

**Supplement to the agenda for**

# **Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 2 March 2026**

**10.00 am**

**Conference Room 2 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane  
Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

**7. WASTE RECOVERY CONTRACTING**

**Pages**

**3 - 14**





# Title of report: Waste Recovery Contracting

**Meeting: Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Monday 2 March 2026**

**Report by: Waste Services Manager**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

All

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the scrutiny committee on the establishment of the new waste recovery contract and an update on the roll-out of the garden waste collection scheme.

## **Recommendation(s)**

That:

- a) **Members of scrutiny note the report and prepare any questions for the meeting.**

## **Alternative options**

1. This report is for information only and does not present any alternative options.

## **Key considerations**

2. Herefordshire Council as a unitary authority has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to collect household waste and commercial waste if asked to do so, a duty to arrange for the disposal of waste collected by the authority and to provide places where residents can dispose of their household waste.
3. The current waste disposal contract is a joint contract between Worcestershire County Council, Herefordshire Council and Mercia Waste Management, with Severn Waste Services providing the public face of the contract across both authorities.

4. The contract is for the full provision of municipal waste management services including residual waste to landfill, green waste composting, the bulking and transfer of kerbside collected waste and recycling streams, management of household recycling centres (HRCs) and the treatment and disposal of municipal waste, which included the construction and operation of a Waste to Energy (WtE) facility and a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).
5. A new waste collection contract started in November 2024 following a robust procurement process with an initial term of 8 years (2032) and options to extend up to 12 years (2044).
6. The waste disposal contract was extended in December 2022<sup>1</sup> for a five year period offering savings to the council on the contract costs and included variations to allow Herefordshire to send separately collected garden waste for composting, send collected food waste to anaerobic digestion, separately collect paper and card for direct delivery to reprocessors instead of going through EnviroSort and divert 99% of residual waste into the EfW, avoiding the use of landfill as far as possible. This contract is due to end on 11th January 2029.
7. The Environment Act 2021 introduces the obligation on all waste collection authorities to recycle household garden waste by 31 March 2026. A charge for the collection of this waste is permitted.

### **Garden Waste Service Update**

8. In May 2025, Cabinet approved the commencement of the new chargeable garden waste collection service. The following provides an update to scrutiny on the roll-out of the new garden waste collection service which is due to commence collections on 30th March 2026.
9. A programme of readiness activity enabled subscriptions to open in October 2025, and to date there have been 3209 subscriptions<sup>2</sup>. Figure 1 below details the geographical spread of subscriptions to date. It is anticipated that an increased proportion of subscriptions will be received across the next four to eight weeks prior to and into the early stages of the service launch.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Decision - Waste Management Review – Waste Disposal - Herefordshire Council](#)  
[Decision - Waste Disposal Extension, Variation and updated Joint Working Agreement - Herefordshire Council](#)

<sup>2</sup> *Figures correct as of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.*



10. In order to maximise subscriptions in the early stage of the service launch, Herefordshire Council promoted the service across social media platforms, newspaper articles, front and back page space in the winter edition of Herefordshire Now and promotional stands by waste management staff across strategic garden centres.
11. Each online purchase of the existing garden waste sacks promoted the new service and informed residents that the collection of these would cease from March 27th 2026.
12. The principal advertising streams for continuing and upcoming promotions include targeted online and social media campaigns, local print media advertising, including local press, Herefordshire Now and Herefordshire Living magazines, more promotional stands at garden centres, and promotional screens in high footfall areas such as at the Courtyard.
13. In terms of infrastructure, FCC have arranged for an appropriate number of hire vehicles in readiness for the service launch with permanent vehicle deliveries to be completed by September 2026. Herefordshire Council and FCC Environment are currently calculating the optimal approach for collection vehicle quantity, considering the number and geographic spread of subscriptions across the County. The procurement of the containers is ongoing in line with subscriptions and to date containers have been delivered to circa 2400<sup>3</sup> properties.
14. The use of web forms as the primary option for online signup has proved an efficient method, allowing direct integration into our contractors system for service sign up and bin delivery requests. A telephony option is available which has allowed for an inclusive sign-up and is seen as important to allow the availability of multiple channels, especially due to the need to provide direct debit information which some people can be unsure of completing online.
15. The business case previously set out a ratchet model towards cost neutrality within six years of scheme implementation (subject to 16,000 subscriptions and service operating costs). In line with this, monitoring will continue throughout the scheme, and planning is now underway for an appropriate and targeted communications plan into the second year of the scheme.

### **Establishment of new waste recovery contract**

16. In October 2024 consultants, WSP, were engaged to consider future services provision and how the approach to the market may be packaged. A report was produced for the purpose of exploring and analysing alternative options of how the Councils' services could be grouped, for example separating household recycling centres to tender as an individual lot.
17. Through the latter part of 2024 and into 2025 Worcestershire CC experienced absences of senior members of staff responsible for Waste Management and in 2025 Herefordshire Council also experienced changes and absences in key members of staff.
18. In early 2025 Worcestershire CC received its formal, statutory invitation from the Government to submit proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). This has created uncertainty over future working arrangements across the authorities and decisions over responsibility for waste services could be unclear until after elections of the new 'shadow' authority/authorities in May 2027.

### **Uncertainties in waste flows and composition**

19. The full implementation of the packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) only came into effect in 2025. It is expected this will effect material composition of collected waste by

---

<sup>3</sup> Figures correct as of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

making producers responsible for the full cost of managing packaging waste, driving a shift towards more sustainable, recyclable, and reusable materials.

20. The introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) is expected on 1st October 2027 and is expected to effect the composition of the recycling stream. The scheme will introduce a refundable deposit on single-use drinks containers (150ml to 3 litres) made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic, steel, or aluminium. Empty containers are expected to be returned to designated retailer locations, likely using reverse vending machines.
21. The implementation of Simpler Recycling which mandates the separate collection of specific materials including plastic, paper/card, glass, metal, and food waste for recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion aims to boost recycling rates. The effect of this on both the residual waste and recycling waste stream will be affected by the introduction of new or different collection services and customer behaviour and participation in collection services.
22. WSP have been commissioned to develop a waste flow model which will identify the baseline model of existing waste movements across the current collections and disposal contracts and model future projections based on estimated effects of schemes outlined above in 19, 20 and 21.

### **Future options**

23. WSP were also asked to provide a timeline for development of an Outline Business Case ('OBC') which considers the challenges and opportunities for each potential procurement option and aligning with the methodology set out in the HM Treasury Green Book to identify a Preferred Procurement Option for the future arrangements for the management, transfer and haulage of recyclables and residual waste. This was completed in November 2025 and identified that it would be essential that the business case is developed and approved by April 2026 in order to allow enough time for a robust procurement process.
24. Advice has been sought from Eversheds and our own internal legal and commissioning services managers to establish the possibility of a short extension to the current waste disposal contract beyond January 2029. The purpose of this would be to allow the effects of the schemes outlined in 19, 20 and 21 to be realised and for the working arrangements across Worcestershire (and potentially Gloucestershire [SDS]) to be established, allowing decision making for future working arrangements to be more certain.

### **Community impact**

25. Effective scrutiny enables the committee to reflect community concern, one of the four purposes of scrutiny as outlined by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

### **Environmental impact**

26. This report contains no direct environmental impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline their potential environmental impact.

### **Equality duty**

27. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. This report contains no direct equality impacts. However the reports and issues that

the committee will consider may have direct impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline the any associated equality impacts for committee consideration.

### **Resource implications**

28. This report constitutes part of the typical function of this committee. There is therefore no resource implication in considering this report.

### **Legal implications**

29. The remit of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 3 section 4 of the constitution and the role of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 2 article 6 of the constitution.
30. The Local Government Act 2000 requires the council to deliver the scrutiny function.

### **Risk management**

31. There are no risks identified in considering the information contained in this report.

### **Consultees**

32. None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Response to recommendations made by Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on 24 March 2025.

### **Background papers**

None identified

**Summary of recommendations to the executive and executive responses**  
**Scrutiny Committee: Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**  
**Date: 24 March 2025**

<b>Recommendation 1</b>	Commission a piece of work, exploring further options for improving current reuse and recycling rates across the county, in advance of any expansion of the waste collection streams to food and garden.				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<b>Partly agreed</b>				
<b>Action</b> – Limited resources available to allow commissioning of additional work streams due to the preparation works for existing expansion of services which were outlined within the Scrutiny meeting in March 2025 but a list of completed and planned actions are below.	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>	
Introduce Commercial food waste collection service	Paul West	1 April 2025	Collecting food waste from commercial customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced a service on 5/5/25 sharing resources with Wychavon for initial 2 day per week which expanded to 3 days on 20/6/25 due to positive take up by businesses.</li> <li>Providing service to 196 customers.</li> <li>Diverted 165 tonnes to anaerobic digestion Apr 25- Jan 26.</li> </ul>	
Increase commercial recycling offer to include 1100 litre wheeled bins and expand customer base	Paul West	1 April 2025	Bins purchased and advertised on web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced service on 19/5/25.</li> <li>101 new customers using 1100 litre recycling bins with 138 x 1100 bins between them.</li> </ul>	
Expand recycling collection service from householders to include batteries and small waste electrical and electronic equipment	Gary Williams	April 2025	Collecting new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced a service on 07/04/25</li> <li>Diverted 4 skips of WEEE and 4x 1m<sup>3</sup> containers of batteries diverted for recycling since service launch.</li> </ul>	

Additional items added to recycling collection service from home to include disposable vapes	Gary Williams	June 2025	Collecting new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced a service on 03/06/2025</li> <li>• 4 x 60 litre containers of vapes diverted for recycling.</li> </ul>
Implement glass collections from all properties unable to recycle glass from home	Gary Williams	October 2025	Boxes delivered and being used by residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed 5301 sack collection properties to determine if they were suitable for a recycling bin</li> <li>• Sent 4462 postcards to residents informing them of the new glass box recycling service, and in some cases offering the option to move to a recycling bin from recycling sacks.</li> <li>• 270 requests for change of service from recycling sacks to bins. Reduction in 28,080 recycling sacks each year.</li> <li>• Reviewing all flat blocks currently on a recycling sack service, moving 184 individual properties to a recycling bin service, alleviating the need to provide them with plastic recycling sacks each nor the glass recycling box.</li> <li>• Delivered glass boxes to 3522 householders through Sept 2025</li> <li>• Feedback from crews on use of boxes is positive.</li> </ul>
Launch garden waste collection service	Craig Cornish	September 2025	<p>Subscriptions open online</p> <p>Collections taking place – March 31 2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet decision to introduce service approved in May 2025.</li> <li>• Launched subscription sign up on 22 October 2025</li> <li>• 3108 subscriptions at 10/2/26</li> <li>• Planned promotions for 2026 include:</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Online social media &amp; google advertising campaigns.</li> <li>○ Additional advertising in local press through February and March 2026.</li> <li>○ Promotional stands at local garden centres during the spring.</li> <li>○ Advertising in Herefordshire Now.</li> <li>○ Promotional screens at The Courtyard.</li> </ul>
Launch food waste collection service	Nicola Percival	March 31 2026	Collections taking place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cabinet decision to introduce service approved in May 2025, subject to sufficient new burdens revenue funding from Government.</li> <li>● Delayed announcement of revenue funding which eventually was included within settlement in Dec 2025 but not identified separately. This did not provide sufficient funding for service.</li> <li>● Following full council budget agreement, the food service decision now requires new Governance.</li> </ul>
Increase awareness of recycling services to householders	Craig Cornish	January 2026	Increase in recycling tonnages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Herefordshire Now Winter edition included garden waste service promotion on front and back cover pages.</li> <li>● Middle pages included reminder of acceptable recycling from home and introduction to battery, WEEE and vape recycling.</li> <li>● <a href="#">Herefordshire Now December 2025</a></li> </ul>

Recover 240 litre additional capacity bins from householders no longer eligible for them	Gary Williams	Dec 2025	Reduction in 240 litre bins in use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed 258 properties since 1 April 2025</li> <li>Swapped 170 bins back to the standard sized 180 litre for households no longer eligible for the larger bin.</li> </ul>
Implement Duty of Care project to contact commercial waste customers with lapsed Waste Transfer Notes (Duty of Care forms)	Paul West	Mar 2026	Increase in compliance of commercial waste businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx 475 lapsed customers contacted by letter &amp; email between 28/1/26-4/2/26</li> <li>122 customers compliant within first 2 weeks</li> <li>Over £8.5k received through purchase of HC commercial waste and recycling sacks within 2 weeks</li> <li>Follow ups &amp; enforcement ongoing</li> </ul>
Encourage reuse	Nicola Percival	March 31 2026	Items reused	<p>Collections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 tonnes of items reused through diversion from booked bulky collections by FCC.</li> <li>Looking into possibility of supplying HRRO with appliances from bulky bookings.</li> <li>Difficulties experienced due to weather, restrictions from reuse organisations on what they can accept and many items are broken or incomplete.</li> </ul> <p>HRCs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Almost 25 tonnes diverted by reuse organisations from HRC reuse containers.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help for Ukraine set up to accept items from FCC collections and as new off-taker from the reuse containers at HRCs.</li> </ul>
Increase repair cafés across the county	Craig Cornish	March 31 2026	Additional repair cafes running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant funding remains available</li> <li>• Hereford City Repair Café provided grant funding in April 2025 and now running regular cafes. This makes 6 across Herefordshire, 5 provided with grant funding.</li> </ul>
Investigate possibilities for increasing recycling from charity organisations using the 'tip permits' for free disposal through our transfer station.	Nicola Percival	March 31 2026	Policy updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas discussed with one of our reuse organisations to provide additional 'recycling permits' for disposal of single loads of materials such as wood, metals so that can be recycled.</li> <li>• Redraft of policy commenced.</li> </ul>
Increase recycling items in collection service to include foil and plastic tubes.	Craig Cornish	March 31 2026	Collecting new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans are in place to implement this from 31 March 2026. Promotions planned to advertise this across all households.</li> </ul>
Increase recycling items to include flexible plastics	Gary Williams	1 April 2027	Collecting new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring options with disposal contractor for how these can be effectively extracted from recycling stream.</li> </ul>

