

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Food waste behaviour change invest to save programme
EIA Author	Name	Carl Holloway
	Position	Director of Communications and Policy
	Date of completion	29 th January 2026
Director	Name	Carl Holloway
	Position	Director of Communications and Policy
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr Hetherston
	Portfolio	Policy & Communications

PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- New policy / strategy
- New service
- Review of policy / strategy
- Review of service
- Commissioning
- Other project (*please give details*)

1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

Under the UK Government's Simpler Recycling reforms, waste collection authorities in England are required to introduce weekly household food waste collections by 31 March 2026, unless a transitional exemption applies due to an existing long term waste disposal contract.

Coventry City Council's food waste collection service is scheduled to commence in September 2026. At present, no dedicated budget has been identified for communications or engagement activity to support the rollout. The implementation of the food waste service is expected to be linked to significant savings targets, with the level of financial benefit directly dependent on resident uptake and participation. Higher participation will reduce the amount of waste presented in general waste bins, prevent food waste contamination of garden waste, and generate income through the disposal of food waste via anaerobic digestion.

The Council is already experiencing significant financial pressures arising from contamination within recycling and residual waste streams, with estimated costs of approximately £900,000 per annum. Contaminated waste increases disposal costs, undermines the efficiency of recycling services, and exposes the Council to the risk of future financial penalties associated with meeting statutory recycling targets.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

The council are proposing that we set up a behavioural insights approach to change residents' behaviours that are significantly impacting on Council's finances and environmental ASB.

This intervention is intended to prevent the behaviours that result in contamination and associated costs, rather than deal with the financial penalties and environmental impact. This approach has been successfully introduced in other councils.

If successful, the same approach could be applied to other areas such as fly-tipping, bulky waste, etc.

This business case requests a year 1 amount of £300,000 to fund the following.

1. The appointment of three new grade 3 engagement officer posts

Evidence from local councils shows that trusted local voices and officers are crucial to reinforce messages, correct misunderstandings, and increase adoption of pro-environmental behaviours. (Parliament Publications) The three Engagement Officer Posts (Grade 3) will ensure meaningful and sustained behaviour change beyond mass communications and will focus on:

- localised behaviour support to build trust and clarify confusion on bin use
- targeted place-based/audience-based interventions to reach households/audience groups most resistant or at risk of contamination
- real-time feedback to comms to allow iterative improvements to the campaign.

2. Specialist insight providers to inform targeted behaviour change strategies, for example:

- household segmentation and behavioural analysis – identify barriers, motivations, and attitudes across 148,500 households, including flats, multi-occupancy buildings, and diverse resident groups
- qualitative and quantitative research – focus groups, surveys, and community engagement to generate actionable, evidence-based insights
- tailored campaign materials and interventions – informed by insight to maximise engagement, participation, and recycling compliance
- benchmarking and best practice guidance – learnings from other councils and national programmes.
- evaluation planning – establish metrics and methods to measure the impact of communications and behaviour change interventions
- support for engagement officers – information packs, roadshow collateral etc to enable the three new posts to deliver highly targeted, localised campaigns effectively.

In years 2 and 3, the budget request is reduced based on the insight work only needing to be carried out in year 1. The 3 x G3 Waste Education Officer posts will be retained along with the budget for implementation of the behaviour change campaign using paid for media to support the Council's own channels.

1.3 List organisations and people who are involved in this area of work

Coventry Residents, Businesses and Visitors
 Waste Services
 Communications Team
 Public Health

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Director of Communications and Policy

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

To find out more about local data, please visit the below links:

[Facts about Coventry](#)

[Census 2021](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

2.1 Baseline data and information to include data on Protected Characteristics, Health Inequalities and Digital Inclusion

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary. Where possible, compare your data to local data using: Facts about Coventry; Census 2021; JSNA.

Resident priorities (2025 Your Voice Counts survey):

Environment and waste as a top priority - Residents rated Environment and Waste services (including tackling fly-tipping and waste collections) as the most important Council service, above street cleaning and highways/lighting.

Resident support for efficient environmental services - Respondents expressed a desire for efficient, well-managed services rather than “vanity projects” or high-profile initiatives. Strong demand exists for transparent, accountable, and locally-focused waste services, indicating that campaigns encouraging proper recycling behaviour are likely to be supported.

Engagement and participation insights - Survey findings showed that targeted communication increases participation, with respondents engaging via direct email, newsletters, and social media. Open-ended comments highlighted the importance of better engagement with residents and support for local initiatives, supporting the case for engagement officers and insight-led campaigns to improve recycling participation.

One Coventry Plan Objectives:

Commitment to tackling climate change and circular economy - The plan includes “Tackling the causes and consequences of climate change” as one of its three core priorities. Within this section, it explicitly states that the Council will support the minimisation of waste and development of a circular economy, moving away from a consumption-disposal model to extending the life of products, reuse and recycling.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Residents' role in environmental behaviour

The Plan asks residents to help deliver environmental goals through behaviours such as reusing and recycling more.

Performance reports support recycling priorities

The One Coventry Annual Performance Report provides detailed local data showing Coventry's recycling rate and challenges, and how behaviour and resident engagement are critical to improving it, including through education campaigns targeting barriers to recycling, especially in flats.

External national comparators and context:

Behavioural Science Unit (Public Health Wales) – Behaviour Change Underpins Long Term Recycling Growth - A behavioural science review examining household recycling in Wales shows how recycling rates grew from around 5% in 2000 to over 65% by 2023 through sustained behaviour focused interventions. The report highlights that effective recycling behaviour change requires a mix of structural changes (like bins) and behaviour change communication interventions that improve clarity and resident understanding.

Local Government Association

Hampshire Recycling Behaviour Change Case Study - Hampshire County Council used behavioural insights and targeted communications to improve recycling behaviour. Using insights from residents to tailor messages and channels, the campaigns led to measurable changes in self reported behaviours and reduced contamination in pilot areas. Contamination levels fell in one pilot from 29% to 25%, demonstrating that insight informed communications can impact real behaviours.

Keep Britain Tidy reports that behaviour-informed campaigns can produce significant improvements in recycling quality and contamination reduction. Examples include campaigns that achieved up to an 85% reduction in contamination behaviours among households exposed to focused behavioural messaging.

2.2 Please highlight which Marmot Principles does this EIA Support.

- 1. Give every child the best start in life**
- 2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives**
- 3. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all**
- 4. Create fair employment and good work for all**
- 5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities**
- 6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention**
- 7. Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes**
- 8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity**

SECTION 3 – Protected Groups

3.1 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	Extensive research / engagement with groups will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs. Schemes could include improved access to information and in-person engagement opportunities to young people through community groups, local roadshows, education establishments and through stakeholder specific paid-for channels
Age 19-64	P	Extensive research / engagement with groups will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs. Schemes could include improved access to information and in-person engagement opportunities to older communities through community groups, local roadshows, education establishments and through stakeholder specific paid-for channels
Age 65+	P	Elderly may struggle with new processes. Extensive research / engagement with groups will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs. Schemes could include Improved access to information and in-person engagement opportunities to older communities through community groups, local roadshows, education establishments and through stakeholder specific paid-for channels
Disability	P	People with disabilities may find the new process challenging. Extensive research / engagement with this group will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs.
Gender reassignment	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Pregnancy and maternity	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	Language barriers may lead to misunderstanding of the new process therefore contamination could continue. Extensive research / engagement with this group will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs.
Religion and belief	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Sex	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Sexual orientation	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
--------------------	----	--

3.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show any impact on the following characteristics which are not specified as protected characteristics but should be considered.

Group	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Care Experienced	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Armed Forces	NI	No adverse impacts are anticipated for this characteristic
Social Economic Groups (low income, poverty, education, unemployment, community safety and social support)	P	<p>Low socio-economic households: May face barriers such as lack of space for multiple bins or limited understanding of recycling rules. We will ensure that the insight work informs specific mitigations but learnings from other case studies include targeted engagement, free starter kits, and practical support.</p> <p>Multi-occupancy buildings & flats: Higher risk of contamination due to shared facilities. Mitigation: tailored interventions and communal bin management guidance.</p> <p>Extensive research / engagement with this group will support the development of tailored solutions that meet diverse needs.</p>

SECTION 4 –Next steps

Planned Action	Owner	Timescale

4.2 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

The way the impact of this proposal will be monitored is through complaints and comments received during both the consultation exercise and if/once the change is implemented (if adopted).

Collecting equality monitoring data where necessary to carry out analysis on who we are engaging with

The impact of this work will be measured through:

- Uptake of food waste scheme
- Reduction in contaminated waste
- Financial saving linked to contaminated waste

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

SECTION 5 – Impact on Council Staff

5.1 Will this area of work potentially have an impact on Council staff? Yes/No

If yes

Nature of impact and any mitigation required

Yes, 3 new grade 3 posts will be created.

SECTION 6 – Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

The potential impact of this proposal on protected groups is not yet known

Before you submit this form - please save your progress and forward the email you receive with any questions to equality@coventry.gov.uk. The team will review your Equality Impact Assessment and provide you with feedback.

Only click submit if the Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed and you have been advised to by the equality team.

7.0 Approval

Name of Head of Service:	Date approved by Head of Service:
Rachel Kerslake (interim)	29 Jan 2026
Name of Director:	Date sent to Director:
Carl Holloway	29/01/2026