

We the undersigned members of Wokingham Borough Council would like to call in the decision made by the Lib Dem/Labour coalition Executive to cease the provision of free food caddy liners to residents in 2023/24 as we believe that this will damage the rate of food recycling and put at risk the savings generated by food recycling.

The rules clearly define the decision as a Key Decision as follows:

- 1) The savings identified as £120K in the press release issued on 13/7/22 are material to the service under rule 1.4.4.a).
- 2) The additional saving attributed to an increase in food waste recycling in the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 is £350k. We believe this decision will damage the ability to deliver this. Rule 1.4.4. a) is relevant.
- 3) The decision affects every resident in the Borough across all wards (rule 1.4.4.b)). It puts additional stress on residents to find alternative methods of collecting food waste. This will inevitably have a knock-on effect on the volume of food waste collected as residents stop recycling food and simply put it into their blue bags therefore it is subject to call in under rule 5.1.9.5.b).
- 4) The decision is clearly a change of policy from that of the previous Conservative administration, which provided food caddy liners free for several years, including for 2022/3. Therefore it is a key decision under rule 5.1.9.5.a). There have been no savings identified by the previous administration in the MTFP related to the removal of food caddy liners.
- 5) As a Key Decision this is subject to suitable advance public notice as outlined under rule 1.4.4.2.

The previous policy agreed by Executive on 25th January 2018 states clearly on page 189 and in Appendix 2 on page 194 that free liners will be provided.

In particular page 194 of the report confirms the policy of free provision of caddy liners:

Q 4. Will we have to pay for the recycling boxes, caddies or bags.

A. No. Everything you need to recycle your food waste under this scheme will be provided free of charge. The bags that will be provided are biodegradable to go into food recycling waste and so we would ask people do not use other types of bag.

Reason for call in

We believe that the above rules clearly define this as a Key Decision and therefore the way this decision has been made breaks rule 5.4.11. regarding the procedure for Key Decisions as it was not placed on the Forward Programme and publicised at least 28 days before the publication of the decision.

Under Rule 5.4.14. the following 5 councillors would like to trigger the requirement for the Executive to submit a report to the Council as defined in the rule.

“The Committee may require the Executive to submit a report to the Council within such reasonable time as the Committee specifies. The power to require a report rests with the Committee, but is also delegated to the Proper Officer, who shall require such a report on behalf of the Committee when so requested by the Chairman or any five members of the Council. Alternatively the requirement may be raised by a resolution passed at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.”

Thank you

Signed by:
Pauline Jorgensen
Jacqueline Rance
Norman Jorgensen
Alison Swaddle
Keith Baker
Philip Cunninton
Gregor Murray