

Household Waste Engagement Survey Findings

Culture & Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 19/06/2025

Lead director/officer: Sean Atterbury, Director of
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 1.0

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the Household Waste Collections Engagement Survey including the approach to the engagement survey, the key lines of enquiry in the form of its objectives and scope.
- 1.2 Detailed findings and next steps are set out in the report appended (Appendix A).

2. Recommendation(s) to Scrutiny:

- 2.1 Culture & Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission are invited to:
 - Note the contents of the report and findings
 - Comment on the report.

3. Overview

- 3.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to arrange for the collection, management, treatment and disposal of household waste in their area. As a unitary authority, Leicester City Council is both a Waste Collection Authority and a Waste Disposal Authority, being responsible for end-to-end municipal / household waste management.
- 3.2 The majority of the Council's waste management services are delivered by Biffa Leicester Ltd (Biffa) as part of a 25-year Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract that commenced in 2003. The existing arrangement with Biffa expires in May 2028.
- 3.3 There are a range of factors that have significant influence on the design of household waste collection services, including:
 - Statutory requirements set by the government that require the Council to focus on reducing the volumes of waste and increase the proportion of recycling produced by households; to ensure that waste and recycling is collected and processed cost-efficiently; and to implement separate weekly food waste collections for all households.
 - Financial pressures and affordability of future waste services.
 - Climate change and the need to reduce the environmental impact of waste.
 - Anticipated growth of household and population numbers in the City.
- 3.4 With future funding linked closely to evidencing both cost and operational efficiency of waste collection services, it is widely recognised by councils in England that providing affordable, sustainable services, and achieving climate and circular economy goals, requires a step change in both consumption and management of waste. The Council's approach to future household waste collections along with household behaviour will therefore play a major role.

3.5 The Council sought views from all households on a range of waste-related matters through a Household Waste Collections Engagement Survey. The survey opened on 07 April 2025 for 6 weeks, closing on 19 May 2025.

3.6 The objectives of the engagement survey and key lines of enquiry (KLOE) were:

- To understand what influences how households currently manage their waste, including issues with space and understanding of recycling.
- To inform the public about the reasons for change to future household waste collection services and when this will need to happen.
- To further understand household attitudes towards waste management and recycling, seeking views on the barriers and support required to i) maximise recycling and reuse, ii) encourage engagement with required changes such as separation of food waste; and iii) make food waste segregation simple and clean in future.
- To identify household priorities and challenges in relation to waste collections.
- To inform the Council's approach to future household waste collection services.

3.7 The engagement survey included 27 waste-related questions that, with questions separated into a range of themes and topics including general waste, recycling, food waste, and other services.

3.8 Responses are detailed in Appendix A and set out into the following sections:

- Household management of waste
- Household priorities, challenges and concerns
- Future waste collection services, and
- Communication preferences.

Response Rate and Representation

3.9 We received 5390 responses to the on-line survey over the 6-week period. The response rate of 4% of households is considered an excellent response compared to other City-wide engagements and consultations and provides a vital piece of early evidence in shaping future services.

3.10 As the survey was available to all household / residents, and publicised wide via a range of media, respondents were self-selecting and, although not wholly representative of the demography of the City, respondents present a good representation of households / house types that is in alignment with the City housing type make up.

Key Findings

3.11 Detailed findings can be found in Appendix A.

Next Steps

3.12 The findings from the waste services early engagement and the supporting data analysis will inform a series of recommendations to Council. Recommendations will set out a proposal for developing a new approach for the City that focus on delivering future household waste collection services that are compliant with national reforms, whilst remaining cost-effective, sustainable and fit-for-purpose.

4. Financial, Legal, Equalities, Climate Emergency and Other Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

As a summary of the findings of an engagement exercise, there are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The cost implications of any changes to service arrangements will need careful consideration for future decisions.

Signed: Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

Dated: 04 June 2025

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications on this report and the responses to the engagement survey at this stage.

Signed: Jenis Taylor, Project Lawyer (Commercial), Legal Services

Dated: 04 June 2025

4.3 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have statutory duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, decision makers must pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report provides an overview on the household waste collections engagement survey outcomes. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is currently underway, and this will need to be updated to include the survey outcomes. As cited in the report the survey had a good response rate with some over/under representation across the city's demographic profile, this being in line with other council engagement exercises. The survey also highlighted residents preferred methods of communication and we need to ensure these are taken into account as this area of work is progressed.

The EIA once updated will be appended to the necessary decision report.

Signed: Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer

Dated: 04 June 2025

4.4 Climate Emergency Implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications arising from this report.

It is important to note however that dealing with Leicester's solid waste and wastewater is estimated to generate about 100,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year. Waste also adds to the city's carbon emissions arising from the consumption of goods, packaging and raw materials where opportunities to reduce and reuse are missed. Decisions about future household waste management arrangements and associated communications therefore provide a key opportunity to cut carbon in line with our Climate Ready Leicester Plan.

If not already noted, consideration should be given to using these survey findings to help secure investment and/or support for innovation and engagement from the future collection and disposal service provider(s), not just for reducing the transport associated emissions, maximising pre-treatment segregation and minimising contamination, but also in promoting waste reduction and reuse which are equally important to reducing carbon.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Energy & Sustainability Service

Dated: 04 June 2025

4.5 Other Implications

None

Signed:

Dated:

5. Background Information and Other Papers:

Summary of Appendices:

Appendix A – Household Waste Collections Engagement Survey – Report of Findings

Appendix B – Survey Questions

Appendix C – Paper Survey