

COUNCIL
24 April 2024
CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to Council made at the Cabinet meeting held on 21 March

(a) Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 (LAHF R3) in 2024-25 and 2025-26

On 7 March 2024, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) confirmed it would be launching a third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF R3), to the value of £450 million, to run over the financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26.

The third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF R3) will:

- support local authorities to acquire good quality, and better value for money Temporary Accommodation (TA) for families owed a homelessness duty.
- continue to provide resettlement housing for those on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), expecting these homes to become available to support wider local authority general housing and homelessness responsibilities after the resettlement needs of the eligible cohort have been addressed.

DLUHC has allocated the Council £1.029m in grant for 5 homes; two temporary accommodation, two standard resettlement homes and one large resettlement home. The Council can return unspent funding to the Government should it wish or be unable to deliver all the housing. The Council's contribution is expected to be £1.276m.

The Cabinet approved the acquisition of up to 5 properties using the funds earmarked for this initiative, provided that any such acquisitions are undertaken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, and Cabinet Member for Housing, Communities & Wellbeing.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) To proceed with the application for, and receipt of, the grant allocation for the Council to provide or facilitate the provision of 2 resettlement homes and 2 temporary accommodation homes and 1 large (4+bed) resettlement home.
- (ii) To approve capital spend of £2.305m in the 2024/25 capital programme.
- (iii) To approve the revenue grant income and spend of £8,000 in 2024/25.

REASON

- (i) To apply for, receive and use the grant to help purchase / provide more affordable homes for the district.
- (ii) & (iii) Full Council must approve the capital budget.
- (iii) Subject to Council approval, to avoid the requirement to seek Cabinet's approval for the purchase by Horsham District Council of each individual property that would otherwise be required to give effect to this initiative.

(b) Commercial Food Waste

This report to the Cabinet considered the implications and processes for introducing a commercial food waste collection service by 31 March 2025 as required through the Environment Act 2021.

There are several projects which will form the process of introducing weekly food waste collections which include vehicle procurement, receptacles procurement, space to park the new vehicles, communications and recruitment to increase establishment.

The report set out all the associated projects and considerations to enable us to deliver a commercial food waste collection service by January 2025 to meet the deadline for businesses to recycle all recyclable waste streams by 31 March 2025.

The Cabinet approved the implementation of a weekly food waste collection to our commercial waste provision before 31 March 2025.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) To approve capital expenditure of £130,000 required to purchase the vehicle and £5,000 for containers in 2024/25.
- (ii) The revenue expenditure of £51,903.75 and the income of £32,500 with a net expenditure of £19,400 required for the transition to commercial food waste collections in FY24/25 is approved. This expenditure includes staff wages and the ongoing running costs.

REASON

- (i) The Environment Act 2021 requires businesses, except micro-firms, to recycle all recyclable waste stream, excluding garden waste and plastic film. As a commercial operator we are not obliged to collect food waste but if we don't then we will likely lose income from businesses who will need to use the service.
- (ii) The commercial waste service does not currently offer a food waste offering within the current service provision. To provide a comprehensive competitive commercial waste service a food waste service is required to ensure we are offering businesses all waste streams. Businesses are required to separate their waste in line with legislation by 31 March 2025.
- (iii) Full Council approve capital and revenue budgets.

(c) Domestic Food Waste Weekly Collections

The Cabinet report considered the implications and processes for introducing a weekly food waste collection for all Horsham residents, including flats, by 31 March 2026 as set out in the Government's Simpler Recycling announcement.

There are several projects which will form the process of introducing weekly food waste collections which include vehicle procurement, caddy procurement, vehicle storage, routing of rounds, communications and recruitment to ensure a successful District wide roll out.

There will also be the need to work with West Sussex Waste Partnership and to establish post implementation monitoring to establish the success of the new service.

A decision was required on the frequency of residual waste collections taking into account the Simpler Recycling recommendations. The report set out all the associated projects and considerations to enable us to deliver the most effective food waste collection service and meet the deadline of 31 March 2026.

The Cabinet approved the introduction of a weekly domestic food waste service before 31 March 2026 to all residents in Horsham District, as well as the frequency of the residual waste, dry mixed recycling, garden waste and food waste collections.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) That capital expenditure of up to £2,617,000 required to purchase the vehicles (to include in cab technology and CCTV), caddies and bins, is approved. This will be spent across 2024/25 and 2025/26 and profiled into the capital programme in the relevant year by the Director of Resources when the lead times for each capital items are known.
- (ii) That revenue expenditure of £25,000 in 2024/25 for route planning required for the transition to weekly food waste collection is approved.

REASON

- (i) The Environment Act 2021 set into legislation various requirements for local councils and specifically mandated for all waste collection authorities (WCAs) in England to provide a weekly collection of food waste from households. On 21 October 2023, Government announced 'Simpler Recycling' waste reforms which stated the new requirement must be provided by 31 March 2026.
- (ii) The roll out of weekly food waste collections encompasses a number of projects as detailed in the report, which will all feed into achieving the delivery of the service by 31 March 2026.
- (iii) Full Council must approve capital and revenue expenditure.

(d) An Additional Service for the Isolated Property Rounds

The Council has a statutory duty to collect domestic waste from all domestic properties within our district. Some of these properties are sited along narrow lanes and tracks that are not accessible using our normal large collection vehicles. We therefore have to use smaller specialised vehicles which are now at collection capacity. Despite this, some of the properties which we are required to collect from are in very long narrow lanes with no space to turn. This means we currently have to reverse our vehicles up narrow lanes which poses a health and safety risk and increases the risk for accidents.

The Cabinet approved an increase in the waste collection service for the isolated rounds, and the award of the contract to the winning bidder to purchase a suitable collection vehicle on standard market terms. Authority was delegated to the Director of Communities in

consultation with the Head of Legal Services to finalise the terms of and enter into a contract with the winning bidder.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) To approve the additional capital budget in 2024/25 of £130,000 for an electric vehicle and charging point.
- (ii) To approve the additional revenue budget expenditure in the recycling and waste service 2024/25 budget of £27,000.

REASON

- (i) Full Council must approve the allocation of funds outside of the budget.

(e) One-Off Cost of Living Supplement

The report proposed to offer a “one-off cost-of-living award” supplement to our employees on Grade 4 and below, of £450 p.a., pro-rata, payable monthly from 1 April until the national pay award for 2024/25 can be implemented, but with a maximum duration of nine months (whichever is earlier).

The Unison Regional Officer and the Chair of the Horsham Unison branch confirmed to make a positive recommendation to their members to accept that offer. Projected costs are around £100,000.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) To approve an increase of £100,000 in the income and expenditure revenue budgets in 2024/25 for the cost-of-living award.

REASON

- (i) To support council employees on lower grades with managing the increased cost of living and bridge the anticipated delay in the national pay settlement for 2024/25.
- (ii) Full Council must approve the allocation of funds outside budget.