

# Cabinet



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|--------------------------|---|
| Date of meeting:         | 08 December 2025  |
| Title of Report:         | <b>The Food Waste Collection Project</b>  |
| Lead Member:             | Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) |
| Lead Strategic Director: | Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth)                               |
| Author:                  | Rachel Hawadi   |
| Contact Email:           | Rachel.Hawadi@plymouth.gov.uk   |
| Your Reference:          |   |
| Key Decision:            | Yes   |
| Confidentiality:         | Part I - Official   |

## Purpose of Report

To request the approval of the Revenue Business Case for the implementation and phased roll out of a new city-wide weekly statutory Food Waste Collection Service commencing early in 2026 in order to meet the Government deadline of 01 April 2026.

## Recommendations and Reasons

To approve the Revenue Business Case and associated phased roll out of Plymouth City Council's Household Food Waste Collection service.

### Reasons:

- a) *Statutory Compliance: The Food Waste Collection Project is a legislatively driven initiative and aligns with national legislation and Defra requirements for separate domestic food waste collections in England by 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2026.*
- b) *To commence phase 1 of the food waste collection service in early March 2026.*
- c) *To support the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan and Net Zero targets by introducing a food waste collection service.*
- d) *To empower residents to reduce waste and improve recycling habits which will increase Plymouth's recycling rate.*
- e) *To divert food waste from residual waste streams, reducing disposal costs over time.*

## Alternative options considered and rejected

1. An opt-in service for food waste collection from households but rejected on the basis of industry advice that it would not be in keeping with the statutory requirement and would also likely reduce participation levels.
2. A do-nothing approach was rejected on the basis that it is a statutory service.

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

GRO9 - Minimising Plymouth's waste: a) Circular economy principles b) Carbon reduction and promoting green technologies.

## Corporate Plan

Making Plymouth a fairer, greener city, where everyone does their bit: The project contributes to the Council's Net Zero ambitions by reducing methane emissions and supporting renewable energy generation through anaerobic digestion.

Minimise the impact of the cost-of-living crisis: By helping residents reduce food waste, the project supports household budgeting and food security.

Green investment, jobs, skills and better education: The project contributes to the Council's Net Zero ambitions by reducing methane emissions and supporting renewable energy generation through anaerobic digestion.

### Implications for the Medium-Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

- The proposed project costs for 2025/26 to 2028/29 total £4,256,333 and will be met by a combination of the council's revenue resources and DEFRA 'New Burdens' grant funding.
- Provision has been made in the MFTP to meet an estimated gap between the cost of introducing a food waste service and the grant funding provided by DEFRA. Budget growth has been approved in 2025/26 for £250,000 stepping up to £500,000 on an ongoing basis from 2026/27.
- DEFRA grant funding has been estimated – the actual allocation for Plymouth has not been announced or received. For the purposes of finalising this Business Case the funding estimate has been assumed to meet the difference between the forecasted cost and existing budget. Once the actual Government funding is announced, budgets can be adjusted if appropriate through the council's budget monitoring and medium-term financial planning process.

### Financial Risks

The principle financial risk is that DEFRA's New Burdens grant funding is lower than estimated, increasing the cost of the service beyond the budgeted position. This is considered unlikely because previous Stage 1 and 2 funding allocations have generally been in line with associated costs.

### Legal Implications

The duty of local authorities to collect and dispose of household waste is set out in Section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Environment Act 2021 was enacted into UK Law in November 2021. This made several changes to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and mandated that all local authorities in England must provide a separate, weekly food waste recycling service to all households from 31 March 2026.

### Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Diverting food waste to an anaerobic digestion (AD) which produces, biomethane, heat, electricity and nutrient rich fertilizer is very positive in relation to the disposal of food waste, however the addition of new vehicles operating each week across the city will add additional vehicle related emissions.

### Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

Plymouth City Council will be expected to follow a combination of national health and safety standards compliant with the Health & Safety Executive, COSHH, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER). There is an intrinsic Duty of care to employees and the public, industry best practice, and existing PCC policies, Safe Working Operating Procedures when implementing the food waste collection service.

### Appendices

| Ref | Title of Appendix                                     | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)<br><i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i> |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|     |   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| A   | Briefing Report- Food Waste Collection Project        |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| B   | Revenue Business Case - Food Waste Collection Project |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |

|   |                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| C | Equalities Impact Assessment |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| E | Climate Impact Assessment    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Background papers:

*\*Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

| Title of any background paper(s) | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                                  | If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box. |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                                  | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
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**Sign off:**

|  |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |
|--|--------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----|----|-----|--------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Finance  | OW<br>.25.2<br>6.09<br>0 | Legal | LS/00001<br>312/1/A<br>C/30/10/<br>25 | Mon<br>Of | N/A | HR | N/A | Assets | N/A | Strat<br>Proc | N/A |
| Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Andy Sharp (Interim Service Director-Street Services)         |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |
| Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes                                      |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |
| Date agreed: 30/10/2025  |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |
| Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |
| Date approved: 30/10/2025  |                          |       |                                       |           |     |    |     |        |     |               |     |