

Bath & North East Somerset Council			
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Tim Ball, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services  Cllr Matthew McCabe, Cabinet Member for Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development		
DECISION DATE:	On or after 8 May 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:	
		E	3613
TITLE:	Re-provide a Recycling Centre for Bath in Locksbrook Road to enable Midland Road Recycling Centre to close and housing development to commence on the site		
WARD:	All		
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM			
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – Plan of sites involved Appendix 2 – Bath RC proposed plan			

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The council-owned site at Midland Road Depot (MRD) has planning permission for around 176 new homes including affordable housing, delivery of which is a council priority. This housing scheme is part of the Bath Western Riverside regeneration programme (see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 MRD Waste and Transfer Station has now relocated to the state-of-the-art Keynsham Recycling Hub (KRH) as part of a multi-million-pound scheme to modernise waste and recycling facilities across the authority. The public Recycling Centre is the only remaining function at MRD which needs to close in 2026 to enable the housing development to commence.
- 1.3 The council is committed to re-providing a recycling facility in Bath to serve the residents in the centre and the east of the city and now planning permission has been granted for [24/03168/REG03](#), this will be constructed in Locksbrook Road on the site of the Cleansing Yard and The Old Coal Yard (see Appendix 2).
- 1.4 In order to commence construction of Bath Recycling Centre (RC), Cleansing Services will move out of this site to the Transport Depot recently vacated by Fleet operations, also in Locksbrook Road. This site is currently not fit for purpose and requires remodelling and refurbishment
- 1.5 Reviewing the Transport Depot was part of the Pixash Site Redevelopment Capital Project, as Fleet operations relocated from here to KRH in 2024. Retaining SEND Passenger Transport (SENDPT) operations alongside

Cleansing Services at the Transport Depot and upgrading facilities is now proposed to be carried out within this project.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet Members are asked to make the decisions set out in the following recommendations for a recycling centre at Locksbrook Road**

### **2.1 Recommendation 1**

Fully approve a capital budget allocation of £4.554m for construction of a new Recycling Centre in Locksbrook Road on the site of the existing Cleansing Yard and the adjacent 'Old Coal Yard' site; and

### **2.2 Recommendation 2**

Fully approve capital budget allocation of £5.543m to refurbish the Locksbrook Road Transport Depot units 1 and 2 to provide fit for purpose facilities for SENDPT Service who remain on this leased site in unit 2 and Cleansing Services who will relocate to unit 1 on this site; and this includes a virement from the Pixash Site Redevelopment budget, of £1.4m. In addition, the abortive cost of £58k from alternative site proposals to revert to revenue.

### **2.3 Recommendation 3**

Delegate to officers the power to appoint contractors and all other matters relating to project delivery and implementation of **recommendations** 1 and 2.

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted on 9 April 2025 and this executive decision means that the council can now undertake a tender exercise to appoint a construction contractor and a timely start to construction can be made.
- 3.2 The relocation of MRD Recycling Centre is part of the Council's longstanding depot consolidation and modernisation programme. The construction of the KRH in 2023 enabled the relocation of waste operations from MRD, the recycling operations from Ashmead Road in Keynsham and the Fleet Maintenance/MOT Service from Locksbrook Road Transport Depot in Bath.
- 3.3 The Midland Road site has been allocated for housing as part of the Bath Western Riverside regeneration programme. Planning permission for circa 176 homes has been granted. Construction is due to start in mid-2026.
- 3.4 To allow the housing construction to commence, MRD Recycling Centre must relocate in line with the Liberal Democrat commitment at the local elections in 2022 to maintain recycling facilities in Bath.
- 3.5 Following exhaustive site searches over several years, the site at Locksbrook Road was chosen as the most feasible and appropriate location to maintain recycling provision for the residents of Bath and aligns with the council's climate and nature priorities and aims to further increase recycling rates across B&NES.
- 3.6 The proposed site will consist of an operational area accessed by an operational entrance. This will contain 7 skips for the collection of the most commonly

deposited items at the current Midland Road Public Recycling Centre. There will also be a weighbridge, and 3 tipping bays for cleansing to deposit street sweepings, weed waste and litter bin waste, washdown facilities, parking for plant and electric vehicle charge points. The existing welfare facilities will be retained and enhanced with solar panels. A separate public entrance will provide 11 dedicated parking / offloading bays and room for 5 vehicles for queuing. Access to the 7 skips will be via a gantry. There will also be a small cabin at the entrance for a member of staff to manage access and separate walking and cycling access from the river towpath, see Appendix 2.

- 3.7 Materials accepted will be general waste, bulky waste, wood, garden waste, metals (including large domestic appliances), cardboard and upholstered furniture. There will also be a dry recycling area for paper, glass, cans, plastics (bottles, pots, tubs and trays) and textiles. However, these items will be reviewed periodically to ensure they meet the needs of residents.
- 3.8 Cleansing Services currently occupy the site of the proposed recycling centre at Locksbrook Road and will relocate to the Transport Depot site, also on Locksbrook Road (Northside) which enables them to maintain easy access to Bath RC which will house their tipping bays for street sweepings, weed waste and litter bin bags.
- 3.9 The Highways Service City Centre team will also share the Cleansing Service facility to maintain efficient operations following their vacation of Argyle Works (also being developed for Housing). The SEND Passenger Transport currently occupy the other half of this site and will remain here following the decision not to relocate this service to Odd Down. The whole site requires refurbishment to provide facilities of an acceptable standard for staff and enable efficient operations.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The council is the Waste Collection and Disposal Authority with statutory responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act (1990). Our waste and recycling infrastructure is being redeveloped in line with forecast growth in population and households detailed in the Core Strategy, and to adapt to future changes in waste, environmental and health and safety legislation.
- 4.2 The Environment Act 2021 gained Royal Assent on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Act makes provision for protecting and improving the natural environment in the UK. It sets out numerous measures, including environmental governance; the clean air strategy; biodiversity net gain; trees; conservation covenants; extended producer responsibility for packaging; increasing recycling quality and levels; a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers. Other elements that may have significant implications for local authority waste and recycling services are consistent recycling services across the country (Simpler Recycling), extended food and garden waste collections, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and tackling waste crime.
- 4.3 The site will be operated in accordance with an Environmental Permit issued by the Environment Agency. The permit will only be granted once the Environment Agency are satisfied that the operations on site will not cause a nuisance to any nearby receptors. All operations will be carried out in strict accordance with the

permit and any compliance issues will be dealt with through enforcement from the Environment Agency.

4.4 The waste and recycling industry is high-risk in health and safety terms, and the site will deliver suitable operational buildings and work areas where compliant Health and Safety Executive working practices can be fully implemented and maintained to keep our staff and the public safe.

4.5 The Council Waste and Cleansing fleet is heavily regulated. All council vehicles, from 3.5 tonne GVW upwards, are controlled through our Operators licence, granted by the Traffic Commissioner who is responsible for the licensing and regulation of those who operate heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches, working with the DVSA, on driver testing and other traffic and road safety matters.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 Approved budget allocation to date for Feasibility and Development is £840K

5.2 Forecast capital costs are outlined in the following tables:

<b>Bath Recycling Site Works (South)</b>	<b>£'000</b>
F&D - Prior Year spend plus current 24/25 fully approved budget:	495
Project Delivery	3,227
Equipment	372
20% Contingency	720
Staffing - Internal recharges	235
<b>Total Bath Recycling Centre:</b>	<b>5,049</b>
<b>Of which is pending full approval:</b>	<b>4,554</b>
<b>Transport Depot Refurb, Cleansing &amp; SEND PT (North)</b>	<b>£'000</b>
F&D - Prior Year spend plus current 24/25 fully approved budget:	345
Transport Depo Lease Considerations - Based on 20yr term	2,968
Project Delivery	1,959
Equipment	50
20% Contingency	402
Staffing - Internal recharges	164
<b>Total Transport depot Refurb:</b>	<b>5,888</b>
<b>Of which is pending full approval:</b>	<b>5,543</b>
<b>Capital Summary</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Bath Recycling Site Works (South)	5,049
Transport Depot Refurb, Cleansing & SEND PT (North)	5,888
<b>OVERALL TOTAL:</b>	<b>10,937</b>
<i>Of which £840k is already approved for F&amp;D</i>	<i>- 840</i>
<b>TOTAL REQUEST FOR FULL APPROVAL</b>	<b>10,097</b>

5.3 The provisional budget remaining for the scheme is £13.36m. In addition, within the KRH Site Development Budget £1.4m was reserved for re-provision of SENDPT depot who didn't relocate with other Fleet Operations and are now

absorbed into these proposals. Funded by Corporate Supported Borrowing and envisaged revenue repayment of £909k p.a. The “underspend” on capital releases £332k p.a. savings, which is redirected towards additional operational costs of £328k

- 5.4 The relocation of SENDPT depot which had envisaged moving to another site, was aborted as relocation of the Cleansing Team could be accommodated from the space vacated by Fleet Operations, now at KRH. Costs of £58k were incurred which will not result in asset improvement and can now be reclassified as revenue costs in 2025-26, with funding provided in the business case. Revenue Costs are outlined in the following table:

<b>Revenue (Transport Depot 20-year lease) 000's</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Current Budget for Cost of Borrowing (Based on £14.2m WM budget and £1.4m to be transferred from Pixash Site Redevelopment)</b>	909
Updated cost of borrowing, per year	577
Additional Operations Costs & Lease	328
<b>Revised Revenue estimate, per year</b>	<b>904</b>
<b>REDUCTION - variance to original costing</b>	<b>- 5</b>

- 5.5 Bring Bank proposals are not affordable from the provisional funding envelope.
- 5.6 The business case has been updated regularly to reflect current financial positions; project scope and estimated costs; strategic fit and the case for change; economic case and procurement considerations; management, delivery and governance arrangements; risks, constraints and dependencies.
- 5.7 The business case provides the corporate assurance that the investment is justified and financially robust and provides a management tool for evidence-based and transparent decision making and gateway sign-off.
- 5.8 Approximately 5 operational staff will be based at the new Bath RC and approximately 40-45 staff at the Locksbrook Road Depot in updated welfare and office facilities, tailored to operational needs and in accordance with our Health, Safety & Wellbeing policies. There will be no changes to staffing as a result of this project implementation.

#### risk management

- 5.9 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.
- 5.10 Delivery of this project includes comprehensive risk management procedures and project and quality assurance through supervision of the design development and construction phases. This will include contract administration, inspection and approval of works.

## 6 EQUALITIES

- 6.1 As a front-facing service with significant touch points with all residents and households across the district, waste and recycling collections and public reuse

and recycling centres have a core focus of equality and accessibility. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out and is published here: [EqIA](#).

- 6.2 The EqIA has been reviewed by the Independent Equalities Advisory Group (IEAG) and once Bath RC is operational, will be a working document under constant review by Waste Operations through continual engagement by managers and staff on site and with equalities training included in training plans

## **7 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 7.1 The modernisation of the waste and recycling infrastructure is in line with the Council's waste minimisation and recycling improvement targets.
- 7.2 Incorporating biodiversity net gain (BNG) into the design and build of the facility and improving the energy efficiency of the buildings e.g. solar panels, will help towards the carbon neutral goals and help further the council's climate emergency objectives.
- 7.3 The business case identifies the requirement to consider the Councils longer term fleet decarbonisation needs. The requirement for upgrading all sites to reflect the move towards a preference to EV (or other low carbon) vehicles is required if the council is to achieve net zero by 2030 and infrastructure to support this will be included where possible.

## **8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 Do nothing: This entails a high risk of service failure for Waste Services as the existing MRD site is no longer fit for purpose, on the limit of the tonnage it can manage and has been underinvested for many years. Aside from this, the site has been allocated for housing and the RC must relocate by mid 2026 to bring the much-needed housing forward as a council priority thereby leaving Bath with no household recycling provision which would not support the council's climate and sustainability objectives.
- 8.2 Lease or purchase sites and re-develop so fit for purpose: This entails high financial and operational risk. There are no suitable, feasible sites of sufficient size and capacity within the district, nor close by in neighbouring districts that will suit objectives. The council would need to invest in purchasing or leasing land for construction and indicative financial and property benchmarking costs show significantly more capital growth would be required.

## **9 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 This report has been approved by the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- 9.2 Following positive pre-application advice from Planning Services, a public engagement exercise took place during June 2024. A website was set up to explain the development proposals with information updates. A drop in event on 18th June 2024 was held in Locksbrook Road at the former MOT test centre offices which was attended by circa 100 people and the local Ward Members. Feedback was collected and informed the design of the planning application which was submitted in August 2024. The statutory planning consultation closed on 4 October but following the amended submission was extended to a new date of 27th November 2024.

<b>Contact person</b>	Simon Porter, Head of Waste Services
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	



Appendix 1 Map of sites





## Appendix 2 Bath Recycling Centre Proposed Plan

