

Last week Cabinet agreed a new waste strategy for the borough, aiming to do everything possible to cut down waste, increase recycling, protect the environment, and save public money.

The new strategy will allow us to invest in better containers, ensure recycling is collected weekly, continue to support the most vulnerable, support the local re-use/repair network of organisations, and will support our efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

Increasing recycling must be a collective effort – as residents, we all need to play our part.

Co-mingling (having just one bin for recycling) might be easier but because items get contaminated when mixed together it limits their future use from recycling. This is worse for the environment and impacts our ability to generate income to fund other essential services.

It's also likely that the government will shortly announce changes that will see many Council's move away from co-mingled collections.

That's why we're all being asked to separate our waste.

And the fact is we have to put less in our brown residual waste bins.

For every tonne of rubbish that goes in the brown bin at the moment, it costs the council around £120.

In 2021/22 it cost the council nearly £5m to get rid of brown bin waste, and given that we've found that up to 75% of the rubbish in brown bins could be recycled, that means we are spending more than £3.5m every year that could be used for services instead.

Children and young people understand the environmental urgency better than most, and can be our best advocates to encourage more recycling. That's why the recycling and waste service work actively to engage schools across the borough, the most recent example being the competition to name our new hydrogen-powered collection vehicle – the first in the UK.

We will also be continuing to support the Assisted Collection Scheme to help any vulnerable people who find it difficult managing the waste system. We've invested in new in-cab technology that reminds drivers of the location of assisted collections and if there are any special collection arrangements.

Council staff on the frontline work exceptionally hard, and I'd like to thank them and officers for their efforts, and Cllr Andy Bowden for bringing this new strategy forward.

You can find out much more at [www.sthelens.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/recycling).

Best wishes to all Star readers.