

#RECYCLE
for
GOOD



Lichfield District & Tamworth Borough

Joint Waste Service business plan

2025 – 2026

**working
together**

**for a
greener future**



Lichfield
District Council

Tamworth
Borough Council

Executive summary

The Joint Waste Service (JWS) for Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council is dedicated to providing an efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable waste collection service to local households.

This business plan outlines strategies for improving recycling rates, simplifying the recycling process, and reducing costs through enhanced efficiency, while aligning with longer-term goals to meet the environmental challenges and policy directives up to 2035.

This business plan is influenced by the following documents:

Organisation	Strategy/document
Partner council strategic plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lichfield District 2050• Tamworth Borough Council's corporate plan 2025 – 2030
County council/disposal authority plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy• Joint resource and waste strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, 2025 – 2045 (emerging – see summary at appendix 2)
National strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our waste, our resources: a strategy for England• Simpler recycling reforms

The business plan was ratified by the Joint Waste Committee on 25 June 2025 and is now subject to sign off by Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council.

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Vision statement

To deliver simple, sustainable and efficient statutory waste collection services to approximately 80,000 households across Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough, supporting both districts in achieving higher recycling rates, reducing residual waste, and promoting a circular economy by 2030.

Strategic objectives

Simplify recycling for residents

- Make recycling easier and more accessible for households.
- Address common barriers to participation and confusion.

Drive up recycling rates

- Aim to achieve a recycling rate of 50% by 2026/27 and 65% by 2035.
- Reduce tonnage of black bin waste in line with Staffordshire wide targets.
- Introduce food waste and plastic film recycling.
- Reduce contamination rates in recyclable materials.

Enhance efficiency and reduce costs

- Optimise collection routes costs and fuel usage.
- Maximise the use of technology and data-driven decision-making.
- Ensure the service is financially efficient.

Support environmental sustainability

- Align with government waste reduction targets and carbon neutrality goals.
- Encourage waste prevention and reuse initiatives across the partnership area.

Long-term vision to 2035

Achieve 65% recycling rate

- Roll out new waste services and increase the range of recyclable materials collected.
- Regularly review and update educational materials to reflect changes in recycling streams and regulations.

Work with partners to deliver efficient waste infrastructure across Staffordshire

- Work with Staffordshire authorities to ensure the partnership and local communities can benefit from an efficient waste infrastructure.

Develop a greener fleet and service

- Introduce greener fuels and technologies into the waste fleet and service by 2035 to align with local and national carbon neutrality targets.

Demonstrate circular economy leadership

- Position the joint waste service as a leader in waste management innovation by sharing good practice and hosting pilot programs for emerging approaches.

Key performance indicators (KPIs)

- **Increase recycling:** Increase from the current baseline (e.g., 41.7% 2023/2024) to 50% by 2026 – [view our recycling dashboard](#).
- **Reduce residual waste:** Residual waste weights per household.
- **Reduce contamination rate:** Number of rejected loads (2023/2024 baseline – one per annum).
- **Increase resident satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction rate measured through annual surveys.
- **Minimise missed bin collections:** Number of missed household bin collections.
- **Reduce customer complaints:** Number of upheld customer complaints.
- **Achieve cost efficiency:** Cost of collection per-household.
- **Create a committed workforce:** Agency spend.
- **Increase safety of the workforce:** Number of personal and vehicular accidents.

See appendix 1 for baseline and targets.

Financial overview

Discretionary income

This business plan confirms that the Joint Waste Service increases prices for discretionary services annually in line with CPI to allow it to recoup the costs of running the services:

Charge type	Increase effective
Bulky waste, scrap and replacement black bin prices	The financial modelling of the service assumes that from 1 April each year, prices will rise in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the preceding January, rounded up or down to the nearest £1. The implementation of this is delegated to the joint waste committee. Should the committee recommend rises above CPI, this will be subject to separate approval by both councils.
Garden waste charges	The financial modelling of the service assumes that from 1 October each year, prices will rise in line with CPI from the preceding June, rounded up or down to the nearest 50p. Lichfield District Council (LDC) has implemented an automatic annual increase mechanism. In contrast, Tamworth Borough Council must approve increases annually, and any rise below the Consumer Price Index (CPI) would require Tamworth to fund the resulting shortfall. This difference in approach necessitates careful financial planning to maintain sustainable service delivery. Should the committee recommend rises above CPI, this will be subject to separate approval by both councils.

Sale of recyclates

The sale of recyclates collected through the waste partnership service is agreed upon in collaboration with the Staffordshire Waste Partnership. This arrangement ensures that the income generated from selling recyclable materials fully funds the cost of the services provided.

By working together under this agreement, Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council can maintain a cost-neutral approach to waste management services, effectively reducing the financial burden on both councils. This sustainable funding model not only supports the ongoing delivery of high-quality waste and recycling services but also aligns with broader environmental and financial objectives.

Joint council budgets

Lichfield District Council (LDC) and Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) share the costs of the waste partnership service through a fair and transparent percentage split, which is based on the number of properties within each council's area.

This cost-sharing arrangement is reviewed annually to ensure it remains equitable and reflective of the latest property counts. The percentage split to be used for 2025/2026¹ is:

- 56.13% Lichfield District Council (LDC)
- 43.87% Tamworth Borough Council (TBC)

This year, a base budgeting exercise will be undertaken to provide both councils with greater confidence and clarity regarding the partnership's financial arrangements. The aim is to ensure that all overheads and full costs are fairly distributed between the councils, promoting transparency and accountability.

By conducting this thorough review, LDC and TBC reaffirm their commitment to maintaining a balanced and sustainable partnership that continues to deliver high-quality waste management services to residents.

Government grants

The funding landscape for waste management continues to face uncertainty due to ongoing changes related to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and recycling credits. As the sector grapples with evolving regulations and potential financial implications, both Lichfield District Council (LDC) and Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) have agreed to adopt a cautious approach.

In light of the unclear future, both councils have committed to retaining any EPR funding received until the funding landscape becomes more certain. This decision reflects their shared commitment to maintaining financial prudence while ensuring that any strategic adjustments are informed by greater clarity on national policy changes. By holding onto the EPR funding, LDC and TBC aim to safeguard resources while monitoring developments closely. This approach will enable both councils to make well-informed decisions that support sustainable and efficient waste management practices in the long term.

Social value

Social value generated through Joint Waste Service contracts is reinvested directly into the service, ensuring both Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough areas benefit equally. This approach supports sustainable, community-focused waste management and improves service quality and efficiency across both areas.

¹ The percentage split is not fixed and alters depending on house building in each district, as it represents the property count,

High level budget

	Budget			Budget	Budget	Budget	
	2025/26			2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	
	Lichfield	Tamworth	Total	Total	Total	Total	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Budgeted 2025/26 property split	56.13%	43.87%	100%				
External income	(1,049)	(820)	(1,868)	(1,933)	(1,998)	(2,063)	
Garden waste subscriptions	(1,000)	(782)	(1,782)	(1,836)	(1,893)	(1,952)	
Tamworth BC contribution		(2,160)	(2,160)	(2,182)	(2,230)	(2,259)	
Lichfield DC contribution	(2,763)		(2,763)	(2,784)	(2,921)	(3,032)	
Total income	(4,812)	(3,761)	(8,573)	(8,735)	(9,042)	(9,305)	
Employees	2,447	1,913	4,360	4,392	4,553	4,716	
Transport	1,244	972	2,216	2,231	2,245	2,260	
Supplies and services	775	605	1,380	1,495	1,627	1,712	
Third party payments	6	4	10	10	10	10	
Support services	340	266	607	607	607	607	
Total directs costs	4,812	3,761	8,573	8,735	9,042	9,305	
Surplus or deficit	0	0	0	0	(0)	0	
Memorandum accounting charges	283	221	505	505	505	505	
Memorandum Lichfield District trade waste	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		
Direct expenditure	419	426	433	440	451		
Direct income	(589)	(590)	(591)	(592)	(595)		
Contribution to overheads	(170)	(164)	(158)	(152)	(144)		
Depreciation	188	188	188	188	188		
Overheads	63	67	68	70	70		
Net expenditure	80	91	98	106	114		
Earmarked reserves	Lichfield	Tamworth					
	£000	£000					
Servicing new properties in the future	(205)	(34)					
Dry recycling contract		(51)					
Holiday pay overtime		(15)					
Payments in adv. for Fleet		(99)					
Weekly food waste collections transitional grant	(229)						
Total projected at 31 March 2025	(434)	(199)					
Project	Lichfield District Council approved capital programme						
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total	
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Projection		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Bin purchases	150	150	150	150	150	750	
Food waste collections	1,767	0	0	0	0	1,767	
Approved budget	1,917	150	150	150	150	2,517	

Given the level of changes likely to impact the service in the coming years, the team is conducting a base budget review and update of the cost split analysis between the two teams in June/July 2025 to ensure greater financial clarity and forward planning.

2025 – 2035 delivery plan

Reviewed annually – these actions are incorporated in the joint waste service's **rolling action plan and risk log**.

Simplify recycling for residents

Key project	Description	Target outcome
Clear communication campaign – recycle for good	Roll-out the recycle for good public awareness campaign to educate residents about recyclable materials and proper sorting techniques, using flyers, social media, and local events.	Comms plan developed and delivered annually
Community champions program	Recruit and train local volunteers to serve as recycling ambassadors, helping to promote best practices in their communities.	Programme in place by December 2025

Drive up recycling rates

Key project	Description	Target outcome
Roll out food waste collections ready	Implement a food waste service for 2026 onwards, including procurement of fleet, food waste containers and introduction of new rounds that optimise collections to ensure they efficient across the wider service.	Service delivered by 31 March 2026
Ward councillor and parish council engagement	Develop specific programmes to engage better with ward and parish councillors to deliver recycling messages to their local communities.	Ongoing – specific target set out in the delivery plan
Encourage innovation	Consider the introduction of innovative initiatives and pilots to increase recycling and re-use.	Options appraisal by December 2025
Recycling in flats and communal areas	Pilot programs to improve recycling infrastructure and education for residents in multi-unit housing.	Roll out in line with food waste service
Partnership with schools	Work with schools to incorporate Recycle for Good education into their curriculum and run waste-reduction challenges.	Programme in place by December 2025
Targeted messaging	Deliver specific campaigns to target battery disposal and Tetrapaks for example.	Ongoing – specific target set out in the delivery plan
Satisfaction surveys	Carry out customer satisfaction surveys to understand areas of improvement.	Ongoing – specific target set out in the delivery plan

Enhance efficiency and reduce costs

Key project	Description	Target deadline
Route optimisation	Conduct a detailed analysis of current collection routes using route optimisation software to minimise travel times, fuel consumption, and emissions, and to enable efficient introduction of the food waste service.	Roll out in line with food waste service
Workforce optimisation	Work with the unions to roll out workforce changes to increase efficiency whilst supporting staff welfare. This includes moving towards a 1 driver, 2 loader set-up and reducing use of agency and reviewing working cap.	Deliver options appraisal in line with food waste roll out
Safe working practices	Review and robustly implement policies and procedures to better support the safety of the workforce and service.	Review and implement new procedures by 2026
Vehicle upgrades	Launch a new fleet of waste and recycling trucks to better support crews. Roll out safe incab communications software.	New general fleet in place by 1 April 2025, food waste by 1 April 2026
Training first focus	Deliver robust staff focused training courses to drive up standards of respect, skills and staff satisfaction.	Increase satisfaction levels
Data-driven decision-making	Use GPS tracking in vehicles to monitor and improve service levels.	Launch enhanced tracking and monitoring as part of new fleet roll out from 1 April 2025
Shared procurements	Maximise opportunities for joint procurement with partners of vehicles, bins, and services to benefit from economies of scale.	Ongoing in line with procurements
Missed bin process	Launch a data driven missed bin process that reduces returns to bins and better educates residents on how not to contaminate bins.	New process launched by December 2025
Waste minimisation	Consider ways to minimise household black bin waste by introducing new sized containers or frequencies.	Roll out approach in line with food waste service

Support environmental sustainability

Key project	Description	Target deadline
Reuse hubs	Better promote community reuse and repair centres where residents can donate and pick up items such as furniture, appliances, and clothing, reducing waste and supporting circular economy principles.	Roll out as part of comms plan
Carbon reduction targets	Set measurable goals for reducing emissions associated with waste collection and disposal in line with both council's carbon reduction targets.	31 March 2026

Preparing for the future

Key project	Description	Target deadline
Plastic film collections	Work towards establishing a system for collecting plastic films, including partnerships with waste processors, public awareness campaigns, and accessible drop-off points to reduce contamination.	31 March 2027
Deposit return scheme	Work towards developing a strategy to support residents and businesses in adapting to the deposit return scheme, ensuring infrastructure and communication plans are in place for smooth implementation, and the service is appropriately sized to cope with any reduction in household demand/recycling income.	1 October 2027

Key partnerships

Partnership	Description	What it directly influences
Staffordshire Waste Partnership (SWP)	An informal collaboration comprising ten councils in Staffordshire, including Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and eight district and borough councils. The SWP aims to promote sustainable waste management practices across the county.	Collaborative working on strategy and projects e.g. food waste joint procurement of vehicles and caddies
Staffordshire Waste Officers Group (SWOG)	A subgroup within the SWP, consisting of waste management officers from the member councils. SWOG meets bi-monthly to discuss operational matters, share best practices, and coordinate waste management strategies across Staffordshire.	Share best practice, support partnership working, assist in development and implementation of waste strategy
Staffordshire Sustainability Board (SSB)	A board comprising senior officers and members responsible for environmental sustainability including waste management within the SWP councils. The board meets quarterly and with regards to waste oversees the implementation of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy and to monitor performance across the partnership.	Countywide waste strategy that all authorities work to support
Communications Recycling Officers Group (CROG)	A group focused on recycling and communication campaigns within Staffordshire. The CROG collaborates on campaigns, such as waste minimisation efforts, and organizes events to promote recycling and sustainable waste practices among residents.	Joint comms, best practice

These partnerships and groups collectively work towards enhancing waste management services, promoting recycling, and ensuring sustainable waste practices across Staffordshire.

Governance and accountability

The Joint Waste Committee comprises lead councillors and officers from Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council and oversees the implementation of this business plan.

View [meetings, minutes and agendas](#).

The Joint Waste Committee is supported by the Joint Waste Partnership Steering Group that comprises lead officers from Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council.

Meeting frequency:

Body	Meeting regularity
Joint Waste Committee	Quarterly
Joint Waste Partnership Steering Group	Monthly

Quarterly progress reports are published to ensure transparency and accountability and are considered by the Joint Waste Committee and individually by Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council's relevant committees.

The Joint Waste Partnership Steering Group manages a **rolling action plan and risk log**, and oversees the management of the joint waste service's finances.

Appendix 1 KPIs

Base KPIs reviewed annually – [view our recycling dashboard](#).

KPI	2023/2024baseline	2024/2025 baseline*	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
Increase recycling						
Overall dry recycling rate	22.36%	22.17%	23%	23.5%	24%	24.50%
<i>Tamworth dry recycling rate</i>	23.12%	22.70%	23%	23.5%	24%	24.50%
<i>Lichfield District dry recycling rate</i>	21.83%	21.80%	23%	23.5%	24%	24.50%
Organic recycling rate	19.34%	18.71%	20%	20.5%	21%	21.5%
<i>Tamworth organic recycling rate</i>	14.30%	13.20%	15%	15.25%	15.5%	16%
<i>Lichfield District organic recycling rate</i>	22.80%	22.52%	25%	25.75%	26.5%	27%
Food recycling rate	n/a	n/a	0%	10%	15%	20%
<i>Tamworth food recycling rate</i>	n/a	n/a	0%	10%	15%	20%
<i>Lichfield District food recycling rate</i>	n/a	n/a	0%	10%	15%	20%
Overall recycling rate	41.70%	40.88%	43%	54%	60%	66%
Reduce residual waste						
Residual waste weights per household (kgs)	470.92	474.72	470	465	460	455
<i>Tamworth residual weights (kgs)</i>	492.89	506.31	500	490	480	470
<i>Lichfield District residual weights (kgs)</i>	455.22	452.21	450	440	430	420
Reduce contamination rate						
Number of rejected loads	1	1	0	0	0	0
Missed bins per 1000 collections	0.46	0.43	0.42	0.4	0.38	0.36
% of missed bins that are missed assisted collections	15.49%	17.65%	15%	13%	11%	10%
Increase resident satisfaction						
Customer satisfaction rate	n/a	n/a	50%	60%	70%	80%
Compliments	9	8	10	12	14	16
Upheld complaints	16	24	15	13	10	8
Achieve cost efficiency						
£ collection per household	£57.11	£56.92	£56.50	£56	£55.50	£55

KPI	2023/2024baseline	2024/2025 baseline*	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
Deliver a committed workforce						
Agency spend	£634,732	£595,522	To be defined following base budget review			
Vehicle accidents	47	56	45	40	35	30
Personal accidents	5	11	8	6	4	2
Frontline days lost to long term sickness absence*	778	721	717	668	660	634
Frontline days lost to short term sickness absence*	356	322	320	310	296	258
Greener service						
Fleet carbon emissions – without targeted action	1,005,990	1,074,388	1,000,212	1,268,212	1,353,175	1,443,838

*Estimate at this stage as full figures will not be known until 31 March 2025

Rationale

- **Long term sickness:** A small reduction of ~3.6% and ~2.2% respectively, acknowledging age-related health challenges.
- **Short term sickness:** Slightly more flexibility for minor improvements via new health care package and earlier intervention ~4.5% and ~3.7% reductions.

Appendix 2

Joint resource and waste strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, 2025 – 2045

Historically, waste management strategy has centred on recycling rate targets, both national and at a local level. For the Staffordshire Waste Partnership, this linked to a PFI funding deal target 55% recycling rate. Whilst this target remains and is ongoing, the current strategic direction for the Staffordshire Waste Partnership authorities focuses on reduction of waste sent directly to landfill, which was fully achieved during its term.

Recycling rates across the county have stalled in recent years, reflecting the national trend, and residual waste is increasing. Looking ahead from 2025, the strategic direction will focus on the reduction of residual waste by primarily concentrating on waste prevention and minimisation, as well as diversion, which will have knock on effects to improve recycling rates.

Linked to the National Resource and Waste Strategy (2018), there are several key pieces of legislation that are coming into force in the early years of the new term which will largely impact our finances and service delivery models. The main legislative changes are outlined below:

- **‘Simpler Recycling’ reforms** Mandatory separate food waste collections for businesses (along with dry recycling) from 2025, and for residents from 2026, with inclusion of film in dry recycling from 2027.
- **Extended producer responsibility for packaging** Industry scheme to fund material collection, treatment, processing, disposal by local authorities from 2026.
- **Deposit return scheme** Reverse vending (or digital) scheme to encourage public recycling on the go for a monetary voucher, from 2027.
- **Emissions trading scheme** Inclusion of emissions from incinerators in the existing carbon tax scheme, with pass through costs to councils, from 2028.

To meet these new legislative requirements in a cost effective and efficient manner and further compounded by the increasing need for standardisation and collaboration as we head towards devolution, SWP authorities are committed to joint approaches to resource and waste management that creates a holistic system to provide the best value for money for the taxpayer.

The overarching vision of the strategy is to build upon the success of meeting our target to send zero waste direct to landfill by working together with residents and businesses to reclaim waste as a resource for the environmental, social and economic benefit of our area.

The following core principles set out our commitments – waste reduction, customer engagement, service performance, value for money and environmental sustainability.

These core principles will be delivered through a single implementation plan as a partnership, although also highlighting any local requirements as applicable, and through a joint communications strategy. Key projects to be delivered urgently are:

- A review of all current waste infrastructure, including transfer station provision and processing facility competition, to highlight operational gaps and feasibility of large-scale infrastructure development opportunities.
- Joint procurement of food waste equipment and treatment contracts, alongside joint communications campaigns for the new services to promote operational standardisation and consistent messaging to all Staffordshire residents.
- In-depth assessment of current waste composition to determine key areas of focus for minimisation and prevention projects, including the main waste streams (dry recycling and residual waste) and collection methodologies (kerbside and HWRCs).
- Collating data to further provide a baseline of current practices and to offer Central Government the necessary details required for future schemes, such as EPR payments and DRS impacts.

All documentation will be reviewed every five years over the 20-year term of the strategy, and where any large changes impact the strategic development, a revision can be drafted accordingly.

The strategy is currently delayed whilst awaiting further details on devolution plans, and it scheduled for public consultation in early 2026 and launch thereafter.

Appendix 3

Simpler recycling SWOT analysis

Strengths:

Enhanced recycling programs: The introduction of dual-stream recycling collections in 2022 has improved the quality of recyclable materials by reducing contamination. This system separates paper and cardboard from other recyclables, leading to more efficient recycling processes.

Community engagement: The #RecycleForGood campaign, launched in November 2024, demonstrates a strong commitment to community involvement. By collaborating with residents, the initiative fosters a culture of environmental responsibility and encourages better recycling practices.

Proactive adaptation: The councils' plan to implement separate food waste collections by 2026 aligns with national waste management goals. This proactive approach showcases adaptability and readiness to meet future regulations, positioning the service as a forward-thinking entity.

Weaknesses:

Resource allocation: Implementing new recycling initiatives requires substantial investment in infrastructure, such as specialised collection vehicles and containers. This financial burden could strain existing budgets and necessitate careful financial planning.

Public adaptation: Transitioning to new recycling systems may initially confuse residents, leading to improper sorting and increased contamination rates. Continuous education and clear communication are essential to mitigate this challenge.

Opportunities:

Increased recycling rates: Simpler and more efficient recycling systems can boost participation rates, leading to higher volumes of recycled materials and contributing to environmental sustainability.

Cost savings: Effective recycling programs can reduce the volume of waste sent to landfills, resulting in cost savings on landfill taxes and associated expenses. These funds can be redirected to enhance other community services.

Technological advancements: Embracing new technologies in waste collection and processing can improve efficiency, reduce operational costs, and provide data-driven insights for continuous improvement.

Threats:

Policy changes: Future alterations in national waste management policies or funding structures could impact the sustainability of current initiatives. Staying informed and adaptable is crucial to navigate potential regulatory shifts.

Public resistance: Despite the benefits, some community members may resist changes to waste collection routines, leading to non-compliance or negative perceptions of the service. Engaging with the community and addressing concerns transparently is vital.

External factors: Market fluctuations in the recycling industry, such as changes in the value of recyclable materials or international trade policies, could affect the economic viability of recycling programs.