

CABINET

14 November 2023

GREEN WASTE CHARGES FOR 2024/25

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and the Environment

Strategic Aim:	A modern and effective Council	
Key Decision: Yes	Forward Plan Reference: FP/220923	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Cllr C Wise, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and the Environment	
Contact Officer(s):	Penny Sharp, Strategic Director for Places	psharp@rutland.gov.uk
	Angie Culleton, Head of Public Realm	aculleton@rutland.gov.uk
	Emily Frikha, Environment Manager	efrikha@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposed annual charge of £60 per bin for the 2024/25 financial year.
2. Authorises the Director for Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with portfolio for Environment, to revise as necessary the terms and conditions associated with the implemented chargeable service for the kerbside collection of green waste.
3. Approves the recommendation that future green waste charges are included in the annual Fees and Charges report a year in advance.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To request approval of revised charges for Green Waste collections in 2024/25.

2. BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Green Waste charges were introduced in 2018/19 in order for the Council to recover the costs of providing a collection service to residents.
- 2.2 There is a discount of 25% available to households in receipt of Local Council Tax

Support. This has applied across all years of the scheme.

2.3 Payments for subscriptions are accepted online or over the phone. We are not able to accept payment by cash or by card 'in person' at the Council offices. The Council offices do not have a till function to accept cash and the foyer area is not a secure environment for processing card payments. Cheque payments are still accepted but discouraged due to the additional resource required to process these.

2.4 The following table shows a breakdown of current budgeted expenditure for green waste collections:

2023/24 budget:

Operational Costs	£496,600
Directorate Management and corporate support costs	£123,400
Total Expenditure	£620,000.00
Number of subscriptions (Forecast to December 2023)	12,649
Cost per bin (no. of subs divided by the total cost)	£49.02

2.5 This suggests that the current charge set for 2023/24 of £50 is accurate.

2.6 The Directorate Management costs is an allocation of staffing within Places and Environmental Services. Corporate costs are an allocation from Council support services including staffing and property costs. This figure is allocated as per Government Revenue Outturn Returns.

2.7 The table below shows the comparison between current green waste charges for Rutland and Rutland Experian Mosaic near neighbours (correct as of September 2023):

Local Authority	Cost per subscription	Variations	Discount
South Northamptonshire (West Northants Council)	£55		None stated.
Stratford-on-Avon	£44		None stated.
Daventry (West Northants Council)	£55		None stated.
Rutland	£50		25% discount if eligible for local Council Tax Support.

South Cambridgeshire	£45	First bin is free. Additional bins are chargeable. Bin is for both Food and garden waste.	None stated.
Uttlesford	£50		25% discount if eligible for local Council Tax Support.
Maldon	£56	Charge for new bin/replacement bin is £31.	None stated.
Wychavon	£52	Also offer chargeable garden sacks.	None stated for bins. 50% discount for sacks if registered disabled.
Harborough	£61		None stated.
East Hampshire	£76	Also offer chargeable garden sacks. Charge for new/replacement bin is £44.	None stated.
Melton	£85	Run by Biffa's Green Waste Club. Replacement bins charged at £20 plus VAT. Removal charged at £12.	None stated.

3. 2024/25 SUBSCRIPTION CHARGES

- 3.1 Project work for 2024/25 subscription period commenced in Autumn 2023. Therefore a decision is needed regarding the subscription charge.
- 3.2 As well as inflation costs, additional expenditure will be incurred due to the extension of the Biffa contract. Subscription numbers are expected to remain at similar levels. However an increased subscription charge, in conjunction with the current cost of living crisis could lead to a drop in subscription numbers. This would mean that the subscription cost would need to be higher in order for the council to recover costs.
- 3.3 **OPTION 1** - Based on inflation of 6% on total expenditure, the following figures would apply for 2024/25:

2024/25 budget: Modelled on 6% inflation

Staff (includes Green Waste Officer and CST)	£51,940
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Car Milage (monitoring and inspections)	£2,968
Equipment and printing costs	£26,500
Bank fees and charges	£16,960
Postage	£5,830
Publicity	£0
Software Licences	£10,600
Waste Collection	£414,598
Predicted expenditure	£529,396
Directorate Management costs	£46,004
Corporate Support costs	£84,800
	£660,200.00
Predicted number of subscriptions	12,649
Cost per bin (no. of subs divided by the total cost)	£52.19

- 3.4 This would mean a subscription charge of £52 for 2024/25.
- 3.5 If the predicted 6% inflation is incorrect, then any difference will be included in the price adjustment the following year.
- 3.6 **OPTION 2 –** alternatively the Council could choose to increase charges by more than £2 per subscription to bring it into line with neighbouring authorities charges and to increase contribution to core costs (including capital expenditure on new collection vehicles under the extension).

2024/25 budget: Modelled on 6% inflation

Staff (includes Green Waste Officer and CST)	£51,940
Car Milage (monitoring and inspections)	£2,968
Equipment and printing costs	£26,500
Bank fees and charges	£16,960
Postage	£5,830
<i>Contribution to capital costs of new vehicle purchase</i>	<i>£55,000</i>
Software Licences	£10,600
Waste Collection	£414,598
Predicted expenditure	£584,396
Directorate Management costs	£46,004
Corporate Support costs	£84,800
	£715,200.00
Predicted number of subscriptions	12,649
Cost per bin (no. of subs divided by the total cost)	£56.54

This gives a suggested subscription cost of £57.

- 3.7 **OPTION 3** - Should the subscription cost increase to £57, it is possible that approximately 5% of subscriptions will be lost. In order to mitigate this loss, the subscription charge could be set at £60 in order to fully cover costs:

2024/25 budget: Modelled on 6% inflation

Staff (includes Green Waste Officer and CST)	£51,940
Car Milage (monitoring and inspections)	£2,968
Equipment and printing costs	£26,500
Bank fees and charges	£16,960
Postage	£5,830
<i>Contribution to capital costs of new vehicle purchase</i>	<i>£55,000</i>
Software Licences	£10,600
Waste Collection	£414,598
Predicted expenditure	<u>£584,396</u>
	-
Directorate Management costs	£46,004
Corporate Support costs	£84,800
	-
	<u>£715,200.00</u>
Predicted number of subscriptions	<i>12,017</i>
Cost per bin (no. of subs divided by the total cost)	<u>£59.52</u>

- 3.8 Going forwards, the proposal is to include future green waste charges in the annual fees and charges report a year in advance. The fee will be based on an agreed inflation rate.

- 3.9 This would mean that the report due for approval in February 2024 (for 2024/25 prices) will include the green waste charge for 2025/26. This removes the need for a separate report being presented to Cabinet each year.

The reason why 2024/25 subscription charges cannot be included in the February 2024 Fees and Charges report is because details of the scheme finalised each autumn to enable publicity documents, welcome letters and stickers to be printed and posted ready for the scheme start date of 1st April. Approval in February does not allow enough time to do this.

RCC Fees and charges report drafted (for 2024/25 prices) To include green waste price for 2025/26	November 2023
Green Waste letter and sticker artwork sign-off	19th January 2024

Invitation to renew letters sent to existing green waste subscribers	First week of February 2024
Subscription window (during which residents must subscribe in order to guarantee use of the scheme from 1st April)	February 2024
Full Council approval of RCC Fees and Charges report (for 2024/25 prices). To include green waste charge for 2025/26	26th February 2024
Welcome letters and stickers sent to customers	March 2024
2024/25 green waste scheme go- live date	1st April 2024

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The above recommendations have not been subject to public consultation.

4.2 This is on the basis that there is no statutory duty to consult and that the council can demonstrate it has exercised fairness because:

- a. It is an optional service.
- b. Alternative options for green waste disposal are available.
- c. The proposed fee is reasonable and proportionate.
- d. Residents on Local Council Tax Support are entitled to a 25% discount.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 An alternative to the proposed fee, in light of the current cost of living crisis, would be to freeze charges at £50 for 2024/25. This would mean that the council is not able to recover the costs of providing the service. This shortfall would have to be found from elsewhere within the directorate.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 With Option 1 (a subscription cost of £52), if subscription numbers remain stable, the Council expects to recover some costs associated with providing the collection service. However this option does not contribute towards the capital costs of the new vehicle purchase

6.2 Option 2 (£57 per subscription) does contribute towards the capital costs of new vehicles. However if subscription numbers were to reduce, there is a risk that costs may not be fully recovered.

6.3 Therefore Option 3 (£60 per subscription) is recommended in order to attempt to fully recover all costs associated with providing the collection service.

7. LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 states 'no charge shall be made for collection of household waste except in cases prescribed in regulations

made by the Secretary of State'. Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 states that charges may be made for collection of garden waste (also referred to as green waste). This was therefore the legal basis for the introduction of charging.

7.2 Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also states that the authority may recover a reasonable charge for the collection of waste from the person who made the request. The Council has therefore set annual charges with the intention of recovering associated operation contract costs, overheads and administration costs, with the exception of disposal costs which as per the legislation, are not recoverable. The Council cannot profit from charging for the collection service.

7.3 Under the Simpler Recycling waste reforms, DEFRA have recently (October 2023) confirmed that all Local Authorities will be required to collect garden waste by 31st March 2026. Therefore, Rutland County Council must continue to provide this service to residents.

8. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has been completed. No adverse or other significant risks/issues were found. A copy of the DPIA can be obtained from Emily Frikha -efrikha@rutland.gov.uk

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 No adverse impacts have been identified.

9.2 A 25% discount will continue to be available to residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support.

10. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no Community Safety implications from the above recommendations.

11. HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications from the above recommendations.

12. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental implications

12.1 The above recommendations would protect the valued but non-statutory service of green waste collections. The collection of green waste positively contributes to the Council recycling rate and diverts green waste from disposal.

Human Resource implications

12.2 There are no Human Resources implications.

Procurement Implications

12.3 There are no procurement implications.

13. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The proposed charge of £60 per subscription for 2024/25 is reasonable and proportional in light of current inflationary and budget pressures, the purchase of new collection vehicles and the extension of the Biffa contract.
- 13.2 It is recommended that the charge of £60 per subscription is approved for 2024/25.
- 13.3 It is recommended that future green waste charges are included in the annual Fee and Charges report a year in advance.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 There are no appendices.

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