

PAPER NO.7

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 5 DECEMBER 2016

Meeting: Executive
Date: 5 December 2016
Subject: Waste Collection Review (Garden Waste)
Report of: Mark Perris
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Bannister
Status: For Information
Relevant Ward(s): All

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To consider the review of the implementation of the Garden Waste service and to consider the fees for year two of the service commencing April 2017.

2 Recommendations:

2.1 To note the review and the proposed process for 2017/18.

2.2 To provide a free Christmas Tree collection for all Garden Waste subscribers in January 2017.

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 To allow the subscription process to commence in January 2017.

4 Key Facts

Review

4.1 In April 2016, the Council introduced a chargeable Garden Waste service, having been a free service previously since 2003/04.

4.2 The annual fee per bin was set at £40.

4.3 The contract with FCC included a fixed charge for all properties up to 9,250, with the fee shared 50/50 for all subscriptions over this figure.

4.4 The chargeable green waste service has been very successful with total bin subscriptions numbering 18,937 as at 24 November 2016.

- 4.5 For the 2016/17 subscription year, the following payment methods were available to customers;
- Online – debit and credit card
 - Telephone – debit and credit card
 - Face to Face – cash, cheque, debit and credit card
- 4.6 The Council utilised the online payment system of Charnwood Borough Council, who operate the Council's Contact Centre, due to difficulties with the payment system at Harborough District Council.
- 4.7 The Council utilised the Lagan, CRM, system to identify all subscribers and issue a letter with the bin sticker. The customers using phone and face to face were entered directly into the system at the point of contact. Web based subscriptions were entered in the following day on receipt of email conformation from the Charnwood payments system.
- 4.8 The database information was provided to FCC, the Environmental Service contractor, for loading on to their "Whitespace" system so each property subscribing and the number of bins for each property was clearly identified.
- 4.9 The process was resource intensive, in part, as this was the first year of the service, but, also, as the various systems are not integrated. However, the cost of integration of the different systems is far in excess of the cost of the staff resource which was utilised.
- 4.10 All those who subscribed by 25 March 2016, i.e. 1 week before the service commenced, were provided with a service in the first round of collections.
- 4.11 Overall, the system operated effectively and the Council delivered a good quality service with very few issues arising. Over a two week period we empty 18,937 green bins, this equates to 302,992 collections from April 1st to 24th November 2016. The total number of complaints regarding the operational garden waste service is 46 for the same period. This equates to 0.015%. This is extremely low and shows how well the service has bedded in and is operating across the district.

Payment Options

- 4.12 The Council has explored alternative payment options including;
- Invoicing/Direct Debit
 - Recurrent Debit Card payments

The provision of both options is constrained by the Council's current finance system, which is due to be upgraded in early 2017. As such, it is not feasible to offer these options for the 2017/18 financial year.

- 4.13 The Council will seek to establish the demand for these payment systems to allow consideration for their introduction for the 2018/19 service.

2017/18 Service

- 4.14 The Council have identified streamlining opportunities to further improve the service and reduce costs. This includes not completing the label with customers' details prior to distribution and not including a unique reference number on the sticker. This will reduce administrative time and allow requests to be dealt with more quickly.
- 4.15 In accordance with the Council decision of 23 February 2015 (General Fund Revenue Estimates and Capital Programme item 2.7), that the s. 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Financial and Commercialisation is able determine fees and charges it has been agreed to retain the fee for Garden Waste per bin at £40 for 2017/18.
- 4.16 This will enable commencement of the new subscription process in January 2017, to ensure a smooth continuation of the service in April 2017.

Christmas Tree Collection

- 4.17 The Budget position for 2016/17 is as follows;

Garden Waste Service 2016/17						
	Approved Budgets £	Additional Budgets linked to Gain share £	Updated Budget £	Spend to the end of September £	Projected Outturn £	Variance £
Core Contract for 9250 Lifts	766,200	192,880	959,080	383,491	959,080	-
Garden Waste Recycling Gate Fees	242,900		242,900	92,771	160,608	- 82,292
Garden Waste Administrator/Agency	27,465		27,465	29,229	42,729	15,264
Other Supplies and Services (AMEC, Website Development, Consumerables etc)	-		-	5,012	11,600	11,600
Income	- 360,000	- 192,880	- 552,880	- 745,760	- 552,880	-
Sub Total	676,565	-	676,565	- 235,257	621,137	- 55,428

The above table demonstrates that the garden waste service is performing well with;

- Additional £192,880 of income which is contributing to the budget surplus being forecast in 2016/17
 - The budget for garden waste recycling gate fees was retained at the same level for 2016/17. The budget is, therefore, still at the level that was set when we had a universal free service in 2015/16. Based on projected volumes to the end of the year, it is anticipated that there is an underspend on this budget of £82,000.
 - There are associated costs on administration and consumables due to the increased uptake of the service.
 - The £192,880 additional income is based on £20 with the other £20 of the subscription fee being passed over to FCC, based on the income share arrangements within the contract for all subscriptions in excess of 9,250.
- 4.18 The favourable budget position arising from the uptake of the service presents an opportunity to include a free Christmas Tree collection for all subscribers

as a goodwill gesture for a 2 week period in mid January 2017. FCC has agreed that the cost of this service will not exceed £10,000, less than 50p per subscription.

This will, also, provide another opportunity to promote the service for 2017/18 commencing in April 2017.

5 Legal Issues

5.1 There are no significant legal issues as a result of this report.

6 Resource Issues

6.1 The revenue budget provides for resources to process renewals and new subscriptions.

7 Equality Analysis Implications/Outcomes

7.1 The Equality Impact is as outlined in the previous report dated 7 September 2015.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 The report is to note, and consequently, there are no risk management issues for consideration as a direct result of this report.

9 Consultation

9.1 Consultation has been undertaken with Finance, Customer Services, Charnwood Contact Centre, ICT and FCC, Environmental Services contractor.

10. Options

10.1 The report is to note. As there are no changes in fee or operation of the core garden waste schemes, there are no options for consideration.

11 Background Papers

11.1 None

Previous report(s):

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: N

Ward Members Notified: N