

Report to Cabinet

Report Title	Waste and Recycling Collection Policy				
Date of Meeting	19 th March 2025				
Report Author	Paul Southall				
Corporate Director	Executive Director Place				
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Cabinet Member for Place and the Environment				
Why is this a key decision?	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Expenditure over £500K</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table>	1. Expenditure over £500K	No	2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	Yes
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2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	Yes				
Wards Affected	All Wards				
Identify exempt information and exemption category	Choose an item. N/A				

Is report Urgent?	No
Reasons for urgency (only where applicable)	N/A
Appendices (if any)	1. Thurrock Council Waste and Recycling Collection Policy

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The new Waste and Recycling Collection Policy consolidates various pre-existing policies, frameworks, and legislative guidelines into one comprehensive document, bringing clarity, compliance, and alignment to Thurrock's 2021-2031 Municipal Waste Strategy. This updated policy serves as an essential component of the 2021-2031 Municipal Waste Strategy, transforming Thurrock Council's long-term environmental objectives into accessible, community-focused actions and guidance.

- 1.2 Key additions to the policy include a formally documented missed collection policy and a waiver requirement for waste collection on private or unadopted roads. These enhancements not only refine service delivery but also provide a consistent and legally robust approach to managing waste collection services across the borough. By ensuring operational practices align with strategic sustainability goals, Thurrock Council strengthens its commitment to reducing waste, increasing recycling rates, and meeting both local and national environmental targets.
- 1.3 The policy is rooted in foundational waste policies from 2008, the comprehensive Waste Strategy for 2021-2031, recent 2024 savings business cases, and existing legislation such as the Environment Act 2021. By promoting clarity, compliance, and flexibility, the Waste and Recycling Collection Policy empowers the community and Council to work collaboratively toward a cleaner, more sustainable future while remaining adaptable to evolving regulations.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, the Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the Waste and Recycling Policy attached to this report and comment upon the content and if satisfied recommend that it be included in Thurrock Councils Policy Framework.
- 2.2 Review and agree the two additional sections, missed collections and collections from private and unadopted roads, not specifically covered in existing, agreed policies and documents.

3. Commissioner's Comments

- 3.1 It is an important step for the Council to consider and agree a policy that brings together the improvements made in the waste and recycling services and consolidates the commitments and ways of working.

4. Background

4.1 Several documents and policies, including those from 2008, have governed waste management practices in Thurrock. These earlier frameworks were designed to address specific issues at the time but have since evolved in response to changing environmental priorities and legislative requirements.

4.2 The 2021-2031 Waste Strategy established long-term goals for waste reduction and sustainability, while the 2024 savings business cases identified operational improvements and cost-saving measures, such as the introduction of a chargeable garden waste service.

The new Waste and Recycling Collection Policy represents a consolidation of these disparate elements, bringing them together into a single cohesive policy framework. This comprehensive approach provides clearer guidance on operational standards, legal compliance, and community engagement.

4.3 New Sections Requiring Consideration

4.4 **Missed Collection Policy:** While Thurrock Council has dealt with missed waste collections in practice for some time, this is the first occasion where the approach has been formally documented in a policy. The introduction of a clearly defined missed collection policy provides transparency and formal procedures for handling missed collections, ensuring consistency in service delivery and communication with residents.

Waste Collection from Private or Unadopted Roads: A new requirement is introduced for waste collection from private or unadopted roads. The policy mandates that landowners must sign a waiver granting Thurrock Council permission to access the property for waste collection. This waiver protects the Council from any potential claims regarding damage to private property or unauthorised access.

The waiver formalises the relationship between landowners and the Council, reducing legal and financial risks associated with waste collections in these areas.

5. Key Components of the Policy

5.1 Consolidation of Documents

This policy unites various existing Cabinet approved documents, including 2008 policies, the 2021-2031 Waste Strategy, and key business cases developed in 2024. It ensures that all waste-related guidelines, previously scattered across multiple documents, are accessible in one place, improving clarity for both residents and council officers.

5.2 Alignment with Legislative Frameworks

The policy reflects national legislation, such as the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Environment Act 2021. These laws require councils to collect recyclable waste separately, including glass, metal, plastic, paper, and food waste. The policy enforces weekly food waste collections and fortnightly collections for recycling, garden, and non-recyclable waste, where applicable, as mandated by current environmental laws.

5.3 Operational Changes and Savings

The 2024 business cases introduced cost-saving measures like the chargeable garden waste service and a revised recycling collection schedule. By increasing recycling rates, the Council aims to save £1.3 million annually. The policy also outlines penalties and enforcement actions for non-compliance, supporting both education and deterrence.

5.4 Waste Management and Sustainability Goals

Thurrock Council aims to increase its recycling rate to 50% by 2030, up from the current 28.5%, which is below regional and national benchmarks. This goal aligns with the UK's broader environmental objectives, such as achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and moving towards the national target of 65% municipal recycling by 2030. Effective waste management is central to the Council's commitment to sustainability, with significant environmental and financial benefits for the borough.

6. Proposals – the rationale and evidence for the recommendations

- 6.1 Implementing a comprehensive waste and recycling collection policy for Thurrock Council offers numerous benefits that align with strategic goals and community needs.
- 6.2 The policy encourages higher recycling rates and proper waste diversion, significantly reducing the volume of waste sent to landfills and minimising environmental impact.
- 6.3 Standardising waste and recycling collections ensures consistent, reliable service delivery, improving customer satisfaction and increases recycling rates.
- 6.4 Encouraging residents to participate in recycling programs fosters community involvement and responsibility.
- 6.5 Initiatives to educate the public about waste disposal and recycling practices increase compliance and participation rates.
- 6.6 The policy supports the council's overall waste strategy by operationalising strategic goals related to sustainability, efficiency, and community engagement.
- 6.7 Implementing a comprehensive policy is a proactive step towards achieving long-term waste management and environmental objectives.
- 6.8 A comprehensive waste and recycling collection policy is crucial for promoting environmental sustainability, ensuring legal compliance, achieving economic efficiency, improving public health, and enhancing community satisfaction. This policy provides a foundation for effective waste management practices that benefit both the council and its residents.

7. Alternative options considered

- 7.1 There is currently no Waste and Recycling Collection Policy for Thurrock.

8. Consultation

No public consultation is required as nothing new is being introduced as part of this policy.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 Implications verified by: Dawn Calver
Chief Financial Officer
8th August 2024

No financial implications identified. However, the policy does provide clarity on charges that can be made to places of religious worship, premises occupied by a charity, waste collection from community centres and village halls and collections from schools and education establishments.

All are covered under Schedule 2, Regulation 5, of The Collection and Disposal of Waste Regulations 1988 where a charge for collection only can be made.

10. Risk Implications

- 10.1 Residents may resist changes to waste collection practices, especially if it involves separating waste for recycling or adhering to stricter disposal guidelines.
- 10.2 Enforcement action for non-compliance could be viewed as overly punitive, particularly if enforcement is seen as aggressive or unfair.
- 10.3 To mitigate these reputational risks, the council must ensure transparent communication, a high standard of service delivery, and a focus on community engagement throughout the policys introduction and implementation.

11. Legal and Governance Implications

Implications verified by: Helen Nicol
Assistant Director – Legal and Governance
20 August 2024

- 11.1 Pursuant to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990) the Council has a statutory obligation to provide a domestic waste collection service and a commercial waste collection service (for which a charge can be made). Under EPA 1990 Councils may prescribe what receptables must be used for

disposal of waste and where these are to be placed for collection. The EPA 1990 is supported by regulations, such as The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012, which defines the difference between household and commercial waste and sets out what domestic collections can be charged for, for example bulky waste collections.

- 11.2 The EPA 1990 has recently been amended by the provisions of the Environmental Act 2021 in order to promote more recycling. Recyclable household waste is now separated into the following recycling streams: glass; metal; plastic; paper and card; food waste; and garden waste. Recyclable household waste must be collected separately from other household waste and be recycled or composted. Further, recyclable household waste in each recyclable waste stream must be collected separately unless it is not technically or economically practicable to collect those waste streams separately or collecting separately has no significant environmental benefit, having regard to the environmental impact as a whole. Food and garden waste may not be collected together with the other recyclable waste streams and food waste must be collected once a week.
- 11.3 Aside from the above statutory framework, the legislation does not prescribe how waste collections should be arranged or managed which is a matter for the Council.
- 11.4 The Waste and Recycling Collection Policy is therefore a key document in setting out how the Council complies with their statutory duties with regard to waste and communicates to residents how the Council will deal with waste and any charging.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

Implications verified by: Roxanne Scanlon
Community Engagement and Project Officer
5th August 2024

- 12.1 A community and equalities impact assessment form has been completed and there are no negative impacts identified on any parts of the community.
- 12.2 The waste and recycling collection policy is designed to guide the use of Thurrock Council's waste services, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.
- 12.3 The policy reflects the feedback gathered during a full consultation with residents at the beginning of 2020 and the approval of the 2021-2031 Waste Strategy in November 2020, which aimed to understand public opinions on key aspects of the waste strategy. Additionally, the waste strategy has been shaped by a Cross-Party Working Group to incorporate diverse political viewpoints and ensure that residents' voices are adequately represented. Since then, no further formal consultation or engagement has been necessary, as these aspects were thoroughly covered in preparing CTS0136 Waste Collections business case.

During this period specific comments and questions were received. In response, FAQ pages were established for Waste and Recycling, providing residents with accessible information, and addressing common concerns. These FAQs are available on the Thurrock Council website.

- 12.4 Following the initial consultation, a budget engagement exercise was conducted from 29 November 2023 to 7 January 2024.
- 12.5 Overall, the policy is expected to positively impact residents by clarifying service guidelines and incorporating community feedback.

13. Other Relevant Implications

No other implications have been identified.

14. Background Documents

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 - [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Relevance Check



Budget Reduction/Service Area:

Service Lead

Date:

In what ways does this Budget reduction have an impact on an outward facing service? How will the service feel different to your customers or potential customers?

N/A

If not, how does it impact on staff e.g. redundancies, pay grades, working conditions? Why are you confident that these staff changes will not affect the service that you provide?

N/A

Is a Customer Impact Assessment needed? Yes. One has been completed.