



{ This Article was obtained from
[www.thisissomerset.co.uk/clevedon/Fortnightly
rubbish-collection-cards-recycling-revoluti...](http://www.thisissomerset.co.uk/clevedon/Fortnightly_rubbish-collection-cards-recycling-revoluti...)

About North Somerset Council, waste and
recycling changes, Cllr Carl Francis-Pester }

North Somerset Council, waste and recycling changes

THE weekly collection of rubbish in North Somerset is likely to be binned next year.

A revolutionary shake-up of waste disposal services could see the introduction of wheelie bins, a weekly food waste service, weekly instead of fortnightly kerbside recycling collections and the new wheelie bins only being emptied every fortnight.

Cllr Carl Francis-Pester, the authority's executive for waste, said there were a number of reasons for the change, due to take place next March.

These include the environmental imperative of boosting recycling rates and the need to avoid massive fines for exceeding landfill targets.

He denied the proposed changes broke a 2007 local election promise to keep weekly waste collections.

He said: "It will still be a weekly service, but the focus is changing from being a refuse collection service to a recycling service.

"We have achieved an awful lot to improve recycling levels in the past three years, but significant future improvements rely on making changes.

"Our plan is to bring about a revolution in the way we collect and deal with waste in this district."

He said recycling levels had risen from 20 per cent in 2005/06 to 41 per cent so far this year, which was an excellent performance and meant a reduction of 21,000 tonnes of waste going to landfill each year.

But the limitations of the current contractual arrangements mean the scope for further improvement is slight.

The existing seven-year contract expires next year and the council is currently tendering for a replacement seven-year deal.

It will decide at a meeting on Tuesday, October 13, who will operate the contract. Cllr Francis-Pester said the council was hoping to invert the proportions of waste being recycled and going to landfill.

He suggested a target of recycling more than 55 per cent of waste wasn't unreasonable.

He admitted changing how rubbish is collected is likely to prove controversial as it is one of the few services the council provides which is almost universal.

He said: "Most people view it as one of the main things their council tax pays for."

According to Cllr Francis-Pester doing nothing and just hoping recycling levels increased wasn't an option, because of the increasing cost of both sending rubbish to landfill and fines of up to £150 per tonne for exceeding landfill targets set by the European Union.

He said the only way the council could realistically expect people to recycle more was to make it as easy as possible by increasing the range of materials which can be increased from the kerbside and the frequency of collection.

The exact size of the wheelie bins depends on which firm wins the waste tender, but the council said it will be flexible depending on the size of the property and will take into account the needs of large families.

It also said it wouldn't microchip bins to monitor how much waste any given household was sending to landfill.

Cllr Francis-Pester said it didn't want to be perceived as acting in a 'Big Brother' fashion.

He said because food waste would be collected weekly and would be stored in lockable plastic boxes it wouldn't lead to an increase in vermin spreading litter.

Food waste collection services are being introduced as a third of the waste in existing black bags is food and diverting that from landfill is the biggest single factor in avoiding landfill tax increases.

Cllr Francis-Pester said, as well as its environmental benefits, investing in improved services now made more financial sense than paying the inevitable increased taxes and fines in the future if the council merely maintained the status quo.

Until the tender process is complete the council won't comment on the financial details of the contract, but at the moment it spends about £8.5 million per year on dealing with waste.