

CABINET

15 August 2017

GREEN WASTE COLLECTIONS CHARGING

Report of the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport)

Strategic Aim:	Sustainable Growth	
Key Decision: Yes	Forward Plan Reference: FP/140717/04	
If not on Forward Plan:	Chief Executive Approved	N/A
	Scrutiny Chair Approved	N/A
Reason for Urgency:	N/A	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr A Walters, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Culture, Sport & Recreation and Environment	
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Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Recommends to Council the implementation of a charge for the kerbside collections of Green Waste, starting on 01st April 2018.
2. Recommends to Council an annual charge per bin, starting at £35 for the financial year 2018/19.
3. Authorises the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport), 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 collections of Green Waste.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To request approval for the implementation of a charge for the kerbside collections of Green Waste, starting on 01st April 2018.
- 1.2 To set the initial annual charge per bin of £35 for the financial year 2018/19.
- 1.3 To authorise the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport), in consultation with the Cabinet Member with portfolio for Environment, to draft and then to revise as necessary the terms and conditions associated with the implemented chargeable service for the kerbside collections of Green Waste.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The number of local authorities charging for Green Waste collections has been steadily increasing since 2000. It is anticipated that by the end of this year 50% will be charging, and by the end of 2019 over 70%.
- 2.2 One of the key drivers for introducing a charge is the Council's financial position and in particular the reduction in Government funding. The Council estimates that by 2020/21, it will have a financial gap of in excess of £1m and any charge will go towards closing this gap.

3 SCHEME DETAILS

- 3.1 The scheme will operate as follows:
 - After the initial subscription process and subsequent annual renewal processes, customers will be able to join up to the end of December each year;
 - Payment options will be direct debit, web payment or by phone;
 - The scheme will have a dedicated telephone number and email address;
 - Cancellation and refunds will only be issued in exceptional circumstances;
 - There will be a 25% discount for those on local council tax support;
 - Existing bins will not be removed from customers who do not join the scheme, unless they specifically request this; and
 - Stickers will be issued to identify those bins 'in the scheme'.

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 that it has 'exercised fairness' because:
 - The Council has previously publically set out its challenging financial position and that it will have to generate additional income to protect services;
 - The Council has never vowed that it will always maintain a free of charge for Green Waste collection service;
 - The chargeable service will be optional;
 - Alternative options for the disposal of Green Waste are available and reasonable, including use of the two Civic Amenity Sites and home composting (the Council subsidises the provision of home composters to Rutland residents);
 - The £35 annual fee is reasonable, equating to less than 70 pence per week;

- and
- Those residents on local council tax support will be eligible for a 25% hardship discount.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 An alternative option is to keep things as they are and not implement a charge for the kerbside collections of Green Waste.
- 5.2 An alternative delivery model, utilising Biffa's Garden Waste Club, has been considered but rejected due to the higher costs for residents.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The costs of delivering the service are estimated at c£308k; £209k for operational contract costs, £39k for overheads and £60k for administration.
- 6.2 At a projected 50% take up, which equates to 8,000 bins, the associated income generation based on the annual £35 per bin charge, is £280,000 per annum.
- 6.3 With a charge of £35 the Council therefore expects to recover the majority of costs.
- 6.4 As operational contract costs and overheads are already included in the Medium Term Financial Plan, the new income is expected to deliver a net Medium Term Financial Plan contribution of £220k per annum. This assumes the projected 50% take up rate.
- 6.5 The charge will be subject to indexation in future years, as the recoverable costs will also be subject to annual inflation increases. This will be subject to corporate procedures for setting fees and charges.

7 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 states "no charge shall be made for the 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 the collection of garden waste (also referred to as Green Waste). This is therefore a valid legal basis for the proposal.
- 7.2 It is noted that there is no provision for the Council to charge for disposing of Green Waste collected from residents.
- 7.3 Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also states that the authority may recover a reasonable charge for the collection of the waste from the person who made the request. The Council has therefore set a charge with a view to recovering the majority of associated operational contract costs, overheads and administration costs, with the exception of disposal costs which, per the legislation, are not recoverable.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Equality impact assessment screening has been carried out and no adverse

impacts have been identified.

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no community safety implications from the above recommendations.

10 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

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

11 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Environmental implications

11.2 The above recommendations would protect the valued but non-statutory service of kerbside collections of Green Waste, supporting the strategic aim of 'sustainable growth'.

11.3 Human Resource implications

11.4 The scheme administration allows for one new permanent post, as well as temporary staff to be employed during annual renewal periods.

11.5 Procurement implications

11.6 The procurement of a new IT software system is required, although this will deliver other long-term benefits. Associated costs are included in the estimated scheme administration costs.

12 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 The implementation of a charge for the kerbside collection of Green Waste is recommended as it is a reasonable change that will protect this valued but non-statutory service.

12.2 An initial annual charge per bin of £35 is recommended as this will, based on the projected take up rate, give some flexibility for future adjustment whilst balancing cost recovery only against an optimum positive impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

12.3 Authorising the relevant Director to revise as necessary the associated terms and conditions, is required in order to ensure that the scheme can be delivered and managed appropriately following any initial lessons learnt.

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

14 APPENDICES

14.1 There are no appendices.

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