

# ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016

## Kerbside Green Waste Collection Service

### To consider and comment on the following issues:

That the Committee considers and comments upon the proposals for introducing a new chargeable system of garden/green waste collection at the kerbside.

The proposed changes are set out in more detail as follows:

1. The alternative system will involve the provision of wheeled plastic green waste bins of 240 litres capacity (bins to be green in colour identified by the Carmarthenshire logo and the bilingual wording "green garden waste" or similar), with participating households contracting with the Authority for the service within each financial year for a set fee.
2. The option of providing bins of 140 litres capacity will be available on request for those households with smaller storage facilities, or those that find the larger bins difficult to manoeuvre. However, the charge per bin will remain the same as the larger bin size to reflect the cost of collection.
3. The service will be operational from March/April to the end of October each calendar year so as to include the Easter holiday period.
4. In the first year, the new service would commence in April 2017 to include Easter (in future years it could be as early as March, depending on when Easter falls).
5. The existing service will cease at the end of October 2016.
6. The recommended standard fee for the service is £48 per bin for 2017/18.
7. Payment options will include direct debit (with payments spread over 6 months - April to September), or a single payment at the commencement of the season with a 15% discount applied. The single payment option will therefore be reduced to £40.80.
8. Given the time available to set up the service, it is anticipated that the new proposals will need to be communicated/advertised in December to allow sufficient time to procure and deliver bins by April 2017.

9. Customers will no longer be able to purchase compostable garden waste sacks for setting out at the kerbside from October 2016. No refunds will be available for compostable bags already purchased. We are therefore currently informing the public that the existing bag scheme will cease, so that they do not purchase too many bags in advance of termination of the existing scheme. Compost bins will continue to be available for purchase.

**Reasons:**

- To formulate views for further consideration by the Executive Board.

**To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: YES**

**Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Hazel Evans (Technical Services)**

<b>Directorate:</b> Environment	<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Tel No. / E-Mail Address:</b>
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Ainsley Williams	Head of Waste & Environmental Services	01267 224500 <a href="mailto:aiwilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">aiwilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report Author:</b> Ainsley Williams		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016

**Kerbside Green Waste Collection Service**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Authority will replace its current waste collection vehicles with a fleet of new vehicles in autumn 2016. The existing collection rounds have been re-designed to provide more efficient routes and hence fewer collection vehicles are required in the new fleet. The new vehicles will also address some current operational difficulties as set out in the following paragraphs.
- 1.2 Food waste and green (garden) waste are currently co-collected in the same compartment at the rear of the refuse collection vehicle. The combined waste is currently processed via an in-vessel composting plant at CWM Environmental's facility, Nant-y-Caws, Carmarthen.
- 1.3 In practical terms, difficulties have been experienced with the current form of combined food and green waste collection relating to the open split back design of our existing fleet. Incidents of food waste being forced out at high pressure through seals at the back end of the vehicle during compaction have been observed. There are also difficulties associated with cleaning the vehicles due to the build-up of food deposits.
- 1.4 In addition, we may in future need in to consider a new form of food waste treatment by means of anaerobic digestion (AD) - Welsh Government's preferred treatment method. The AD form of treatment does not readily lend itself to receiving a mixture of food and green waste. Separating the two waste types at this stage provides the Authority with flexibility in future to choose the most appropriate form of treatment. In effect, we are future proofing our ability to consider different options.
- 1.5 In considering the factors outlined in the preceding paragraphs, the new vehicles, which are due in October 2016, will have a different configuration to the current split back twin compartment arrangement. Food waste will be contained in a separate enclosed pod unit located directly behind the cab of the vehicle. Crucially, food waste will no longer be compacted. However, this configuration does not allow green (garden) waste to be collected in the same way as the current method.
- 1.6 The Authority will therefore need to review its kerbside green waste collection service before new refuse collection vehicles are rolled out in October 2016. The current form of collection will no longer be appropriate.

1.7 Currently, householders can purchase a roll of compostable bags for the purpose of setting out garden green waste at the kerbside for a weekly collection i.e. collection is made at the same time as the food waste collection. Current cost for compostable bag purchase is £3.50 per roll of 20 bags.

1.8 The configuration of the food pod units on the new vehicles do not allow green waste to continue to be collected in this way and hence we will need to consider alternatives; there are three options open to us with respect to the kerbside green collection:

- Cease the collection service and rely on our household waste recycling centres for disposal directly by the public.
- Continue to collect green waste utilising biodegradable bags, but collection would have to be based on bespoke rounds utilising dedicated vehicles and would require customers to formally set up an agreement/contract with us on the same chargeable basis as the proposed bin scheme. However, there are practical drawbacks in continuing to collect using biodegradable bags that relate to concerns over the integrity of the bag if left full of grass over a period of a fortnight. In addition, it would be more difficult to exercise proper controls and checks in relation limiting the service only to those customers that have a subscription.
- Provide a bespoke collection service on a chargeable basis utilising wheeled bins.

1.9 Given the difficulties that terminating the green waste collection service may pose, this report sets out the potential option for operating a chargeable separate service for the collection of green waste and sets out the assumptions and costs relating to setting up such a service. Legislation allows local authorities to charge for the collection of green waste, but not for its disposal or treatment. Hence we are unable to recover the full cost of the service, but this is currently the case with respect to treatment cost.

1.10 Customers will continue to have the option of utilising our household waste recycling centres for disposal of green waste irrespective of whether they subscribe to the new service. In addition, compost bins are available for purchase.

1.11 Disposal arrangement will remain as per the current form of treatment in the short term (composting process), but may be subject to review as part of the wider waste treatment and disposal considerations in future.

## **2. Proposal**

2.1 **Basis of service** – chargeable kerbside collection service provided fortnightly, operating from the beginning of March/April to the end of October each year.

2.2 **Crew and vehicles** – two dedicated 15t open back refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) fitted with cone type bin lifts, crewed by 1 driver and 1 loader per vehicle. The vehicles will be hired for 8-9 months of the year. During the period that the service is not operational, the vehicles will be off-hired and the crews will be deployed elsewhere within the service (refuse and cleansing).

**2.3 Receptacles** – it is proposed that we use wheeled plastic bins of 240 litres capacity (green in colour with the Carmarthenshire logo applied together with the bilingual wording “Green Garden Waste” or similar), with the option of a 140 litres capacity bin for those who find the smaller bins easier to manage. The subscription charge per bin will remain the same for the two bin sizes. At the end of each season, the bins will remain with the customer on the basis that they will continue to subscribe to the service in the following year. Bins will only be recovered upon notification by the customer that they no longer require the service, or in the event of non-payment.

**2.4 Take up** – experience in other authorities suggests that about 8.5% of all households have taken up a similar chargeable service, although this does vary. For Carmarthenshire, it would equate to about 7,400 households, but current estimates would suggest that we are nearer half this number on our existing bag system, although we do not necessarily know exactly how many take up this service as thus far the information has not been required.

**2.5 Service viability** – the provision of two vehicles and four crew members will be sufficient to serve up to about 6000 customers. Any take up above 6000 subscriptions will mean an additional vehicle and crew being introduced.

**2.6 Standard subscription charge** – three levels of charges have been modelled. It is recommended that the charge to be applied is £48 per annum for each bin. This equates to just 92 pence per week or £4 per calendar month over the year. The annual subscription charges applied by other authorities, based on similar collection schemes are as follows:

- Pembrokeshire, £41.50 per annum
- Bridgend; £27 per annum.
- Monmouthshire; £14 per annum.
- Authorities in England - their charges vary significantly from £20-£120 per annum.

**2.7 Charging mechanism and associated subscription** – it is proposed that the standard charge of £48 per annum made on the basis of a direct debit payment option spread over a period of 6 months (April to September). For those customers paying as a single payment, a 15% discount will be offered, reducing the charge from the standard charge of £48 to £40.80 for 2017/18.

**2.8 Administrative costs** – the cost of administrating the scheme, managing the customer base, associated subscriber accounts and the arranging of new customer schedules and delivery/removal bins has been taken into account in calculating the cost of the service and setting the proposed charge.

## 2.9 Cost to Carmarthenshire – See summary table:

Summary of net costs for collection (subscription rate of £48 (in Year 1):

Scenario	Assumed Subscriptions	Cost £ Yr1	Cost £ Yr 2	Cost £ Yr 3	Cost £ Yr 4	Cost £ Yr 5
1. Full cost - with bins bought from revenue budget.	Yr1-5 @ 3000 subscriptions	<b>136,564</b>	82,523	84,173	85,857	87,574
	Yr2-5 @ 4000 subscriptions		<b>41,385</b>	23,003	23,464	23,933
	Yr3-5 @ 4500 subscriptions			<b>8,881</b>	<b>-1,691</b>	<b>-2,556</b>

### Notes:

- The above assumes a subscription rate of £48 for Year 1, with inflation applied annually.
- The service would be self-funding from Year 4 onwards, assuming 4,500 subscriptions were secured.
- If the customer base does not expand beyond 3000 customers, the ongoing cost to Authority will be circa £80-£90k per annum.
- If the customer base does not expand beyond 4000 customers, ongoing cost to Authority circa £24k per annum.
- Total cost of scheme, assuming no income is £281k per annum.
- The figures in the table do not include the 15% concession for the single payment option.

If the 15% concession is offered, then the net cost of the scheme would increase by circa £22k based on 3000 customers and £32k for 4500 customers.

The current predicted waste budget deficit for 2017/18 is up to £270k. This deficit excludes any additional cost associated with the proposed grass collection scheme. However, this deficit may yet be reduced due to other variables.

## 3. Recommendation

3.1 It is therefore recommended that a kerbside green collection scheme be introduced at a standard subscription rate of £48 per annum for Year 1. The scheme will be available on a direct debit basis over a 6 month period (April to September). For those choosing to pay the full amount as a single payment, a reduction of 15% will apply.

3.2 The scheme should be viewed as a long term trial to establish its appeal and level of participation. The scheme will need to be in place from April 2017 (Year 1 being 2017/18), to include the Easter holiday period.

3.3 In the meantime customers purchasing compostable bags will be advised of the proposed termination of the existing scheme (October 2016) and advised not to purchase too many bags in the lead up to termination of the current scheme. No refunds will be available for compostable bags already purchased.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**YES**

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

**Signed:**     **Ainsley Williams**                      **Head of Waste & Environmental Services**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>

## 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

- Change in waste operational policy.
- Equalities impact assessment completed on the basis that service provision will be maintained, but provided in a different way.

## 3. Finance

The current predicted waste budget deficit for 2017/18 is up to £270k. This deficit excludes any additional cost associated with the proposed grass collection scheme. However, this deficit may yet be reduced due to other variables.

The single payment concession would increase the net cost by between £22k and £32k per annum, depending on subscription levels.

## 6. Staffing Implications

An additional 2 drivers and 2 loaders will be required along with one administration officer (initially) to manage the scheme. These costs are included in the calculations.

## 7. Physical Assets

Two 15t vehicles will be hired in for 8 months each year.



# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed:     **Ainsley Williams**                    **Head of Waste & Environmental Services**

- 1. Local Member(s) – N/A**
- 2. Community / Town Councils – N/A**
- 3. Relevant Partners – N/A**
- 4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A**

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information  
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

**THERE ARE NONE**

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection