

**REPORT TITLE: Simpler Recycling**

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>E&amp;CC Scrutiny</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>13 August 2025</b>
<b>Cabinet Member (if applicable)</b>	<b>Cllr Tyler Hawkins</b>
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	<b>Yes Yes</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>  To outline the changes in legislation regarding the introduction of Simpler Recycling in 2026 in the wider context of the Government's circular economy policies, and how this interlinks with Kirklees Council's current operations and contractual obligations.	
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No recommendations at this stage, information only</li> </ul> <b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not applicable</li> </ul>	
<b>Resource Implications:</b>  None at this stage, information on upcoming legislation only.	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</b>	<b>David Shepherd, Executive Director for Place Growth and Regeneration – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025</b>  Report for information only  Report for information only

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** None

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** This report contains no personal data and is GDPR compliant

## **1. Executive Summary**

The introduction of Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation in late 2024 aims to standardise recycling and waste collection across England, requiring producers to cover the costs of packaging waste and introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers. Kirklees Council must align its existing waste strategy and procurement plans to comply with these requirements, with significant implications for local services, residents, and contractual arrangements. Full compliance with the new legislation is due by 2026, but local implementation is proposed for 2028 to align with the expiry of the current waste contract.

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

A comprehensive understanding of legislative requirements for Simpler Recycling and EPR is essential, including waste stream separation, eligible materials, and funding mechanisms. It is also important to assess current contractual obligations, particularly the 30-year PFI waste contract expiring in 2028, and the implications for facility ownership and operational changes.

Additionally, a review of implementation timelines is necessary, including the proposed delay to 2028 and the engagement needed with residents and property types, such as back-to-back properties, HMOs, and flats. Financial analysis of EPR payments, disposal costs, funding through EPR or existing budgets, and projected changes to payment calculations will need to be conducted. Legal and operational considerations for the procurement of new waste treatment and reprocessing contracts under the Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP) must also be considered.

Finally, interdependencies with council waste strategy targets, community engagement outcomes, and ongoing assessments, such as Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP) assessments, as well as risk and asset management reviews. Alongside this, future options for our Household Waste and Recycling Centres and our Materials Recovery Facility options, should also be reviewed.

## **3. Implications for the Council**

### **3.1 Council Plan**

The waste service is a key component of the council plan, with the objective of enhancing performance, reducing contamination, and preparing for the implementation of Simpler Recycling. The service is currently evaluating various options for the introduction of Simpler Recycling to achieve its goals of improving performance and reducing contamination. This evaluation aims to identify a cost-effective solution that complies with legislative requirements while delivering the highest quality service to our residents.

### **3.2 Financial Implications**

The EPR introduces new funding mechanisms, with the first-year payment for Kirklees estimated at £6.6 million. However, future payments are uncertain due to a lack of clarity in calculation assumptions and the impact of disposal costs under a new contract.

The purchase of new bins, expanded collection services, and updated infrastructure would incur additional costs, particularly as the Council transitions from the existing PFI agreement, which are being highlighted pre-decision. Funding must be sourced through EPR payments or existing

budgets, with DEFRA acknowledging the challenges of aligning to individual council circumstances.

### **3.3 Legal Implications**

It is a legal requirement for all local authorities to comply with Simpler Recycling and EPR legislation, as non-compliance could expose the Council to regulatory risks. Contractual obligations under the current PFI waste contract, including facility hand backs and variations/extensions, must be managed alongside the transition to new legislative requirements. Additionally, the procurement of new waste treatment contracts must adhere to new procurement regulations, notably the Competitive Flexible Procedure.

### **3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality**

Simpler Recycling aims to increase recycling rates and reduce landfill, directly supporting climate and air quality objectives by minimising waste and emissions.

### **3.5 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

Risks include operational disruption during the transition period, uncertainty over future EPR funding, and the need for effective community engagement to ensure compliance and participation. The Council will need to assess the impacts on staffing, such as new collection routes and service changes, and conduct integrated impact assessments for equality, accessibility, and environmental outcomes. Ongoing audits, asset management, and multiple market engagements are required to ensure robust processes and risk mitigation.

The service is collaborating closely with the communications team to determine the most effective strategies for publicising the introduction of Simpler Recycling when it becomes necessary. This includes identifying the best methods to inform and educate residents and tailoring the message to various communities across the district. A comprehensive communication plan will be developed once a preferred option is selected, which will be based on the feedback from the planned engagement in 2026.

## **4. Consultation**

The Council's Waste Strategy was informed by significant public engagement, including 22,100 visits to the consultation website and 7,578 responses (79% online, 21% on paper). Ongoing consultation is planned during the Simpler Recycling roll-out, with a focus on understanding resident needs, especially for diverse property types. Feedback from these exercises will inform final implementation approaches.

## **5. Engagement**

Extensive engagement with residents and key stakeholders is planned over the coming years to facilitate a successful transition to Simpler Recycling and EPR compliance. This includes learning from other local authorities' experience and maintaining transparent communication with communities regarding timelines, service changes, and expected benefits. The Council's approach is iterative, with regular review points and opportunities for stakeholder input to inform decision-making and operational planning.

## **6. Options**

## **6.1 Options considered**

At this stage no options are being presented.

## **6.2 Reasons for recommended option**

Not applicable.

## **7. Next steps and timelines**

Cabinet decision on available options scheduled for 09 September 2025.

## **8. Contact officer**

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## **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Not applicable.

## **10. Appendices**

Not applicable.

## **11. Service Director responsible**

Katherine Armitage,  
Acting Service Director Highways and Streetscene  
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