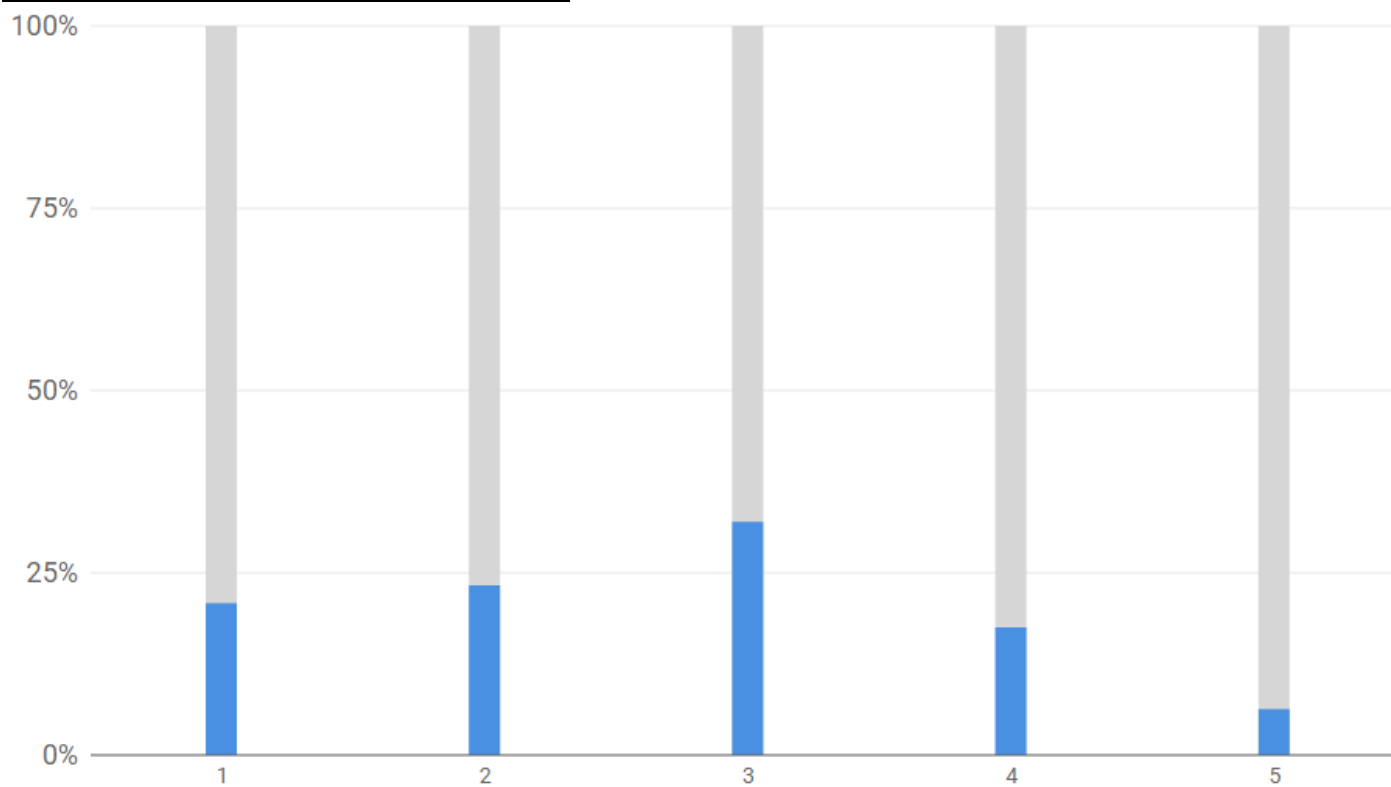
## The standard of litter picking in residential areas

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	22.59
2	20.17
3	33.4
4	16.73
5 (Excellent)	7.11



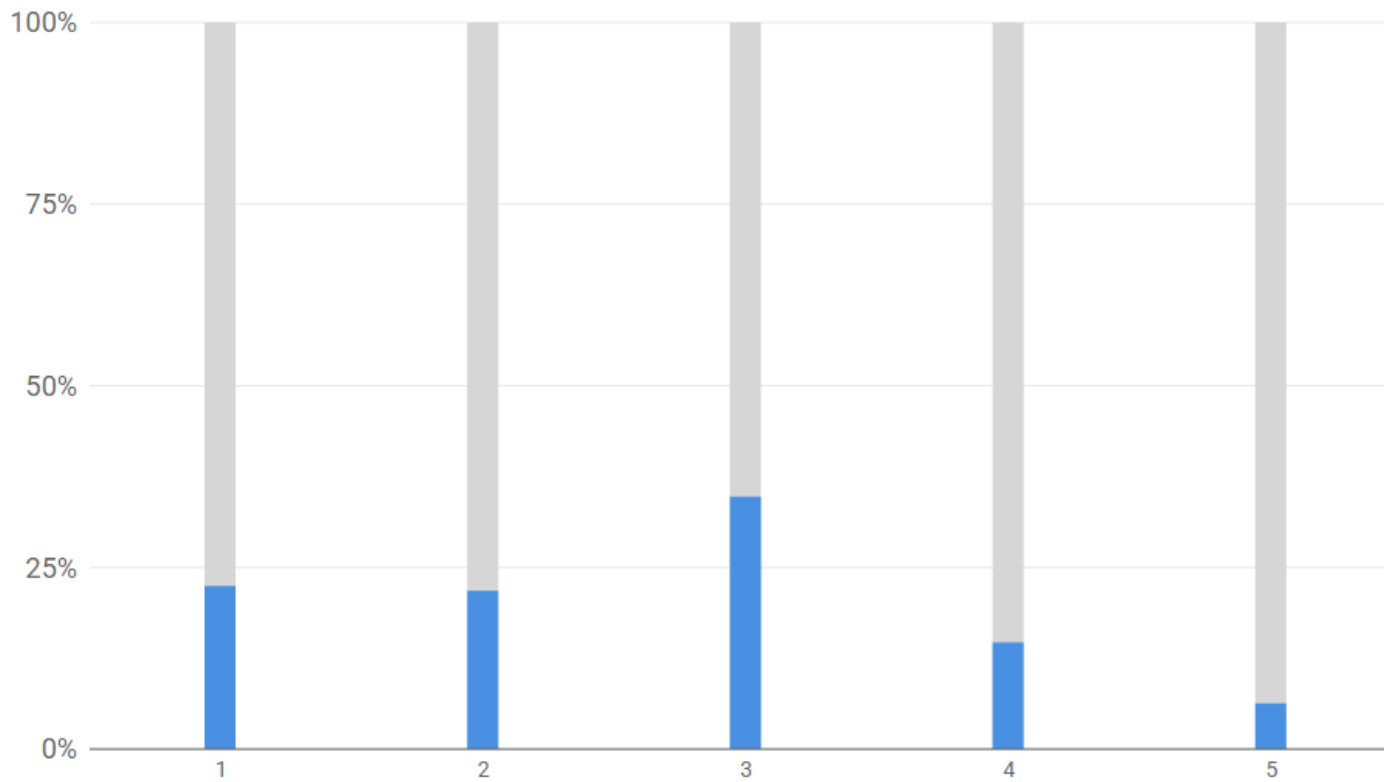
## The provision and emptying of on street litter bins

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	20.83
2	23.31
3	32.01
4	17.54
5 (Excellent)	6.31



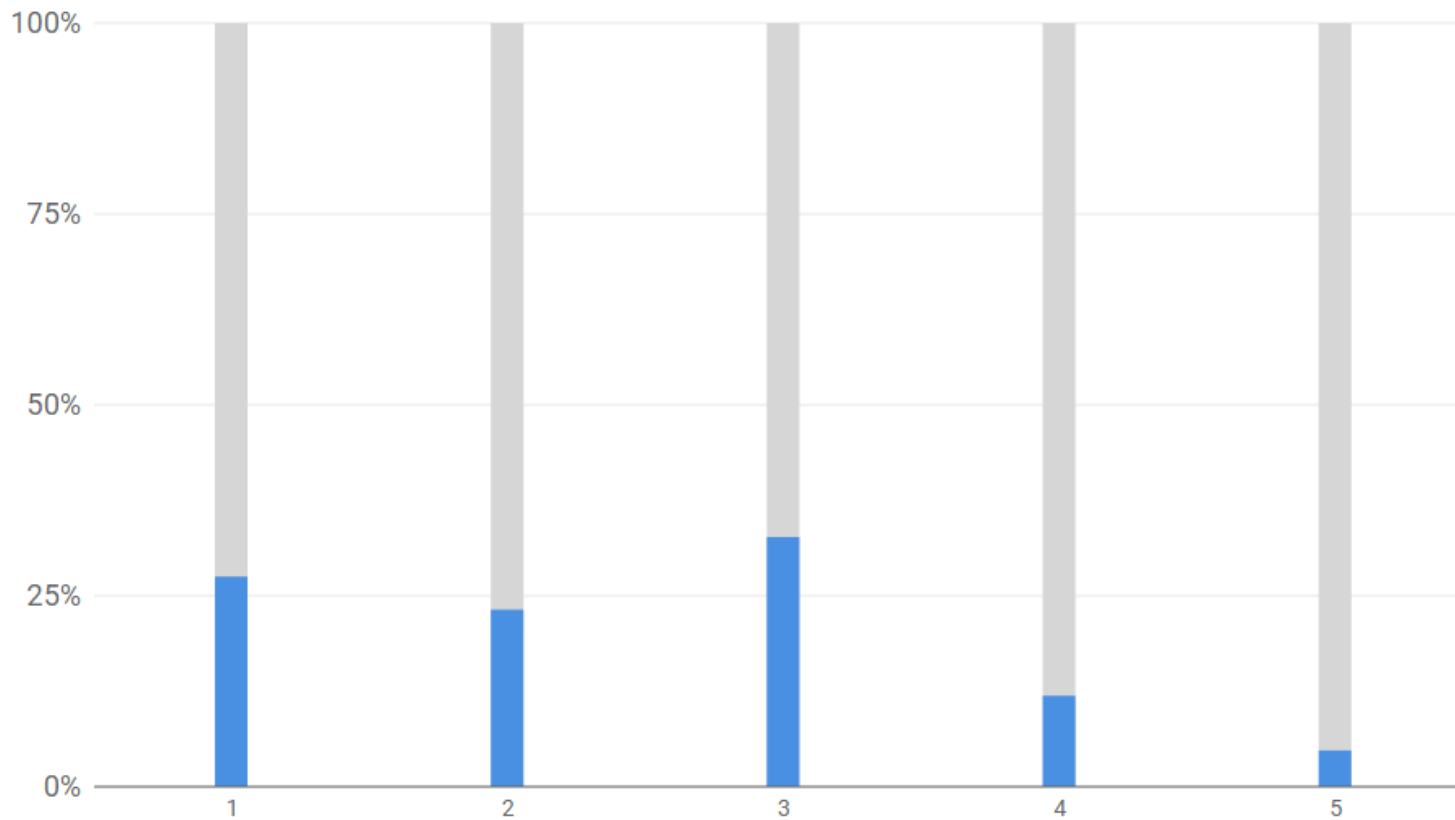
## The management of fly tipped waste on the highway

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	22.42
2	21.81
3	34.77
4	14.7
5 (Excellent)	6.3



## The management of litter on high-speed dual carriageway and major A roads e.g A602, A505, A414 & A10

Scale	Percentage
1 (Poor)	27.48
2	23.17
3	32.7
4	11.92
5 (Excellent)	4.74

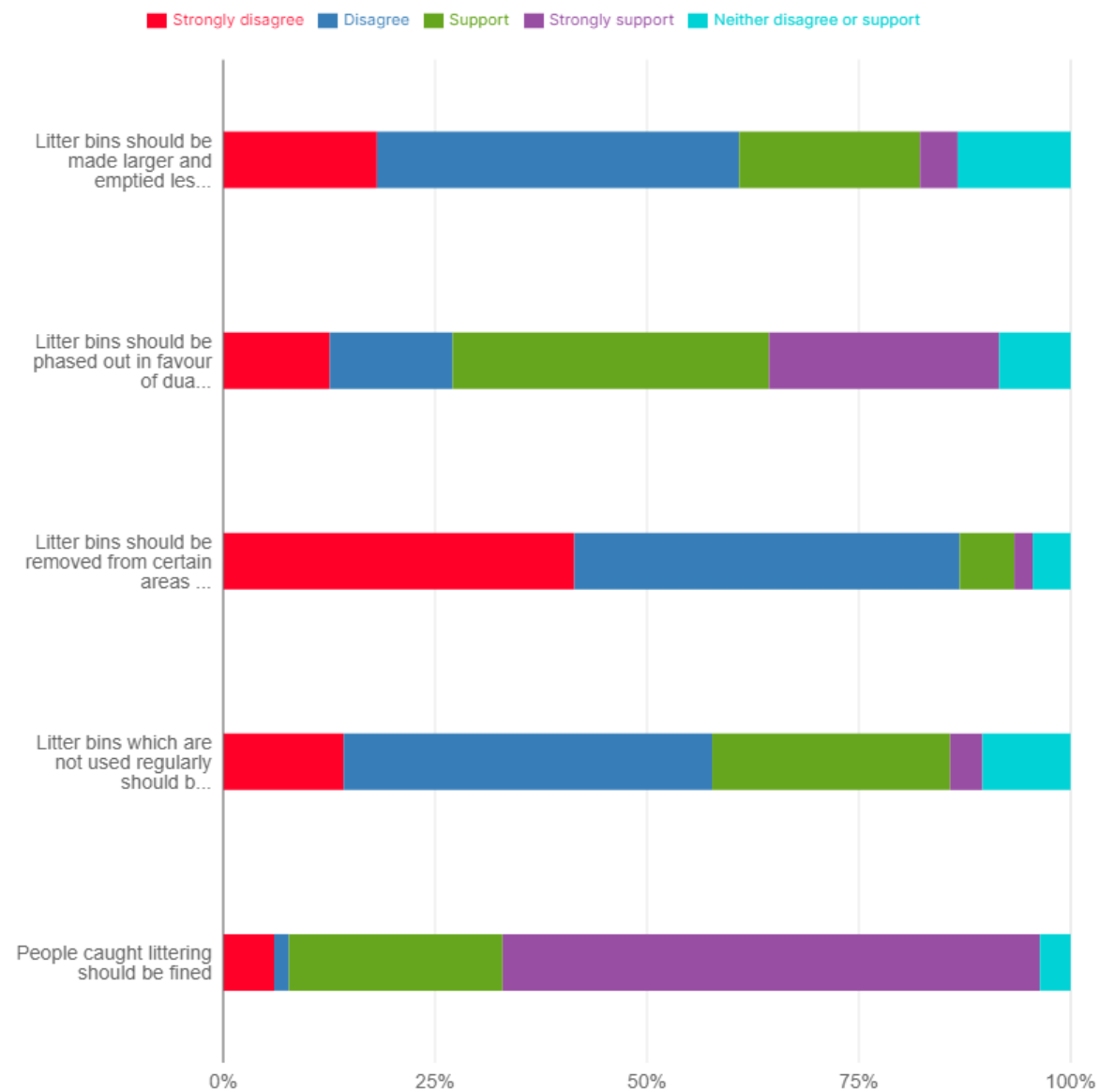




## Our carbon footprint

The council is looking for ways to reduce its carbon footprint and reduce costs but limit the impact on the provision of cleansing services. Please indicate which of the following you feel would help achieve this.

Answer Option	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Support %	Strongly support %	Neither disagree or support %
Litter bins should be made larger and emptied less frequently	18.14	42.75	21.33	4.44	13.35
Litter bins should be phased out in favour of dual litter and recycling bins	12.57	14.5	37.34	27.16	8.43
Litter bins should be removed from certain areas so people are encouraged to take litter home	41.43	45.48	6.45	2.17	4.46
Litter bins which are not used regularly should be removed	14.21	43.47	28.1	3.81	10.4
People caught littering should be fined	6	1.75	25.22	63.41	3.62



Please select the statement which most closely applies to you (Hanger preference)

Answer Option	%
I don't think hangers should be provided as I can check my collection dates online	36.58
I don't think hangers are needed as I can check my collection dates with neighbours	1.16
I don't think hangers are needed, I put my bin out and know it will be emptied eventually	1.61
I don't think hangers are needed if collections are only delayed by one day	5.91
I think we should keep the hangers as I use them for reference	32.28
I think we should keep hangers at Christmas where the change to bin days is not simple	22.46

This page is intentionally left blank

## WASTE & RECYCLING COLLECTION & STREET CLEANSING POLICY STATEMENTS

### POLICY DESCRIPTION

### PAGE

### Domestic Waste Collection Service Policy Statements

- 1a. Standard service for individual houses North Herts
- 1b. Standard service for individual houses East Herts
2. Variations from the standard service
3. Multi-occupancy properties (flats blocks etc.)
4. Mixed Domestic / Commercial properties (Mixed hereditament properties)
5. Number of sacks provided
6. Extra bin capacity
7. Items prohibited from domestic wheeled bins / sacks
8. Excess waste/ side waste
  - 8a North Herts
9. Bin lids
10. Rejected/ contaminated wheeled bins and sacks
11. Collection day and time
12. Collection point for wheeled bins/ sacks
13. Return of bins
14. Missed collections
15. Assisted collections
16. Frozen compostable waste bins
17. Overweight wheeled bins and sacks
18. Ownership of wheeled bins/sacks
19. Provision of new / replacement wheeled bins
20. Lost or stolen wheeled bins
21. Damaged wheeled bins
22. Sharing wheeled bins
23. Severe weather
24. Access issues
25. Healthcare and Clinical waste
26. Bulky waste collections

### Trade Waste Collection Service Policy Statements

28. Trade refuse and recycling collection material streams
29. Trade refuse and recycling collection bin sizes
30. Terms and Conditions

### Street Cleansing Policy Statements

31. Standard of Service
32. Response times
33. Leaf clearance

- [34. High speed roads](#)
- [35. Street Cleansing Town centres](#)
- [36. Litter Bins](#)
- [37. Winter snow clearance](#)
- [38. Events and street parties](#)
- [39. Graffiti and fly-poster removal](#)

## DOMESTIC WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE POLICY STATEMENTS

### Policy 1a - Standard service for individual houses North Herts

The standard service for the collection of residual domestic waste is a fortnightly service. Mixed dry recycling and paper will be collected fortnightly on the alternate week, in separate containers. Food waste is collected separately, weekly. Each property on the standard service will receive only one bin of each type.

Residents also have the option of paying for a fortnightly collection of garden waste. This collection will occur during the same week as the recycling is collected. Each household can pay a subscription charge for a maximum of two additional brown bins for garden waste.

The bins provided are as follows:

Container	Material	Frequency
180L purple bin (replacements purple lidded)	Residual waste (waste which cannot be recycled)	Fortnightly
240L grey bin	Mixed dry recycling*	Fortnightly
55 L blue box	Paper	Fortnightly
23L brown caddy	Food waste *	Weekly
240L brown bin (chargeable opt in service)	Garden waste*	Fortnightly
Residents use own carrier bag and place it at side of grey bin	Household batteries	Fortnightly
Residents use own carrier bag and place it at side of grey bin	Textiles	Fortnightly

\*As defined by our current acceptance criteria stated on our website

The correct bin must be used for the different types of waste. Exemptions to the standard service may be made subject to certain criteria (see [Policy 2](#)). Where a property is provided with the standard service, only waste presented in wheeled bins provided by the Council will be collected with the exceptions under [Policy 8](#) and for batteries and textiles.

### Policy 1b - Standard service for individual houses East Herts

The standard service for the collection of residual domestic waste is a fortnightly service. Mixed dry recycling and paper will be collected fortnightly on the alternate week, in separate containers. Each property on the standard service will receive only one bin of each type.

Residents also have the option of paying for a fortnightly collection of garden waste. This collection will occur during the same week as the recycling is collected. Each household can pay a subscription charge for a maximum of two additional brown bins for garden waste.

The bins provided are as follows:

Container	Material	Frequency
240L black bin (replacements 180L purple lidded)	Residual waste (waste which cannot be recycled)	Fortnightly
240L blue lidded bin	Mixed dry recycling*	Fortnightly
40L inner paper box /55 L blue box	Paper*	Fortnightly
240L brown bin (chargeable opt in service)	Garden waste*	Fortnightly

\*As defined by our current acceptance criteria stated on our website

The correct bin must be used for the different types of waste. Exemptions to the standard service may be made subject to certain criteria (see [Policy 2](#)). Where a property is provided with the standard service, only waste presented in wheeled bins provided by the Council will be collected with the exceptions under [Policy 8](#)

### Policy 2 – Variations from the standard service

To qualify for an exemption from the standard service you must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. There is no reasonable rear or side access to the property and the useable off street frontage is too small to accommodate the bins (see [Policy 5](#))
2. The property is accessed via steep inclines or steps, so making it impractical to use wheeled bins (see [Policy 5](#))
3. The property is a flat (see [Policy 3](#))
4. The household is a House in Multiple Occupation or has a large number of residents eg. Student house. (see [Policy 6](#))
5. The household/s are disabled or elderly and cannot manoeuvre wheeled bins. (see [Policy 15](#))
6. The household produces clinical waste (see [Policy 26](#))
7. The household produces large quantities of hygiene waste, e.g. nappies or incontinence pads (see [Policy 6 and 26](#))
8. Any other exceptional circumstance as agreed by the council

### Policy 3 - Multi-occupancy properties (Communal/ flat blocks etc.)

Properties such as flats or accommodation blocks will normally be collected using communal wheeled bins wherever possible. The number of bins provided will depend on the size and number of properties.

Where bins cannot be provided, for example flats above shops, sacks for residual waste will be provided for use and boxes will be provided for dry recycling. Residents will be provided with the quantities of sacks as detailed in [Policy 5](#).

Bins will be collected from the bin storage or other area as agreed by the Council and returned to the collection location. The standard collection cycle is fortnightly, however weekly collections for residual waste will be facilitated for existing flat blocks where bin storage space is insufficient.

Only waste which is presented in the correct containers with the correct items in will be collected. For multi-occupancy properties, where the bin is found to contain incorrect items, it will be rejected and not emptied.



It will be the responsibility of the residents / managing agents to arrange for the incorrect materials to be removed before the bin will be emptied on the next scheduled collection day. The Council may offer to empty the bins at its discretion alongside the scheduled residual waste collection. Repeated incidents may result in charging for the emptying of bins. Only items detailed as acceptable items on our website will be collected.

No loose rubbish or sacks around the bins will be collected nor any other items; and it will be the responsibility of the residents / managing agents to remove or clear any such items.

Where access to a bin is blocked with loose rubbish / sacks it will not be emptied until this has been removed. The bin will then be collected on the next scheduled collection day.

#### **Policy 4 – Mixed Domestic / Commercial Properties (Mixed hereditament properties)**

Mixed hereditament properties are generally business properties with living accommodation attached e.g. a flat above a shop. Such properties will be provided with the standard service ([Policy 1](#)) unless an exemption/variation applies. The bins provided must not be used to dispose of business waste.

#### **Policy 5 - Number of sacks provided**

If the property meets either Criteria 1 or 2 from [Policy 2](#) the property will be provided with sacks for the collection of residual waste and a box for the collection of mixed dry recycling, a box for the collection of paper and a 23l caddy for food waste (NHC only).

Sacks are delivered annually. Sacks are predominantly collected fortnightly and a maximum of 4 sacks will be collected unless an exemption within [Policy 6](#) applies.

In some circumstances flats will receive weekly residual waste collections. Properties must demonstrate they are using recycling services to be considered for weekly residual waste collections.

#### **Policy 6 – Extra bin capacity**

All households will be provided with bins in accordance with the standard service. Residents can apply for additional capacity for residual waste under the following circumstances.

1. There are six or more permanent residents in the household, and there is excessive residual domestic waste that cannot be recycled.
2. There are two or more children in nappies
3. A household where a large quantity of non-clinical healthcare (hygiene) waste is being produced

All households that request additional capacity will need to meet the set criteria. If the application is under Criterion 1 above, a waste audit may then be carried out to determine whether additional capacity is required. This is to ensure that households are recycling all that they can.

Capacity requirements are reviewed periodically and additional bins are provided on a conditional basis. Households will revert back to the standard service when the criteria no longer apply.

If additional capacity is authorised due to babies in nappies then there must be two or more children in nappies under the age of 36 months

Under Criterion 1: If a household is placing out a significant amount of extra recycling each collection, they may be considered for a larger recycling bin or second recycling bin.

### **Policy 7 - Items prohibited from domestic wheeled bins / sacks**

The following items are prohibited from all bins, this list is not exhaustive:-

- Any hazardous waste
- Any clinical waste
- Paint/ Pesticides or chemicals
- DIY waste
- Plasterboard
- Electrical and electronic equipment
- Commercial waste
- Large or bulky waste which does not normally fit into a bin.(see [Policy 27](#))
- Hot ashes
- Car parts
- Rubble / soil
- Corrosive materials and liquids
- Oil
- Fluorescent tubes / low energy light bulbs

An A-Z of recycling is provided on our website for information on what can be recycled at the kerbside.

### **Policy 8 – Excess waste / Side waste**

Excess residual waste beside or piled on top of the residual domestic wheeled bin will not be taken. Where possible excess waste will be placed inside the bin after it has been emptied, a sticker informing the resident may also be left. Persistent excess residual waste may result in an officer visit to advise on management of waste. Excess waste can be taken to the nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre alternatively the resident can pay for a bulky waste collection see [Policy 27](#).

Where bins have been forcibly compacted or frozen and the contents is stuck in the bin, residents are required to loosen the contents. The bin will then be collected on the next scheduled collection day.

Excess waste will not be collected with brown bins with the exception of real Christmas trees, which should be left next to the brown bin in January only. This is for residents who have signed up to the chargeable garden waste service only.

Additional dry recycling materials for the mixed dry recycling bin will be collected as long as these are contained in a paper bag, cardboard box or reusable plastic box. Non-recyclable containers will be left after collection. Large item such as cardboard from large electrical goods must be broken down to facilitate collection. Excess

recyclable material will not be collected if presented in a black or other type of plastic sack.

Excess paper can be placed next to the box in a paper bag or reusable plastic box.

#### **Policy 9 – Bin Lids**

Wheeled bins will only be collected if the bin lid is closed otherwise it will not be emptied. This is due to Health and Safety considerations and to limit the potential for waste to fall or blow out of the bin. See [Policy 8](#) for the management of additional waste.

#### **Policy 10 - Rejected / contaminated wheeled bins, boxes and sacks for standard house service**

Where wheeled bins are found to be contaminated, residents will be notified by means of a sticker or hanger placed on the relevant bin requiring them to remove the incorrect material and dispose of it in a responsible manner. Boxes and sacks will have a sticker placed on them if possible. Once the incorrect material has been removed from the bin or sack they will be collected on the next scheduled collection date for that material. We will not return to empty the bin, box or collect the sack before the next scheduled collection date.

#### **Policy 11 - Collection day & time**

The bins/sacks/boxes must be available at the collection point by 7am on the day of collection for all residents.

During periods of high temperatures in the summer months, collections will begin at 6am following notification via social media.

#### **Policy 12 - Collection point for wheeled bins / sacks**

Receptacles should be presented at the kerbside where this is not possible due to wheeled bins blocking footpaths they should be presented at the edge of the property, where the property meets the public highway. If properties are located down a private driveway/road then the bins must be presented where the private access road / driveway meets the public highway.

In a small number of cases e.g farms, due to the access or location of a property it may not be possible for residents to place bins near the public highway for collection. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis to agree a suitable collection point as close as possible to a vehicle access point on the highway.

Where the collection vehicle has to travel over a private / road drive we will not be liable for any damage due to wear and tear to the road surface from normal collection operations as the roadway is unlikely to have been built to highway standards.

#### **Policy 13 - Return of bins**

Bins will be returned to the collection point where possible or another safe place within a reasonable distance to the property and should be removed by the householder as soon as reasonably/practicable after the collection has been made. Bins should not be left obstructing driveways or the public footpath.

Where a bin store has been provided the bins will be returned to the bin store.

#### **Policy 14 - Missed collections**

We will only return for a reported missed collection in the following circumstances

- The bin, box or sack was placed out before 7.00am
- The correct collection point was used, and;
- It has not been reported as contaminated by collection crew;
- A crew report has not been received regarding the bin e.g. heavy, excessive waste
- In the case of assisted collections (see [Policy 15](#)) there were no access issues e.g. gate unlocked

A missed collection must be reported within 48 hours of your normal scheduled day of collection. Any missed collections reported after this time will not be collected until the next scheduled collection day unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Vehicle CCTV and in –cab crew reports will be used to determine whether a return will be made.

#### **Policy 15 - Assisted collections**

Assisted collections are available to anyone with a mobility problem where no-one in the household is able to take the bins to the normal collection point (see [Policy 12](#)). The collection team will collect the waste or recycling from its 'normal storage point', empty the container and return it back to the householder's storage point.

Where bins/boxes/sacks are placed out for collection at a location not designated as the 'normal storage point' receptacles will be returned to the location that they were found.

The bins/boxes/sacks must be easily accessible for the crews, and collection vehicle. Gates must be left unlocked where necessary and the crew should be easily able to manoeuvre the bins from the property. Please ensure there are no overhanging branches or shrubs as we may be collecting in the dark. Wherever possible the bins should be stored at the front of the property to enable easy collection and collection should avoid steps and gravel drives.

Where a property on an assisted collection is located a long way from the public highway on a private driveway / road the vehicle may need to access the property where it is not suitable for our crews to walk to collect the waste. In these circumstances we will not be responsible for damage cause to road surfaces through normal collection operations.

Checks may be carried out by the Council from time to time on resident's suitability for the collection and evidence requested from the householder. Any change in circumstance must be notified to the council as soon as possible.

#### **Policy 16 – Frozen waste bins**

During winter months organic waste can become frozen in the bin, if the waste does not empty when lifted by the vehicle mechanism the bin will be left with the contents still in it. A sticker or hanger will be left to indicate the reason for non-collection. The resident should ensure that the waste is loosened within the bin when presenting it for collection on their next scheduled collection day. We will not return to empty frozen bins before the next scheduled collection.

**Policy 17 - Overweight wheeled bins and sacks**

Where a crew member cannot safely manoeuvre and position a wheeled bin onto the vehicle, or where the vehicle cannot lift the bin due to its weight, then it will be left unemptied and reported by the collection crew. By law all the vehicle bin lifts have a safe working weight limit which crews cannot override. Bins containing the correct items (see website and [Policy 7](#)) will rarely be over weight.

Sacks should be liftable with one hand. When collecting sacks the employee will assess the weight of the bag. If this is too heavy to carry safely to the vehicle, the bag is likely to split or if the employee cannot safely lift it into the vehicle it will not be collected.

Where any bin or sack is found to be too heavy the householder will be required to remove sufficient material from the bin/sack and dispose of it in a responsible manner. Once sufficient weight has been removed, the bin or sack should be presented on the next scheduled collection date. We will not return to empty the bin or collect the sack before the next scheduled collection date.

**Policy 18 - Ownership of wheeled bins / sacks**

All wheeled bins and sacks provided remain the property of the Council and should be left at the property when moving out.

For households with a larger bin (see [Policy 6](#)) for residual domestic waste it is necessary to notify the waste department at the Council when the property is vacated.

Wheeled bins and sacks provided must only be used for the collection of waste and recycling.

The householder is responsible for keeping the bins / sacks safe whilst they are on their property and to protect them from misuse. The Council will not clean or wash bins.

**Policy 19 - Provision of new/replacement wheeled bins**

Bins will not usually be put on our delivery schedule until the property is occupied and registered with Council Tax.

At a property where the previous occupier has not left the bins, the Council must be contacted to arrange delivery of a set of bins.

The delivery of bins can take up to six weeks.

**Policy 20 – Lost and stolen wheeled bins**

If you suspect your bin has been lost please check the surrounding area before requesting a new bin. You must contact us to request a replacement bin. Waste not contained within the specified receptacles will not be collected.

**Policy 21 - Damaged wheeled bins**

If the bin has been damaged or 'eaten' by the collection vehicle the collection crew will report it on their in-cab reporting system and a new bin will automatically be delivered, and a notification will be left.

Replacement bins can be provided when they are damaged, damage should be reported to the Council and a replacement bin requested. Replacement mixed dry recycling bins are provided free of charge. Replacement garden waste bins and

residual waste bins are provided at a charge to cover the cost of delivery. Replacement bins or boxes can be ordered online.

A replacement may be a refurbished bin.

### **Policy 22 - Sharing wheeled bins**

If residents request to do so, then they may share bins with their neighbour if both are in agreement. One resident must claim overall responsibility for the bin as a bin can only be allocated to one address; this is usually the property where the bins are stored. It is the responsibility of the householder if a bin is contaminated, misused or needs replacing.

### **Policy 23 - Severe weather**

During severe weather we will

- Continue to undertake the regular scheduled collection of waste wherever it is deemed safe to do so. The decision on whether it is safe for a refuse collection vehicle to access a specific location/street has to be determined locally by the driver of that vehicle. Among key factors that apply are: road conditions, weather conditions, access past parked cars, risks to the safety of public and the crew, risks of damage to parked cars or property.
- We will try to return and collect missed bins as soon as possible after the scheduled collection date. If this is not possible due to continuing bad weather conditions we may make alternative arrangements. All service disruption details and any alternative arrangements will be communicated via our website and on social media.
- If disruption occurs we may decide to prioritise which services are caught up.

### **Policy 24 - Access Issues**

If access to a road is blocked by parked cars or road works collections will be attempted on two consecutive days following the scheduled day of collection.

Parked cars blocking access will have a letter, card or sticker attached to the windscreen.

Where access has, on a number of occasions, been attempted to collect waste but vehicles were unable to do so for reasons such as parked cars. We may notify the Police. Collections will resume on the next scheduled day.

If we are notified of road works in advance alternative arrangements may be arranged and communicated to residents.

### **Policy 25 – Healthcare and clinical waste**

#### **Offensive / hygiene waste**

The Council does not offer a separate collection for low grade non-clinical healthcare (offensive / hygiene) waste such as incontinence pads, nappies, feminine hygiene products etc, from a person with a non-infectious condition. This waste should ideally be double wrapped and placed in the non-recyclable (residual waste) wheeled bin. Where a large quantity is being produced then the household may be eligible for a larger residual waste wheeled bin under [Policy 6](#).

**Clinical waste - Infectious or hazardous waste including Sharps**

Sharps such as needles must never be placed in wheeled bins or sacks but disposed of in special sharps boxes and can be returned to the doctors surgery/ hospital or residents can have a special collection. Clinical waste collections of sharps are made in yellow sharps boxes on a call and collect basis.

Clinical waste collections for infectious waste in most cases are considered temporary and are periodically reviewed.

Patients producing infectious or hazardous waste must have a referral form from their healthcare provider.

Which of the services above are provided will be based on the information provided by the resident and their healthcare professional.

**Policy 26 – Bulky waste collections**

Where a household has bulky household waste e.g. a sofa or large Waste Electronic or Electrical Equipment e.g. a fridge for disposal these can be taken to the nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre.

It is advised that for bulky household waste in good condition charities or reuse organisations should be contacted initially.

Bulky household waste collections made by the Council are charged and will be collected only upon receipt of the relevant payment. These collections will be made at a different time to normal waste collections and the items should be placed outside for collection on the notified day.

Items should be stored in a clean and dry location prior to collection as the Council will reuse or recycle the items where possible.

We do not make collections from inside the property.

## TRADE WASTE POLICIES

### Policy 27 – Trade refuse and recycling collection material streams

The Council can provide chargeable collection upon request for residual trade waste. In some areas collections can also be made for mixed dry recycling, separate paper. Waste must be contained within the receptacles provided and payment must be made in advance.

Bins which are contaminated or contain prohibited items will not be collected.

Contaminated bins can be emptied as residual waste for an additional charge.

### Policy 28 – Trade refuse and recycling collection bin sizes

Collections can be arranged for the following bin sizes provided they are in stock.

- 140L
- 240L
- 360L
- 660L\*\*
- 1100L\*\*

\*\*Not suitable for paper only collections.

All bins and sacks remain the property of the Council and will be collected at the end of a contract or on non payment of outstanding invoices.

Terms and conditions and further service information is available on our website.



## STREET CLEANSING POLICIES

### Policy 29 – Standard of Service

The majority of street cleansing operations are undertaken in accordance with a cleansing schedule based on zoning outlined in the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse. Where standards of cleanliness have been identified to have fallen below Grade B between the scheduled cleanse or litter pick, they will be returned to Grade A in accordance with the response times outlined in [Policy 32](#).

### Policy 30 – Response times

All highway cleansing schedules have been devised on needs based cleansing frequencies according to their intensity of use and using guidelines in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse. Further details are available on our website.

Fly-tipping will be removed within 2 working days of the report. Where hazardous waste is identified in the fly tip a specialist contractor is required to remove waste and therefore removal may be up to 10 working days.

Heavily littered and 'hotspot' areas which are categorised as Grade C or D will be cleaned of litter on receipt of reports or as a result of inspections in accordance with the response times.

Overflowing litterbins will be responded to within 2 working days.

Reported needles will be collected the same working day.

### Policy 31 – Leaf clearance

In the NHDC area, separate leaf clearance work will be undertaken as required in high leaf fall streets across the district to maintain the safe use of highway footpaths. All other leaf clearance will be undertaken alongside the scheduled cleanse, typically a minimum of every six weeks.

In EHDC, leaf clearance work will only be undertaken when there is a potential problem for drainage in roads identified as liable to flooding.

### Policy 32 – High speed roads

High speed roads requiring traffic management and road closures to cleanse and litter pick safely will be mechanically swept at least once a year.

Laybys and safely accessible areas will be litter picked as required and in accordance with the zones specified in the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse. This is often done at the same time as litter bin emptying.

**Policy 33 – Street cleansing Town centres**

Town centres will receive a daily litter pick service. The areas of the town centres experiencing the highest intensity of traffic will be maintained to a Grade A standard between 8am and 6pm Monday to Saturday and 8am and 12noon on Sundays, with the exception of Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

**Policy 36 - Litter / on street recycling bins**

Litter bins are to be used for small items of rubbish derived from passers by only. Bagged dog faeces can be placed into street litter bins. Household and commercial waste should not be placed into on street bins. Waste should be placed inside the bin, not next to or on top of it.

If a stub plate is present, the extinguished cigarette should then be disposed in the bin.

Where recycling bins are present, only the correct materials as stated on the bins should be placed within them.

Where litter bins are not present litter should be taken home.

**Policy 37 – Winter snow clearance**

Winter snow clearance and gritting frozen or icy roads or footpaths is the responsibility of the land owner. For roads and footpaths which form part of the highway this is the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

Gritting will be undertaken when necessary on Council owned land such as car parks, and in some circumstances staff will assist HCC in gritting and clearing snow from the town centre footpaths.

**Policy 38 – Events and street parties**

Additional cleansing support can be provided where necessary for events and street parties. It is the responsibility of the event organisers to liaise with the cleansing team about these requirements and the cost of additional services will be recovered from the organisers.

**Policy 39 – Graffiti and fly-poster removal**

Response times for the removal of reported offensive graffiti and reported offensive fly-posting, on Council property, will be in accordance with the recommendations in the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse.

In addition officers will work with private property owners to encourage the removal of graffiti.

Further details are provided on our website

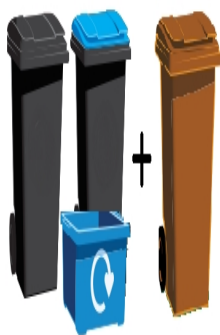
## **Waste Shared Service Aim**

Delivering high quality and well performing services which are both financially and environmentally sustainable.

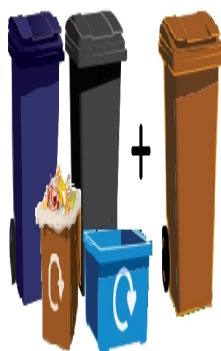
## **Waste Shared Service Principles**

- a. Maintain and/or improve service standards through efficient working.
- b. Achieve service improvements, greater resilience, efficiencies, cost reductions or better performance through service alignment
- c. Deliver service changes aligned with the government's Resources and Waste Strategy which demonstrate a net environmental benefit
- d. Work in partnership with contractors to develop and evolve a carbon management plan identifying how operations can deliver year on year carbon savings and move towards services with net zero carbon emissions.
- e. Improve efficiencies and enhance the offering for chargeable waste and recycling services and explore commercial opportunities
- f. Work in partnership with contractors to explore new opportunities to reduce costs and ensure the delivery of financially sustainable services
- g. Providing residents and customers with improved and enhanced online self-serve opportunities delivering any service changes with this in mind
- h. Work in partnership with contractors to improve and modernise working practices and make our services an attractive place to work
- i. Work with the Herts Waste Partnership and other partners to share knowledge, best practice, reduce waste and embed circular economy principles in service delivery.

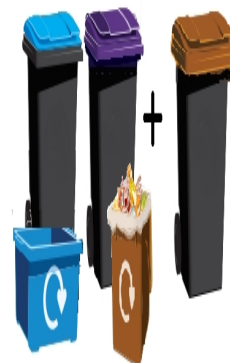
This page is intentionally left blank



East Herts current bins;  
 Black 240 litres refuse  
 Blue lidded 240 litres Co-mingled recycling  
 +  
 Paid for garden waste service 240 litres



North Herts current bins;  
 Purple 180 litre refuse  
 Black 240 litres Co-mingled recycling  
 Blue Paper box 55 litres  
 Food caddy 23 Litres  
 +  
 Paid for garden waste service 240 litres



Proposed Standard Configuration  
 Purple lidded 180 litres refuse  
 Blue lidded Co-mingled recycling 240  
 litres  
 Food caddy 23 litres  
 Blue Paper box 55 litres  
 +  
 Paid for garden waste service 240 litres



Separate Fibre Bin Option  
 Purple lidded 180 litre refuse  
 Black lidded co-mingled bin 240 litres  
 Blue lidded fibre bin 240 litres  
 Food caddy 23 litres  
 +  
 Paid for garden waste service 240 litres

This page is intentionally left blank

# SUMMARY OF COLLECTION SERVICES - 3 WEEKLY REFUSE

Councils with 3 weekly refuse collections	Refuse	Mixed recycling	Food	Garden waste	Paper/card	Glass	2019 recycling rate (SEPA) %	20/21 recycling rate (Let's Recycle &	Notes
Argyll and Bute Council	3 wk, 240L	2 wk, 240L	weekly, 23L caddy, towns only	not collected	included in recycle bin	4 wk towns only, 120L?	38.6		
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	3 wk. 240L? bin or sacks	weekly, 4 stacked boxes (Trolibocs) on trolley for separating paper,plastics, metal& glass	weekly, caddy 23L?	weekly, hessian sack	weekly, hessian sack (cardboard only)	weekly, included in Trollybocs		64.3	Garden waste stops in winter. Batteries and small WEEE collections
Bury Council	3 wk, 240L?	3 wk, bin	2 wk (mixed) bin		3 wk, bin	included in recycle bin		50.5	Collecting 3 weekly refuse since 2014
Ceredigion Council	3 wk, sacks (option to purchase a 240L or 1100L bin)	weekly, sack	weekly, caddy	sacks, bookable collection	in mixed recycling bin	3 wk, box		70.2	
Clackmannanshire Council	3 wk, 240L	2 wk, 240L	weekly, 23L	3 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	in mixed recycling bin	55.4		
Daventry District Council	3 wk,240L?	2 wk, 240L?	weekly, 23L	2 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	in mixed recycling bin		52.7	123+. WEEE collected in bag on residual day
East Ayrshire Council	3 wk, 240L	Weekly, trolley boxes (plastics & cans)	weekly, caddy 23L?	4 wk, 240L	weekly trolley box	weekly trolley box	53.2		
East Devon District Council	3 wk, 240L? bin or gull sack	Weekly Sack (plastic/metal) and box (paper/glass/bagged WEEE, textiles and batteries)	weekly, caddy	2 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	in mixed recycling bin		60	Ask East Devon Alexa service

Councils with 3 weekly refuse collections	Refuse	Mixed recycling	Food	Garden waste	Paper/card	Glass	2019 recycling rate (SEPA) %	20/21 recycling rate (Let's Recycle &	Notes
East Renfrewshire Council	3 wk, 240L?	3 wk, 240L?	weekly, mixed food/garden (max 1 bin), 240L		3 wk, 240L	in co-mingled	67.8		
Gwynedd County Council	3 wk, 240L	weekly trolley boxes	weekly, 22L caddy	2 wk, 240L?	weekly box	weekly box		65.5	
Isle of Anglesey County Council	3 wk, 240L	weekly, trolley boxes	weekly, 23L food	2 wk, 240L	weekly box (paper & Textiles)	weekly box (glass & cardboard)		65.7	
Mid Devon	3 wk, 180L (new bins)	2 wk boxes	weekly, 23L caddy	2 wk, 240L	2 wk (cards & cartons)	in mixed recycling bin		53.7	Bin-it 123, Oct 22
Moray Council	3 wk, 240L	2 wk, 140L bin	2 wk, 140L		2 wk, 140L bin	2 wk, Box 38L	59		
North Ayrshire Council	3 wk, 240L	3wk, 240L	2 wk (mixed), 240L		3 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	56.3		
North Lanarkshire Council	3 wk, 240L	3 wk, 240L	2 wk (mixed), 240L		3 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	40.3		
Oldham Council	3 wk, bin	3 wk, bin	weekly, bin		3 wk, bin	in mixed recycling bin		36.7	
Pembrokeshire County Council	3 wk, 3 sacks	Weekly, reusable sack for metals and plastics	weekly, 23L caddy	2 wk, 240L	weekly, reusable sack for card, box for paper	weekly, box		73.2	Aug 19, good video. Garden waste stops in winter
Powys County Council	3 wk, 180L	Weekly, 55L Box	weekly, caddy		weekly, 44L Box	weekly, 44L Box		66.1	
Renfrewshire Council	3wk, bin	2 wk, bin	weekly, bin	weekly, caddy	2 wk, bin	in mixed recycling bin	53		
Rochdale Borough Council	3 wk, 240L	3 wk, 240L	weekly, 204L		3 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin		48	Family 5+ can have larger bins



Councils with 3 weekly refuse collections	Refuse	Mixed recycling	Food	Garden waste	Paper/card	Glass	2019 recycling rate (SEPA) %	20/21 recycling rate (Let's Recycle &	Notes
Salford City Council	3 wk, 240L (Tues-Fri)	2 wk, 240L bin, box or sack	weekly, mixed garden/food 240L bin and 23L just for food (no garden)		2 wk, 240L bin (may be too big)	in mixed recycling bin		47.2	4 day collections. 4 years, includes farm houses/flats, buy extra capacity via trade contract. Saved £10M. 180-200 houses, 400,00 pop
South Ayrshire Council	3 wk, bin	4 wk, 2 bins allowed	weekly, caddy	4 wk, 2 bins allowed	4 wk, bin	6 wk, 2 bins allowed	57.7		App SAC mybins
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council	3 wk, 240L standard (140 for smaller properties)	3 wk, 240L standard metals,glass plastics (140L smaller properties)	2 wk, mixed garden/food 240L standard (140L or 23L caddy for smaller properties)		3 wk 240/140L or sackx1	in mixed recycling bin		53.2	Food video. T&Cs for bin charging. Published waste policy "at a glance" summary
Warwick District Council*	3 wk, 180L	2 wk, 240L	weekly, 23L caddy	2 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	in mixed recycling bin		49.5	"123 collection" also batteries WEEE and textiles, Aug 22
Stratford-on-Avon District Council*	3 wk, 240L (replacements will be 180L)	2 wk, 240L	weekly, 23L caddy	2 wk, 240L	in mixed recycling bin	in mixed recycling bin		59.4	"123 collection" also batteries WEEE and textiles, Aug 22

\*working in partnership

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Proposal if separate 'fibre' (paper and cardboard) is mandated**

### **Current Service Provision**

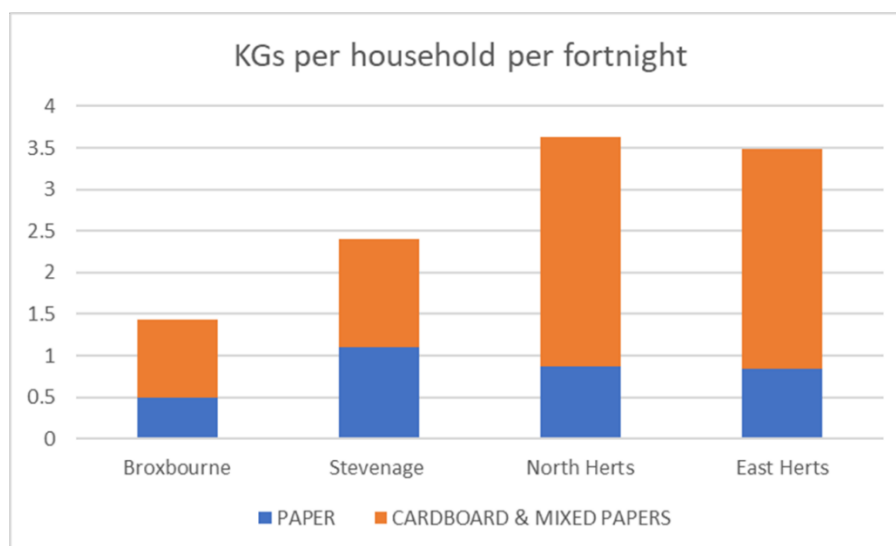
#### **East Herts**

- 240L Fortnightly Residual Waste
- 240L Fortnightly Mixed Dry Recycling
- 45-55L Fortnightly Paper
- Total capacity over 6 weeks = 1,575L - 1,605L
- Recycling Rate 21/22 = 46.03%

#### **North Herts**

- 180L Fortnightly Residual Waste
- 240L Fortnightly Mixed Dry Recycling
- 55L Fortnightly Paper
- 23L Food waste caddy
- Total capacity over 6 weeks = 1,563L
- Recycling Rate 21/22 = 57.58%

Capture rates of paper and card are shown based on two local box services and our current box and bin service.



Capture of cardboard/ mixed papers is likely to drop significantly if collected in a box only service. Proposal is therefore for a 240L bin provision for the majority of households.

### **Preferred Proposal if separate fibre is mandated**

- Introduce weekly food in EH
- Three weekly 180L residual waste
- Three weekly 'Fibre' bin – Paper and Cardboard
- Three weekly 'Containers' bin – plastic bottles pots, tubs, trays, film, aluminium and steel cans, glass
- Total capacity over 6 weeks = 1,458L
- Est. Recycling Rate = 58%-60%+

Capacity for households is reduced slightly from the current provision over a six-weekly cycle in line with waste minimisation principles. However, capacity provision is higher than the primary proposal recommend in the Cabinet/Executive report for three weekly residual waste with fortnightly mixed dry recycling and a fortnightly paper box.

- **Does it reduce waste?** Yes, from reduced residual bin size and reduced residual emptying cycle. Also food waste reduces when separate food waste collections are introduced.
- **Does it increase recycling?** Yes, greater capacity for recycling in bins. Also food waste captured in EHC.
- **Does it reduce fleet carbon footprint?** Carbon impacts are mitigated, reduced fleet movements for residual waste. However, introduction of new mandated services will increase fleet movements and therefore carbon impacts. Fleet movements are mitigated as far as is considered reasonably practicable.
- **Does it reduce collection costs?** Costs are mitigated reduced costs from residual waste collections but the introduction of new mandated services will increase costs. Costs are mitigated as far as is considered reasonable practicable.
- **Are East & North Service aligned?** Yes
- **Is there Capital spend?** Yes, from mandated change only.

Date
June/July/August 2022
Aug-22
August/September 2022
30/08/22
05/09/22
06/09/22
07/09/22
07/09/22
08/09/22
12/09/22
14/09/22
20/09/22
28/09/22
September/October 2022
12/10/22
14/10/22
25/10/22
Nov-22
05/12/22
Nov-22
09/01/23
w/c 09/01/2023 until early Feb 23
Jan-23
End-January - February
Early March
Mar-23
Mid- March 2023
Apr-23
End of May
Jun-23
Early June
End of August
Aug-23
Early September
Oct-23
25/11/23
Dec-23

December 2023/January 2024
Feb-24
Early March 2024
Mid-March 2024
Apr-24
April 2024 – April 2025
May-25

Activity
Tender procurement for Waste Consultants to support the procurement
Issue PIN notice (not essential but alerts the market to the opportunity)
Pre-market engagement to warm up the market and check timetable
EHC LT
NH LT
EH Exec T
NHC PLB
O&S papers deadline
EHC All Member Briefing
O&S papers published
NHC All Member Briefing
EHC O&S
NHC O&S
Development of Descriptive Document and SQ.
Exec Pre Meet
EHC Exec papers deadline
EHC Executive/ NHC Cabinet
Project Board
<b>Contract Notice and ITT Issued</b>
Project Board
SQ deadline
Evaluation of SQ's/Shortlisting
Project Board
Dialogue Stage 1
Reduction in bidders/revised solutions
Project Board
Dialogue Stage 2
Project/Partnership Board
Reduction in bidders/revised solutions
Project Board
Dialogue Stage 3 (may not be required)
Reduction in bidders/revised and final solutions
Project Board
Issue Final Tenders
Project/Partnership Board
Tender Deadline
Project Board

Tender Evaluation & and Post Tender Clarifications
Project Board/ Executive & Cabinet Approval
Intention to Award/Standstill Period
Contract Award
Project/Partnership Board
Contract Mobilisation
Contract Start



## Equality Analysis Template

1. Name of activity:	Waste Collection Service Changes – Three Weekly Residual Waste			
2. Main purpose of activity:	Waste collection from households			
3. List the information, data or evidence used in this assessment:	Public Consultation – 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2022 to 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2022			
<b>4. Assessment</b>				
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Neutral</b> (x)	<b>Negative</b> (x)	<b>Positive</b> (x)	<p>Describe the person you are assessing the impact on, including identifying: community member or employee, details of the characteristic if relevant, e.g. mobility problems/particular religion and why and how they might be <b>negatively or positively</b> affected.</p> <p><b>Negative: What are the risks?</b></p> <p><b>Positive: What are the benefits?</b></p>
<b>Community considerations</b> (i.e. applying across communities or associated with rural living or Human Rights)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>Positive</b></p> <p></p>
A person living with a disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>Three- weekly collection cycle may be unmanageable for households where a disabled resident produces large quantities of adult nappies.</p> <p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Support and policies in support of households producing large quantities of nappy waste. Collections will remain fortnightly.</p> <p>Assisted collections are available to anyone with a mobility problem where no-one in the household is able to take the bins to the normal collection point</p> <p>In particular, residents in receipt of additional capacity residual waste on medical grounds will continue to receive additional capacity suitable for their individual needs.</p>
A person of a particular race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>Positive</b></p> <p></p>
A person of a gay, lesbian or bisexual sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>Positive</b></p> <p></p>
A person of a particular sex, male or female,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p></p>


including issues around pregnancy and maternity				<b>Positive</b> Support and policies in support of households producing large quantities of nappy waste. Collections will remain fortnightly.
A person of a particular religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Negative</b>  <b>Positive</b> 
A person of a particular age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Negative</b>  <b>Positive</b> Support and policies in support of households producing large quantities of nappy waste. Collections will remain fortnightly. Assisted collection service for disabled residents or residents who's mental capacity has deteriorated meaning it is difficult to remember collection information.
Transgender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Negative</b>  <b>Positive</b> 

## 5 Results

	Yes	No	
Were positive impacts identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All groups will benefit from a reduction in our carbon impacts. Some residents will be supported by policies meaning they continue with fortnightly collections.
Are some people benefiting more than others? If so explain who and why.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some residents will be supported by policies meaning they continue with fortnightly collections. Residents of flats will receive at least fortnightly collections rather than three weekly.
Were negative impacts identified (what actions were taken)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive policies will be updated.

## 6. Consultation, decisions and actions

If High or very high range results were identified who was consulted and what recommendations were given?
Residents most at risk will remain on the existing collection service cycles and therefore will experience no impact.
Describe the decision on this activity
Options were discussed with Members at the joint cross-party working group. Public consultation shows 42% of respondents thought we should provide supportive policies for those with genuine needs.

Action	Responsible person	Completion due date
Update to policies surrounding waste collection	Chloe Hipwood	1/4/2025
When, how and by whom will these actions be monitored?		
Details will be provided and discussed at Project Board and if necessary a further report will be presented to Cabinet.		
<b>7. Signatures</b>		
Assessor		
Name: <b>Chloe Hipwood</b>	Signature** 	
Validated by		
Name: <b>Sarah Kingsley</b>	Signature**	
<b>Forward to the Corporate Policy Team</b>		<a href="mailto:cira@dsfire.gov.uk">cira@dsfire.gov.uk</a>
Signature** Alice Sims		
Assessment date: <b>07/09/22</b>	Review date: <b>07/09/23</b>	

**\*\* Please type your name to allow forms to be sent electronically.**

***A copy of this form should be forwarded to the corporate policy team and duplicate filed on the council's report system alongside any report proposing a decision on policy or service change.***

This page is intentionally left blank

## Environmental Implications assessment

<b>1. Name of activity:</b>	<i>Contract Change for Waste Services</i>				
<b>2. Main purpose of activity:</b>	<i>A new waste contract is required, with various changes needed to comply with national policy and to reduce impact on the environment.</i>				
<b>3. List the information, data or evidence used in this assessment:</b>	<i>Data from current waste contractor; WRAP Carbon Waste and Resources Metric; data from our carbon emissions assessment; data from public consultation</i>				
<b>Area of Potential Impact</b>	<b>Examples to Consider (non-exhaustive)</b>	<b>Neutral (X)</b>	<b>Negative (X)</b>	<b>Positive (X)</b>	<p><i>Describe the contribution/impact on the area that the decision may have - assess whether this impact is a negative or positive or neutral one.</i></p> <p><b>Negative: What are the risks?</b></p> <p><b>Positive: What are the benefits?</b></p>
<b>1. Impact on greenhouse emission and support adaption to the effects of climate change</b>	<p>Will energy needs be met through renewable sources?</p> <p>Will it reduce emissions through retrofitting new technology?</p> <p>Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing energy consumption and the need to travel?</p>			X	<b>Negative</b>
					<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Overall, the proposed changes to the waste contract are forecasted to deliver a net carbon saving for North Herts Council according to both the WRAP Carbon Waste and Resources Metric and the government's conversion factors. Reducing to three weekly refuse collection across both North and East Herts (based on current</p>

					housing densities and the current diesel fleet) is anticipated to reduce annual fuel consumption by 40,000 litres, and save around 122 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.
2. Use of natural resources including water and energy	Will it reduce water consumption?  Will it reduce energy consumption?			X	<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b> A move to less frequent general refuse collection is likely to encourage residents to recycle more over time and/or seek out more easily reusable/recyclable products in their consumption habits.
3. Minimisation of flood risks to the area (i.e. promotion of SUD's. protect surface and ground water quality)	Will it minimise flood risk from all sources of flooding?  Will it reduce property damage due to storm events/ heavy rainfall by improving flood resistance and flood resilience?	X			<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b>
4. To protect, enhance and create environments that encourage and support biodiversity	Will it protect, enhance and increase biodiversity and protect habitats?  Will it improve access to and promote educational value of sites of biodiversity interest?	X			<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b>
5. To improve Air Quality	Will it improve air quality?  Will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?			X	<b>Negative</b>


<i>(air quality describes how polluted the air we breathe is)</i>					<b>Positive</b>
					For North Herts, the reduction in frequency in general refuse collection (from every fortnight to three-weekly) will mean fewer waste vehicles on the roads.
<b>6. To reduce need to travel, the use of private motorised vehicular transport as well as encourage walking, cycling, and use of public transport</b>	Will it encourage increased walking, cycling and use of public transport?  Will it increase the proportion of journeys using modes other than a car?	X			<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b>

<b>7. To reduce waste production and increase recycling, recovery and reuse of waste</b>	Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources?  Will it reduce household waste?  Will it reduce construction waste?  Will it increase recovery recycling and re-use?			X	<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b>
					The proposal to move to three-weekly refuse collection should encourage residents to recycle more and to over time opt for products that are more easily reused or recycled. The employment of a Waste Awareness Officer will enable education and awareness raising amongst residents of

					<p>all ages about the importance of reusing and recycling.</p> <p>It is further proposed to begin taking plastic film in the recycling bin, enabling residents to recycle a greater amount of their waste.</p> <p>It is proposed to expand food and garden waste services to the business community, in particular offering services to rural SMEs.</p> <p>It is also proposed to make all future bin replacements black/grey body with interchangeable coloured lids. Black/grey bins often contain higher proportion of recycled plastic polymer, while the proposal overall supports aspirations for a circular economy.</p>
<i>8. To enhance the public realm and street improvements</i>	Will it reduce litter?	X			<b>Negative</b>
	Will it enhance the quality of public realm?				
					<b>Positive</b>
<i>9. To protect, enhance and seek opportunities to increase open space</i>	Will it improve open space?	X			<b>Negative</b>
	Will it improve landscape character?				



	Will it minimise development on Greenfield sites?				<b>Positive</b>
<i>10. To reduce noise and impact of noise</i>	Will it reduce noise pollution from vehicles?	X			<b>Negative</b>
					<b>Positive</b>

6.0 Results			
	Yes	No	
Were positive impacts identified?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive impacts related to carbon savings and to the encouragement of recycling amongst residents identified.
Were negative impacts identified (what actions were taken)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
7.0 Consultation, decisions and actions			
Describe the decision on this activity (refer to section 3.2)			
No major change			
List all actions identified to address/mitigate negative impact or promote positive impact			
Action	Responsible person		Completion due date
Recruitment of Waste Awareness officer	Waste Team		April 2024
When, how and by whom will these actions be monitored?			
The Shared Waste Service will monitor the impacts through fuel and carbon related KPIs and through changes to the recycling rates.			
8.0 Signatures			
Assessor (report author):			
Name: <b>Chloe Hipwood</b>	Signature** 		
Validated by (line manager):			
Name: <b>Sarah Kingsley</b>	Signature**		
Forward to the Corporate Policy inbox: <a href="mailto:corporatepolicy@north-herts.gov.uk">corporatepolicy@north-herts.gov.uk</a>			
Signature** G R CHAPMAN			
Assessment date: <b>09.09.2022</b>		Review date: <b>09.09.2023</b>	

**\*\* Please type your name to allow forms to be sent electronically.**

**A copy of this form should be forwarded to [corporatepolicy@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:corporatepolicy@north-herts.gov.uk) and a duplicate filed on the council's report system, alongside any report proposing a decision on policy or service change.**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 28 SEPTEMBER 2022

### \*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

#### **Call to account of delegated decision taken on 13 August 2021 in accordance with ‘Special Urgency’ provisions contained in the Council’s Constitution**

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND STRATEGIC HOUSING MANAGER

PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

#### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To provide an account of the decision taken on 13 August 2021 to allocate £200k of homelessness funding received from the (as was) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to grant fund the development of an accommodation and support scheme for homeless single people in North Hertfordshire. The scheme is provided by Keystage Housing at the former Lord Lister hotel in Hitchin.
- 1.2 The decision was considered in accordance with ‘Special Urgency’ provisions as set out in the Council’s Constitution.

#### **2. STEPS TO DATE**

- 2.1 This call to account was made at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 13 June 2022, following a proposal at Annual Council of 26 May 2022.
- 2.2 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed to defer the call to account until after the Planning Control Committee has decided Keystage Housing’s application for the former Lord Lister hotel, which is due to be considered on 20 September 2022 (at the time of writing).

#### **3. INFORMATION TO NOTE**

##### **3.1 Context**

- 3.1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic dramatically changed the prevailing landscape of homelessness legislation, with the government issuing its ‘Everyone In’ directive in March 2020. This required local authorities to provide emergency accommodation with immediate effect for all those sleeping rough in their areas, including those *at risk* of sleeping rough. ‘Everyone In’ continued to remain in operation throughout 2021/22 and whilst the initial stages of the rollout of the vaccination programme appeared to be successful, national and/or localised lockdowns posed a very real threat into the winter of 2021/22 (please see Appendix 1 for relevant government announcements).
- 3.1.2 The pandemic revealed a significant, previously hidden, cohort of local single people (and some couples) living chaotic lives in unstable accommodation and many with unmet complex support needs. Of the 150 single households that the Council placed in temporary accommodation over 2021/22 for instance, over 60% had two or more support needs. Poor mental health was by far the most common support need with over half of households reporting this (more detail on this is provided in the [information note](#) to Cabinet on 21 June 2022).

- 3.1.3 The additional demand due to Covid-19, on top of the Council's usual statutory duties towards homeless families and vulnerable households and those at risk of homelessness, has placed exceptional pressure on existing local accommodation and support services. This has resulted in significant hotel usage – by the end of May 2021, there were 67 households (the vast majority single people) in hotels with many struggling to cope without the necessary facilities and support, whilst the Council faced soaring hotel costs, in excess of £400k over the last two financial years.
- 3.1.4 Whilst the Council has these immediate duties towards homeless households, it has been our experience that many of our vulnerable clients have been unable to access, or have not met thresholds of need, for other statutory support services such as Herts County Council, Herts Partnership Foundation Trust, Probation, the NHS and other bodies. As a result of these unmet support needs, many clients have struggled to cope and have been evicted from multiple accommodation placements or refused access to services in a cycle that is repeated over the course of years.

#### Provision of support-based accommodation

- 3.1.5 There is a severe lack of accommodation options locally for single homeless people with complex needs; the Council does not possess its own housing stock and viable sites for new service provision rarely arise, a key factor limiting any additional provision. St Mungos, an organisation specialising in helping single homeless people, secured planning permission for the redevelopment of the Sanctuary site in Hitchin in 2013 for a new hostel, however this did not progress and shortly afterwards St Mungos withdrew from the district. There are also generally few providers in this specialist field and opportunities to bring in new providers with an accommodation site are extremely difficult to realise. For some years now, there has only been one main service provider locally (Haven First) which generally operates at full capacity, usually with a list of people waiting to access the accommodation. The provision of additional accommodation for this client group is therefore highlighted as a priority in the Council's Housing Strategy (2019-2024) and also as an action in its current Council Delivery Plan.
- 3.1.6 It should also be noted that Haven First and another specialist provider, Emerging Futures, have both made additional efforts to help the Council meet the extra demand from this client group over recent years. However they both found the local housing market to be very difficult and despite the availability of government funding, were unable to secure the necessary housing to deliver local accommodation-based support schemes.
- 3.1.7 A planning application submitted by Haven First for a 40-unit hostel at Protea Way in Letchworth - to help meet the needs of those with complex needs – secured planning permission in February 2021. However there remains some uncertainty around this project due to significant increases in construction costs and the recent announcement of the merger of Haven First with One YMCA that is due to complete on 1 April 2023. As a result, there is no certainty over if and when the new facility will be delivered.
- 3.1.8 Due to the low overall capacity of specialist accommodation-based support services in the district, there are limited options to help local people with their support needs and many are finding it extremely difficult to access the appropriate service at the right time. There is evidence of people with these complex needs, who have approached the Council for housing assistance, coming to serious long-term harm, including the deaths of three local people in the last year or so. Although there are occasional opportunities to utilise vacancies in accommodation schemes located in other districts/boroughs across the county, many local people are reluctant to leave North Herts for unfamiliar areas, with some preferring to remain sleeping rough instead.

- 3.1.9 The universal operating model for services for this client group is accommodation with on-site round-the-clock support with external specialist support brought in as required that is tailored to individuals' needs. This enables clients to develop independent living skills and recover from trauma in a stable, supportive environment whilst also being helped and encouraged to access specialist support for e.g. substance misuse and mental health issues. Although the majority of placements are successful and clients move on positively (eg into their own private rented unit), it must be acknowledged that owing to the often entrenched and complex support needs of this client group, despite the considerable efforts of specialist agencies, there will be occasions where the placement fails, and they are required to leave the accommodation.
- 3.1.10 During the course of the pandemic, the Council and its partners have sought to develop an integrated and sustainable pathway of accommodation and support services in order to meet the unprecedented demand from single homeless people. Should the Keystage service receive planning permission, it would provide a significant part of this pathway and it also, crucially, builds in stability, with the Council securing exclusive access to the service for local people for the next ten years. Keystage has also agreed the service can be modified to meet any changing needs identified by the Council throughout this period.

## **3.2 Decision**

### Timeline

- 3.2.1 Due to the lack of alternative options for meeting the accommodation and support needs of this client group, Council officers contacted Keystage Housing in February 2021 following a presentation Keystage made to Hertfordshire Heads of Housing in the previous September. There were no other provider options at the time with existing local services at full capacity and Key stage's base in Luton appeared to offer practical advantages. After the introductory meeting with Keystage Housing, Luton Borough Council were approached in their role as a commissioner of Keystage's service in order to discuss their view of performance and a detailed and lengthy meeting was held in May 2021. Luton offered a resoundingly positive endorsement of the service provided by Keystage Housing and the success they had in delivery of positive outcomes for people with complex needs (see Part 2 report Appendices).
- 3.2.2 Keystage were invited to meet the Director of Regulatory Services and Cllr Gary Grindal, the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health in June 2021 and subsequently produced a written proposal dated 25 June 2021 (See Part 2 report Appendices). It should be highlighted this was not a pure market situation – Keystage presented a complete proposal – accommodation (which is extremely difficult to source in the district) and support to help the Council to meet the complex needs of some of its residents by partnering with a specialist provider delivering an industry standard support model. No other alternative options existed at the time, it was a choice between accepting or declining the Keystage proposal.
- 3.2.3 On 29 July 2021, at the Council's internal confidential Covid Response and Recovery Project Board meeting, with Cllrs Dennis-Harburg, Clare Strong, Morgan Derbyshire, Sam Collins, Ian Albert and Paul Clark present, the Lord Lister / Keystage proposal was briefly outlined (see Part 2 report Appendices). Cllr Collins and Cllr Clark were ward members, with Cllr Clark also being the deputy leader at the time. As the discussions between both parties became more advanced, Cllr Grindal offered his support for the proposal on 11 August 2021.
- 3.2.4 Keystage were involved with lengthy and protracted negotiations with the former owners of the Lord Lister hotel and the Chief Executive of Keystage advised the

owners were considering renewing their business insurances to continue operating as a hotel, providing a final deadline of 31 August for the details to be agreed. This deadline meant the opportunity would no longer be available at the time of the next Cabinet meeting, which was scheduled for 21 September 2021. As a result, the proposal was made to employ 'Special Urgency' provisions contained in the Council's Constitution (please see Appendix 2, which is the email dated 12 August 2021 to Cllr Dennis-Harburg and Cllr David Levett as Leader of the Council and Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the procedure). The decision was also published in Members Information Service, although this did not explicitly reference the Lord Lister site (wording used was "a former hotel in Hitchin") because the sale had yet to be contractually agreed.

#### Grant funding awarded to Keystage Housing

3.2.5 The decision taken on 13 August 2021 (please see Appendix 3) agreed the allocation of £200k of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) funding for the development of the Keystage accommodation and support scheme based at the former Lord Lister hotel. In total, the Council received £340k of HPG funding from central government for 2021/22 and at the time of the decision, about £212k of the Grant remained unallocated (the remaining £12k was spent on homelessness prevention activity).

3.2.6 HPG is an annual grant to local housing authorities from central government (replacing the former Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction Grant and merging them into a single funding stream). It is ring-fenced for use in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.

3.2.7 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) maintains regular contact with the Council in its administering of grant monies and monitoring of grant use and service provision. The Council's s151 officer sought and received approval from DLUHC for the use of the HPG for the Keystage scheme (please see Appendix 4). A DLUHC representative also visited the Lord Lister scheme in December 2021 to meet Keystage Housing, Hertfordshire County Council and North Herts Council officers to discuss the service and view the accommodation.

3.2.8 At its meeting in March 2019, when approving the Housing Strategy (2019-2024), the Cabinet resolved that:

*"In the event the MHCLG [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government] provides homelessness funding beyond the financial year 2019/20, the Cabinet authorises the Service Director – Regulatory, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health, to decide on the specific allocation of the funds in order to meet homelessness priorities, for the duration of the Strategy."*

3.2.9 Keystage has also been allocated the following grants, which have been received from DLUHC following successful Council bids to these government funding opportunities:

- £92k of Accommodation for Ex-offenders Scheme funding for the provision of an accommodation scheme for ex-offenders. This is not based at the Lord Lister site and it supports clients into private rented sector units that are sourced via local landlords/estate agents. This delegated decision was taken on 6 August 2021 by the Director of Regulatory Services.
- £83k of Rough Sleeping Initiative 2021-22 funding for the provision of intensive support services at the Lord Lister scheme (from a total grant of £172k received, the remainder being allocated to Haven First for their similar service at the former Templars Hotel in

Baldock). This delegated decision was taken on 25 January 2022 by the Director of Regulatory Services.

#### 'Special Urgency' provisions

3.2.10 As detailed in the 13 August 2021 decision, the report contained a key decision that would normally be considered by the Cabinet. However, due to the time limited nature of this opportunity, paragraph 15.15 of the Council's Constitution (that detail the requirements for 'Special Urgency') have been employed so that this matter can be considered in a timely way.

3.2.11 The Constitution states the following in relation to the Special Urgency provisions:

##### *"15.15 Special Urgency*

*15.15.1 If by virtue of the date a decision which must be taken under Rule 15.14 (General Exception) cannot be followed, then the decision can only be taken if the decision taker (if an individual) or the Chair of the body making the decision, obtains the agreement of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the taking of the decision cannot be reasonably deferred. If there is no Chair, or if the Chair is unavailable to act, then the agreement of the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of the Council, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair or Head of Paid Service will suffice.*

*15.15.2 As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision taker has obtained agreement under 15.15.1, the decision taker must make available at the Council Offices a notice setting out the reasons that the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred and arrange for this notice to be published on the Council's website. The notice will be circulated to Members."*

3.2.12 The decision was deemed to be urgent, as detailed in the report dated 13 August 2021, as the opportunity was time limited. Without the urgent decision by the Council, Keystage would have not been able to progress their separate transaction to acquire the premises. Whilst the funding agreement was not entered into immediately, the decision itself enabled Keystage and the owners to progress with the rest of the transaction with some certainty concerning the funding arrangements.

3.2.13 The above procedure, outlined at 15.15.1 and 15.15.2 of the Constitution, was complied with by officers. The draft delegated decision report was sent to the Leader and to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 12 August 2021; please see [Notice of reasons for Urgency](#) that was published on the Council's website.

3.2.14 The grant funding received from the government has been provided in accordance with the Council's role as the 'local housing authority'. As a result, the decision was considered and taken by the Managing Director to avoid any potential conflict for the Director of Regulatory Services who also has responsibility for the Council's role of 'local planning authority'.

3.2.15 The Council's Monitoring Officer was involved at the time of the delegated decision being made in August 2021 and confirmed the 'Special Urgency' provisions were followed correctly.

Contractual documents (summarised & copies of contract, see Part 2 Appendices)

3.2.16 Given the time frame and period when these documents were required, external legal support was commissioned for the drafting of the inter-relating contractual documents, being:

- Grant Agreement;
- Lease;
- Nomination Agreement;
- Guarantee and Indemnity Agreement

3.2.17 The Grant Agreement between the Council and Keystage Properties Ltd (which is a Private Registered Provider of Social Housing regulated by the government) and O'Grady Investments Limited contains the following key provisions over the ten-year contract period:

- accommodation (en-suite bedrooms) and support for 21 (mainly) single people at any one time;
- comprehensive 24/7 support to residents, with the ultimate aim of resettlement into independent accommodation. Residents will be supported to address needs such as mental health issues and drug/alcohol misuse and space will be available for onsite multi-agency working to assist with this;
- Council to have exclusive access to all vacancies for local people;
- locally and remotely accessed CCTV in all external and internal communal areas;
- Keystage to seek formal planning approval for the intended use of the building at the earliest opportunity and any subsequent regulatory requirements adhered to without delay;
- Keystage to apply for future grants in order to deliver as many kitchenette rooms as possible.

3.2.18 As detailed in the 13 August 2021 decision, the Grant Agreement contains conditions to protect the Council's interests, including:

- Keystage shall make a pro-rata return of any granted funds should the use, including exclusive use, of the property for the purposes of providing housing not be available; to cover the period of time of which the property was not available in accordance with the terms of the funding agreement;
- Keystage shall commit to meeting at least annually to review and adapt, as necessary, the operation of the property for the purposes of meeting the housing needs of the district, as determined by the Council;
- Additionally, for the initial period of the funding agreement, as an additional safeguard, the Chief Executive of Keystage Housing will provide (and has provided) the Council with a 'Personal Guarantee' regarding payment of an appropriate amount of the grant funding in the event the business is unable to repay any clawback;
- Keystage would seek to register a Restriction against the title in favour of the Council to provide some additional best value security for the payment. We have received confirmation that the application to register the restriction has indeed been made in accordance with the contract.



### 3.3 Operational update

- 3.3.1 The Lord Lister building was acquired on 5 November 2021 and the first clients were accommodated by Keystage from 14 December 2021. The application for a change in planning use was lodged by Keystage on 20 January 2022; Keystage sincerely apologised for the delayed submission citing technical issues with the drawings for the building and staff shortages due to illness.
- 3.3.2 The scheme at the Lord Lister (called PAIRS, Provision for Assessment, Intervention and Resettlement Support) provides residents with en-suite accommodation *and support* to address individual clinical, psychological, and other needs. Ultimately, PAIRS aims to support residents to make positive moves into independent or settled accommodation.
- 3.3.3 PAIRS provides a package of targeted, individualised support for all its residents, including practical measures, such as ensuring that residents have bank accounts, are registered with GPs, and also that eligible benefits are in place. The team supports residents - recognising the complexities of their needs - to access appropriate interventions with external agencies and specialist assistance (at the current time, seven residents are receiving mental health support and four are in active recovery for substance misuse). Positive relationships have been developed working alongside Adult Social Care, Community Mental Health Services, Public Health, local Probation services and DLUHC and it is clear the service is already highly valued by partner agencies. PAIRS has also been working closely with Helping Herts Homeless, Feed Up Warm Up, MIND and other charities such as the Living Room and Resolve. The PAIRS team also provide onsite support with workshops on job and CV training, art therapy, cooking and nutrition amongst others.
- 3.3.4 All PAIRS residents are referred by the Council's housing team and are subsequently assessed to ensure that the scheme is appropriate for their needs. Due to local concerns around anti-social behaviour arising from the scheme, the Council asked Keystage to limit occupancy to ten rooms (out of a possible 21) until the outcome of the planning application is decided (at the same time, the Council had on average between 10-15 individuals in hotels at any one time over recent months, with many others waiting for hostel space and some remaining sleeping rough).
- 3.3.5 In the first six months of operation, to June 2022, there have been 19 placements at PAIRS, mostly single males but also two couples (a further two individuals were placed in Keystage schemes outside of the district). In total the Council has referred 34 individuals to the scheme but not all were suitable for the scheme or were unable to be accepted due to capacity restraints or past histories of abuse/violence with existing residents. Although the service is running significantly below capacity, with the low number of residents making it more difficult to operate the successful hub model that Keystage deliver elsewhere, during this period, seven individuals have been helped to resettle - four into social housing, one into the private rented sector and two into supported accommodation outside of the district. Many of the residents have complex, entrenched needs and will therefore remain at PAIRS for some time until they are ready to move-on to more independent living.
- 3.3.6 A small number of placements at the Lord Lister have broken down with residents being asked to leave or moved to other schemes. These mainly occurred earlier in the scheme's operation and have been well publicised. There has been much local reporting of anti-social behaviour and significant concern amongst local residents, especially immediate neighbours. As and when any incidents have required intervention, Keystage has managed these efficiently to attempt to limit the impact, especially for the local community, and they have provided subsequent updates to

relevant parties, sharing appropriate information including how a similar situation will be prevented from occurring in future.

- 3.3.7 The PAIRS team has developed a good working relationship with the Community Policing team and are likewise committed to building positive relationships with the local community and other stakeholders. A community engagement event was held on 25 February 2022, with local neighbours, partners, councillors, and businesses invited to visit the service and continuous engagement is ongoing with open offers to the local community to meet Keystage staff and discuss the service on offer. Keystage has also provided information on its website, highlighting their service ambitions as well as a specific impact report on the Lord Lister scheme.
- 3.3.8 The planning application for change of use of the site was scheduled to be considered by the Planning Control Committee on 23 June 2022. The decision was deferred and is scheduled to be considered further on 20 September 2022. As anti-social behaviour has been raised as part of the Planning Control Committee proceedings and their consideration, it is not covered further in this report.

#### **4. LESSONS IDENTIFIED AND NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 The Covid-19 pandemic created unprecedented demand for housing assistance from the district's residents and the decision made on 13 August 2021 needs to be considered within this unique context. However, since the decision was made, a number of potential lessons have been identified:
- The special urgency provision was employed on this occasion due to the limited timeframe for the acquisition of the Lord Lister. However due to the potential community interest in the scheme, the decision could alternatively have been listed for consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 21 September 2021, although this would have been after the deadline by which Keystage required a decision from the Council. The benefits of waiting for a scheduled Cabinet meeting would have to be weighed up against the risk of losing the overall opportunity (it is also worth noting that even if consideration had been delayed until Cabinet in September 2021, the detail of the report would inevitably have had to be in part 2 due to the ongoing contractual negotiations and therefore this would not have been a mechanism for notifying the public);
  - Although in this instance due to the demand on services the Council required the scheme to mobilise at the earliest opportunity, where there are planning considerations, there could be contractual requirements to ensure the planning process is engaged pro-actively, rather than retrospectively (ie prior to the first occupation of schemes) where there is likely to be significant community interest and/or concerns;
  - Although the Covid Response and Recovery Project Board (which included two ward councillors) was alerted to the potential Keystage proposal on 29 July 2021, concerted efforts should be made in future to involve all relevant Members (for example, other Hitchin Councillors) at the earliest stage;
  - Where there are potentially contentious accommodation projects, early pro-active communications with the local community should be initiated, with the Council facilitating these to ensure a holistic approach and these should provide enough detail to reassure the community on any likely concerns (it is worth noting however that these types of schemes typically generate a lot of community feedback, much of this being negative);
  - Professional references for potential service providers should be obtained in writing at the time of the request, with as many relevant references obtained as possible;

- The pandemic highlighted a significant need for accommodation-based support services for single people locally. Further work is being undertaken with Herts CC and other relevant partners to build additional capacity into a comprehensive pathway from homelessness to independent resettlement, including supporting individuals at an earlier stage before crisis point (this approach is of course subject to sufficient capacity and resources).
- 4.2 At the time of writing this report the decision of the Planning Control Committee, scheduled for 20 September 2022, is yet to be known. Officers will:
- Continue to attempt to increase engagement with specialist statutory agencies including the NHS and relevant departments in Herts CC, to improve the support that is provided for residents of the PAIRS scheme;
  - Work closely with Keystage Housing regarding maintaining the regular communication that has been taking place with local stakeholders, especially the local community and regular Councillor briefings.

## 5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1: Timeline of relevant government announcements
- 5.2 Appendix 2: Email chain regarding Special Urgency decision
- 5.3 Appendix 3: Record of decision made under Delegated Authority on 13 August 2021
- 5.4 Appendix 4: DLUHC confirmation email regarding proposed use of Homelessness Prevention Grant funding

## 6. CONTACT OFFICERS

### Report authors

- 6.1 Anthony Roche, Managing Director, [anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk), 01462 474588
- 6.2 Martin Lawrence, Strategic Housing Manager, [martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:martin.lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk), 01462 474250

### Consulted

- 6.3 Jeanette Thompson, Service Director: Legal & Community & Monitoring Officer, [jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.thompson@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 6.4 Isabelle Alajooz, Legal Commercial Team Manager, [isabelle.alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:isabelle.alajooz@north-herts.gov.uk)

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 DLUHC's Homelessness Prevention Grant allocations 2021/22: [Homelessness Prevention Grant: 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/94444/Homelessness_Prevention_Grant_2021_to_2022_-_GOV.UK.pdf)
- 7.2 Council Constitution: [Council constitution | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/council-constitution)
- 7.3 Keystage Housing Impact Report: [Impact Reports – Keystage Housing](#)

## APPENDIX 1

### Timeline of key Government announcements on Covid-19 and support for rough sleepers

**23 December 2019** – Prime Minister brings forward commitment to end rough sleeping, pledging to end it by the end of this Parliament, in 2024. [Prime Minister pledges new action to eliminate homelessness and rough sleeping - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**23 March 2020** – First national covid-19 lockdown in England.

**26 March 2020** - Everyone In directive issued [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): letter from Minister Hall to local authorities on plans to protect rough sleepers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) (£3.2 million of emergency funding for local authorities to help rough sleepers [announced](#) 17 March).

**2 May 2020** – Government [announces](#) a specialist taskforce, headed by Dame Louise (now Baroness) Casey, to lead the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during the pandemic.

**28 May 2020** – Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing asks local authorities to set out next-step plans for accommodation and supporting rough sleepers brought off the streets during the pandemic. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): letter to councils about accommodating rough sleepers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) Follows [announcement](#) of £161 million of funding brought forward to 2020/21 to enable longer-term, move-on accommodation to be delivered via the Next Steps Accommodation Programme within 12 months.

**24 June 2020** – £105 million of funding via Next Steps Accommodation Programme [announced](#) for shorter-term/interim accommodation and immediate support for rough sleepers.

**29 June 2020** – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) updates statutory homelessness code of guidance for local authorities, advising local authorities to account for the impact of Covid-19 on vulnerability when assessing those in priority need for accommodation.

**13 October 2020** – MHCLG [announces](#) package of support for cold weather provision for rough sleepers and those at risk of becoming homeless.

**5 November 2020** – second national lockdown comes into force in England.

**6 January 2021** – third national lockdown for England comes into force.

**8 January 2021** - additional £10 million funding for local authorities [announced](#) as part of the ongoing Everyone In initiative. Funding is intended to assist authorities to “redouble their efforts” to help accommodate all those sleeping rough, including those who had previously refused help.

**18 March 2021** - £212 million of funding via the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme [announced](#). The Programme's objective is to provide move-on homes and accompanying support services to achieve a sustainable reduction in rough sleeping.

**15 May 2021** – allocations of £203 million of funding from Rough Sleeping Initiative 4 [announced](#). To provide support to meet Government's target to end rough sleeping by end of Parliament.

**22 June 2021** – Government plans [announced](#) to build on the Everyone In programme through a renewed focus on cross-agency cooperation to tackle root causes of rough sleeping. Local authorities asked to refresh local plans to end rough sleeping and to agree operational targets for reducing rough sleeping in their areas (letter of 5 July from Penny Hobman Director, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Directorate MHCLG).

**July 2021** - MHCLG issues rebuttal to media reports that the Ministry had indicated to local authorities that the Everyone In scheme was ending. [Response to claims about the Everyone In scheme - DLUHC in the Media \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

**8 December 2021** – Move to Plan B in England [announced](#) following rapid spread of Omicron variant.

**13 December 2021** – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance on provision of night shelters updated with new requirement that communal settings should not be opened without written agreement from the local authority and the local Director of Public Health, based on a comprehensive risk assessment.

**20 December 2021** – Protect and Vaccinate funding announced, to support local authorities to find appropriate accommodation and use this as a way of boosting vaccination rates across rough sleeping/those at risk [Protect and Vaccinate letter \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#). Local authorities asked to:

*“...(subject to individual assessments) make offers of safe and appropriate accommodation to people who are rough sleeping now. This will include people who may have previously been offered accommodation but rejected it or left accommodation, and individuals new to rough sleeping who require help to move on from rough sleeping.”*

## APPENDIX 2

**From:** Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg <Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 12 August 2021 18:18

**To:** Anthony Roche <Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk>; Cllr David Levett <David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk>; Martin Lawrence <Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Re: 'Special Urgency' for decision

Evening

Yes, I agree Anthony can move this one, it's a worthwhile project.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

---

**From:** Anthony Roche <[Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 12, 2021 3:43:14 PM

**To:** Cllr David Levett <[David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk)>; Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>; Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg <[Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: 'Special Urgency' for decision

Hi

Thank you David. In relation to planning, potentially yes – which is another reason for me making the decision so Ian is conflict free on the planning side.

Many thanks

Anthony Roche

**Managing Director**

Direct Dial: 01462 474588

North Hertfordshire District Council

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

[Like us on Facebook](#)

[www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk)

**From:** Cllr David Levett <[David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 12 August 2021 15:33

**To:** Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>; Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg <[Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Anthony Roche <[Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: 'Special Urgency' for decision

Good afternoon all,

I've read through the information and happy to agree to "special urgency" in this case.

Just as a matter of interest will this need a change of use application from planning though?

Best wishes,

David

Cllr. David Levett

Chairman - Overview & Scrutiny

Councillor Letchworth South East Ward

North Hertfordshire District Council

[07787 513292](tel:07787513292)

[david.levett@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:david.levett@north-herts.gov.uk)

---

**From:** Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 12 August 2021 15:05

**To:** Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg <[Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Dennis-Harburg@north-herts.gov.uk)>; Cllr David Levett <[David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:David.Levett@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Anthony Roche <[Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Roche@north-herts.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** 'Special Urgency' for decision

Hello Both, I hope all is well.

Apologies for emailing you unexpectedly with this request for an urgent decision.

This decision would normally be taken by the Cabinet. However, due to its urgency (in accordance with the Council's constitution) this email is seeking your approval (as leader and chair of O&S) that Anthony is able to consider and decide this proposal.

This concerns part of the Council's MHCLG homelessness funding allocation that would expand the capacity of accommodation and support for single homeless people (I mentioned this briefly at the recovery board a couple of weeks ago and it concerns the Lord Lister hotel in Hitchin).

This proposal been a possibility for a little while, however as this is an unusual scenario there have been a series of practicalities to consider/work through (including mitigating the Council's risk) to understand if this was viable and worthy of presentation for formal consideration.

However, even though the proposal (outlined in the attached report) is able to now come forward, the current owners of the Lord Lister hotel appear to be considering renewing their insurances as required by the end of August to operate as a hotel for at least another year (apparently they are expecting a final response regarding the acquisition by 24 August, however they may extend this until 31 August).

As this is a key decision, it would normally be considered by the Cabinet, however due to these timings, waiting for the date of the 21 September meeting would result in the proposal being withdrawn, hence the current urgency.

You'll see the attached report is an advanced version and I've taken the liberty of adding some draft text in **red** that is obviously subject to your thoughts/feedback/decision and will be changed as you see fit should this be agreed.

I hope this all makes sense, however realise there's much information here. Please advise if you have any questions (I would be happy to brief you further as required etc).

Many thanks

Martin

## APPENDIX 3

### 5RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

#### **\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

#### **SERVICE DIRECTORATE: REGULATORY**

##### **1. DECISION TAKEN**

- 1.1 The allocation of £200k of homelessness funding received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to grant fund the development of an accommodation and support scheme for homeless single people in North Hertfordshire. This service will be provided by Keystage Housing (subject to agreement terms as detailed below).
- 1.2 As this opportunity is time limited, this decision has been considered in accordance with 'Special Urgency' provisions in accordance with the Council's constitution.

##### **2. DECISION TAKER**

- 2.1 Anthony Roche, Managing Director

##### **3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:**

- 3.1 13 August 2021

##### **4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 The Council has received a homelessness funding allocation of £340k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for 2021/22. The funding is ringfenced for use in managing homelessness pressures, including supporting those who are at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 4.2 The Council has experienced a high demand for housing related support services from single people, many of whom present with complex support needs and are at risk of rough sleeping. This decision concerns £200k of the MHCLG allocation to grant fund development of a local Keystage service with the purpose of operating accommodation-based support services for single homeless people (for a minimum period of 10 years).

##### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The Council could decide against supporting Keystage's proposal, however the immediate accommodation options for single homeless people with complex support needs are extremely limited. In addition to current need levels, the ongoing impact of the pandemic is yet to be fully known and demand for accommodation from single people usually increases in the winter too due to severe weather, so there is likelihood of further challenges - capacity wise – in the short term.

##### **6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)**

- 6.1 The Leader of the Council, Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg has been consulted and is supportive of the proposals in this report.



## 7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is a key Executive decision that the Leader of the Council considers to be urgent. It has not been possible to notify the public by including it in the Forward Plan; the necessary assurances were only recently received and the opportunity will only remain available until the end of August, which is before the next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet on 21 September. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been informed and agreed that the decision cannot be deferred.

## 8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 As a district council, North Hertfordshire District Council is the 'local housing authority'; this role includes responsibilities to assess and plan to meet the housing needs of residents including those who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Council no longer owns or manages any housing stock and as a result, it works with providers of accommodation (some with allied support services) in order to meet local needs.
- 8.2 The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2019-2024 (encompassed within the Housing Strategy 2019-2024) identifies as a priority the need to improve accommodation provision for single homeless people and especially those with complex support needs.
- 8.3 The pandemic has revealed this cohort to be larger than previously assessed, with significant numbers of single people coming forward for Council assistance following the government's "Everyone In" directive issued in March 2020. Previously, few in this cohort would have approached the Council for assistance as most would not fall within the 'priority need' category and would therefore not be owed an accommodation duty. Many in this group are however living unstable, often chaotic lives, and are moving in and out of different accommodation including enduring spells of 'sofa surfing' with friends or relatives or periods of sleeping rough. Now that this previously hidden need has been exposed, there is an opportunity to continue working with this cohort to improve accommodation outcomes for the long-term.
- 8.4 Table 1 below illustrates the rise in temporary accommodation (TA) placements over recent years, driven by a significant increase in single households requiring accommodation. Most of this extra demand has been met recently by making placements in local hotels as existing settle temporary accommodation and supported accommodation options via the Haven First pathway have reached full capacity.

**Table 1. Breakdown of households in temporary accommodation**

	31/3/ 19	31/3/ 20	31/3/ 21	29/7/ 21
Total households in TA at year end	85	93	136	101
<i>of which</i> , no. single	15	33	72	32
<i>of which</i> , no. in hotels	4	19	58	21

Over recent months, a combination of resettlement efforts and MHCLG refocusing from hotel use to 'move-on' options has resulted in less single households in temporary accommodation. However, in addition to those noted in the table above, there are consistently many approaches on a daily basis from single people in unsuitable and unstable housing situations meaning there is unmet need that is far in excess of those illustrated in the table on 29/7/21.

- 8.5 The existing provision for single homeless people in need of supported accommodation is limited. The only permanent homeless hostel in the district, run by Haven First in Hitchin, is for male clients only and consists of 17 beds in dormitory style accommodation. In addition, Keystage have also recently opened a small 5 bed scheme in Hitchin. Haven First plan a new purpose-built 40 bed replacement hostel in Letchworth, with an estimated completion date of late 2022 (conditional planning approval received earlier in February this year). In the meantime, Haven First have secured temporary use of 19 beds at the Templars Hotel in Baldock, however the current lease only runs to end of March 2022.
- 8.6 Support needs amongst this cohort are extremely high. In 2020/21, the Council placed over 200 single households into temporary accommodation (mostly hotels). 80% of these households had at least one identified support need whilst 55% presented with two or more support needs. By far the most common support need was owing to a history of mental ill health, with over half of households reporting this. A quarter of households reported having physical ill health or a disability and a fifth had an offending history. Almost one third of the cohort had a history of repeat homelessness or rough sleeping, reflecting the instability of their lives and entrenched support needs.
- 8.7 As a result of the challenges outlined herein, the Council engaged the market and initiated joint partnership meetings with Haven First and Keystage, the latter having significant experience of running similar schemes totalling 200 units in Luton and Northampton. These meetings recognised the value in the introduction of other accommodation-based support service providers to North Herts to increase the availability of opportunity for local people, enhance existing pathways with complementary services and to add a greater diversity in provision to better prevent repeated incidences of homelessness and achieve the long-term ambition to sustain suitable accommodation.
- 8.8 As a result, Keystage has developed a proposal for an accommodation-based support service in North Hertfordshire to complement both the existing and planned provisions by Haven First and will better enable the Council to meet local demand for single homeless services.
- 8.9 The proposed service will be based in a former hotel in Hitchin; the contribution of £200k of MHCLG funding will enable the acquisition to proceed and Keystage Properties Ltd, a registered provider of social housing (registration number 4725) will take on a head lease from its investment partner of a minimum term of 10 years (Keystage confirmed similar partnership arrangements are in place with Luton Borough Council and West Northamptonshire Council). They will in turn contract with Keystage Housing C.I.C. (Community Interest Company) to manage the property on a day-to-day basis and deliver support to residents for the full term of 10 years for which the Council will receive exclusive access to all vacancies for local people.
- 8.10 The service will provide en-suite accommodation and support for 21 (mainly) single homeless people at any one time in order to support them into longer-term accommodation (this includes a separate block of four units for women). The Keystage service will work with clients to address support needs such as mental health issues and drug/alcohol misuse, with space available for onsite multi-agency working. There will be 24 hour on-site support available from Keystage staff and locally and remotely accessed CCTV in all external and internal communal areas. Keystage have the significant advantage of running two similar schemes in neighbouring areas (which have had an 85% resettlement rate), and are thus able to take advantage of learning from these schemes as well as additional back-office support where necessary and staffing resilience across its wider workforce.

- 8.11 Keystage have also applied separately for additional MHCLG funding to enhance the service further through the inclusion of kitchenettes to make each accommodation unit completely self-contained beyond winter 2021. This funding would be conditional on the Keystage service being operational from 1 October 2021.
- 8.12 The Council also sought a reference from a local authority who currently commission Keystage's service; it offered resounding support for the quality of its provision and most notably its ability to deliver positive outcomes in some of the hardest to reach cases.
- 8.13 The proposed Keystage service would enhance and bolster the existing pathway for single homeless people with complex needs, and crucially secure a stability of service for the longer term. Together with further proposed additions to the service currently subject to separate decisions (a twelve-month procurement of 18 units of move-on accommodation and a Keystage scheme to assist ex-offenders into private rented properties), this will provide a robust and resilient approach to tackling the high demand levels and complex needs of this client group.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Local authorities' homelessness duties are contained within the Housing Act 1996 Part VII, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which placed significant new duties on English local housing authorities.
- 9.2 This report contains a key decision that would normally be considered by the Cabinet. However, due to the time limited nature of this opportunity, paragraphs 15.14 and 15.15 of the Council's constitution (that detail the requirements for 'Special Urgency') have been employed so this matter can be considered in a timely manner.
- 9.3 The MHCLG funding has been provided in accordance with the Council's role as the local housing authority. As a result, this decision has been considered and taken by the Managing Director to avoid any potential conflict for the Director of Regulatory Services who also has responsibility for the Council's planning function.
- 9.4 Keystage will adapt their service to meet the Council's needs and will ensure that formal planning approval for the intended use of the building is sought at the earliest opportunity and any subsequent regulatory requirements adhered to without delay.
- 9.5 The Council shall include the following conditions in the funding agreement with Keystage Properties Ltd (a registered provider of social housing) to protect its interests:
  - 9.5.1 The grantee shall contract Keystage Housing C.I.C to manage the property and deliver comprehensive 24/7 support to residents, with the ultimate aim of resettlement into independent accommodation
  - 9.5.2 The grantee shall provide exclusive access to the Council to all vacancies for a period not less than 10 years, including any additional units built on the site during this same period
  - 9.5.3 The grantee shall make a pro-rata return of any granted funds should the use, including exclusive use, of the property for the purposes of providing housing not be available; to cover the period of time of which the property was not available in accordance with the terms of the funding agreement

- 9.5.4 The grantee shall commit to meeting at least annually to review and adapt, as necessary, the operation of the property for the purposes of meeting the housing needs of North Hertfordshire, as determined by the Council.
- 9.5.5 The grantee shall apply for any requisite change in planning use class, as soon as is practicable; and, for the avoidance of doubt, shall be subject to the provisions at 9.5.3 where any such planning application temporarily or permanently makes the property unavailable for the purpose of its use as set out in the funding agreement
- 9.6 In addition, for the initial period of the funding agreement, the Chief Executive of Keystage Housing will also provide the Council with a 'Personal Guarantee' regarding payment of an appropriate amount of the grant funding in the event the business is unable to repay any clawback.
- 9.7 The Council will also seek to register a Restriction against the title of the property to provide some additional best value security for the payment, which it is understood will be used as part of the deposit to purchase the property.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Council has received a ring-fenced homelessness funding allocation of £340k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for 2021/22. Part of this funding has already been committed via delegated decision-making arrangements and around £212k remains unallocated.
- 10.2 The MHCLG have confirmed the investment of £200k proposed in this report is acceptable within the terms of the grant conditions.
- 10.3 Whilst the £200k investment for this accommodation is an upfront grant, it provides very good value for money over a 10-year period bearing in mind the addition of Keystage's comprehensive support service for local people, the anticipated reduction in repeat homelessness and high levels of successful resettlement, whilst also reducing the Council's reliance on hotel placements.
- 10.4 Due to the detailed contractual matters that are required as part of this decision, external legal support will be sourced. It is anticipated this cost can be covered within existing budgets.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Due to current demand levels, single homeless people may not receive the appropriate level of assistance due to the limited capacity of current services. Many of this cohort are vulnerable and often have complex needs which require specialist assistance. In addition, there is a risk that demand levels increase further, for example due to ongoing impact of the pandemic and arrival of winter.
- 11.2 The proposal sets out an offer of an immediate accommodation and support service, which is greatly needed, but also vital stability of provision over the longer-term. This is important as the majority of the current interventions run for an initial period of twelve months or less and the practical delivery of the new 40 bed hotel is not expected before the late stages of 2022, at the earliest.
- 11.3 There is a risk the Council's investment does not deliver the expected benefits for the whole duration of the agreement; although this cannot be eliminated completely, the measures outlined in paragraphs 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7 seek to manage this risk to an acceptable level.

## **12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.2 There are no equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

### **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

### **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

### **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 There are no human resource implications.

### **16. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 <https://www.keystagehousing.co.uk/>

### **17. APPENDICES**

17.1 None.

**NOTIFICATION DATE:** 13 August 2021

### **Signature of Executive Member Consulted**

**Date** .....The Leader of the Council, Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg confirmed her support via email on the 13 August 2021

### **Signature of Decision Taker**



**Managing Director**

**Please Note:** that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

**Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

## APPENDIX 4

**From:** Eleanor Nickless <Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 06 August 2021 14:08  
**To:** Ian Couper <Ian.Couper@north-herts.gov.uk>; Martin Lawrence <Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Francesca Gasparro <Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Keystage Housing - HPG Proposal

Hi Ian,

Thanks for getting in touch.

I understand your concerns, however this is acceptable within the terms of the grant conditions. In effect the payment is an upfront one to support the acquisition of the property and acts as an incentive to securing nomination rights over lets in the property. It would not work if spending was £20k per year so the outlay is within this financial year.

I hope this answers your query, however please come back to me if you need any further clarification.

Kind regards,  
Ellie



**Eleanor Nickless**  
Pronouns: she/her  
Homelessness Adviser | Homelessness Division  
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Directorate  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor | Fry Building | 2 Marsham Street | London | SW1P 4DF  
[eleanor.nickless@communities.gov.uk](mailto:eleanor.nickless@communities.gov.uk) | 07375 475570

**From:** Ian Couper <[Ian.Couper@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Couper@north-herts.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 05 August 2021 15:04  
**To:** Eleanor Nickless <[Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk)>; Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Francesca Gasparro <[Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Keystage Housing - HPG Proposal

Hi Ellie/ Francesca

Martin passed me your contact details. I am the s151 Officer at North Herts DC.

In relation to the plan that Martin has described below, the intention is that we would treat this a grant payment of £200k in the current year. However, I am concerned that our auditors may determine that the payment should be treated as a payment in advance (i.e. paying £200k now for 10 years of sole access to the vacancies in the property) which would mean that in accounting terms we would only be spending £20k per year. If that was the case I wouldn't want to fall foul of any grant conditions that required the money to be spent by a certain date. If that arose, would you be able to be flexible in how we reported spend against the funding?

Regards

Ian

Ian Couper  
**Service Director- Resources**  
Direct Dial: 01462 474243  
North Hertfordshire District Council  
District Council Offices, Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
SG6 3JF

[Follow us on Twitter](#)  
[Like us on Facebook](#)  
[www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk)

**From:** Eleanor Nickless <[Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 19 July 2021 11:19  
**To:** Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Francesca Gasparro <[Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Keystage Housing - HPG Proposal

Hi Martin,

As a quick response so that this can be progressed, in principle this would be acceptable within the conditions of HPG funding.

But happy to discuss further when we next meet.

Kind regards,  
Ellie

**From:** Martin Lawrence <[Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Lawrence@north-herts.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 18 July 2021 14:20  
**To:** Eleanor Nickless <[Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.Nickless@communities.gov.uk)>; Francesca Gasparro <[Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk](mailto:Francesca.Gasparro@communities.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Keystage Housing - HPG Proposal

Hi Both, I hope all is well.

Ellie – Francesca and I met on Friday re: RSI4 and she asked me to share this query with you both for your views (hopefully this email makes sense).

As you know, our hostel accommodation position for single homeless people is challenging. We are hoping a new 40 bed hostel will be built within the next 18 months. However the immediate provision is the short term lease of another hotel as the main hostel is dorm style. The RSI4 and AfEO allocations are gratefully received, however we are still looking for more stability - accommodation wise - that can also evolve as the requirements of the single homeless pathway/customer needs change and other provision (eg the 40 bed hostel) come on line.

We are therefore potentially looking to allocate part (£200k) of the MHCLG's Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding for 2021/22 for North Herts DC (of a total of £339k) to enable a registered provider (Keystage Properties) to acquire a local hotel (the Lord Lister in Hitchin) to help us accommodate single homeless people.

In summary:

- The Lord Lister is currently vacant; it has 21 en-suite rooms and the purchase price has been agreed at £1.25m
- NHDC would look to use £200k of HPG which will enable the purchase to go ahead
- Keystage Housing will operate their service (for vulnerable/disadvantaged homeless people) from the building
- NHDC would have a contractual relationship with Keystage Housing and would be purchasing sole access to any vacancies for a period of 10 years
- Keystage Housing are confident they can mobilise quickly and have sought Winter Transformation Funding to enhance the service/building eg add kitchenettes to each room
- Keystage's service will be flexible according to the needs of the pathway as other accommodation options fall away/are delivered

I appreciate this does not provide much detail and there are obvious political/planning/contractual etc matters to overcome, but in principle, do you have any objections/thoughts/ideas on this proposed use of MHCLG Homeless Prevention Grant funding?

Thank you,

Martin Lawrence  
**Strategic Housing Manager**  
Direct Dial: 01462 474250  
Mobile: 07799 071604  
North Hertfordshire District Council  
Council Offices, Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
SG6 3JF

[Privacy Statement](#)

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

[Like us on Facebook](#)

[www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk)



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank