

Subject:	Green Waste - Kerbside collection service for garden waste	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Council	Date:	28 th September 2016
Report of:	Director of Business	Portfolio Holder:	Operational Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION
1.1	That Council note this report and agree to await a further report in 2017 on the findings of the working group, as detailed below.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To inform members of the creation of a cross party working group to investigate the future provision of the kerbside collection service for garden waste.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
- **Clean Green Rossendale:** This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND

5.1 The council has provided a free of cost kerbside garden waste collection service for householders in the borough since 2002. The service has proven popular with householders, generating 2,500 tonnes of garden waste for composting in 2015/16. Approximately 18,700 properties have access to the service. Garden waste tonnages form one third [33.66%] of our overall recycling rate, which in 2015/16 stood at 31.83%.

5.2 The council provides one collection vehicle and crew to provide kerbside collections on a fortnightly basis to participating households. The service operates from the beginning of March to the end of November [9 months] each year. Requests for service in the closed season are carried out at no charge to residents on a first come first served basis.

5.3 The service is a non-statutory provision. Councils are legally obligated to provide a refuse collection service and a collection of a minimum of two recycling streams [e.g. paper, glass, cardboard, etc.] which the council exceeds with the current provision. Collection of organic waste, such as garden waste, is a non-statutory service for which councils can levy a

collection charge should they choose to provide a service.

- 5.4 The garden waste collection service is currently fully subscribed and on occasions through the summer months an additional vehicle is sometimes provided to add capacity to cope with demand. To-date the cost of this additional resource has been met from within existing Operations budget.
- 5.5 The total budget for the Operations service is currently £2,374,700 per annum. Of this a total of £551,720 is provided by Lancashire County Council as an incentive payment for recycling services, to divert waste away from landfill; this payment helps the council to provide the garden waste service. The payments, known as the cost share payments, are being removed by the county council in 2018/19 as part of their savings targets. This reduction from base budget provides a substantial challenge to the Operations service and to the council as a whole.
- 5.6 Following discussions with the Portfolio holder for Operational Services and Development Control regarding the future provision of the service, it was agreed that a cross party member working group would be created to discuss future provision of the garden waste collection service. A number of members have volunteered to be part of the group, who met for the first time on September 15th 2016. It is envisaged that several meetings of the group will be required to provide a series of recommendations to the council.
- 5.7 A number of councils in Lancashire now levy an annual charge for garden waste collections for households who request a service. These include Pendle, Preston, Wyre and Lancaster [in 2017]. More Lancashire councils are looking at this option and in England it is estimated that nearly 50% of councils who provide a garden waste collection service make a charge for doing so. The Local Government Association [L.G.A.] estimates that a total of 75-80% of councils who provide garden waste collections will make a charge for kerbside garden waste collections within the next 24 months.
- 5.8 In Lancashire the collection charge per bin averages at £25-£30, with charges made for additional bins per household. Charges for the collection of additional bins are often provided with a discount: for instance, where the charge for the first bin is £30, £25 is charged for each additional bin.
- 5.9 The take up rate for charged garden waste collection services is normally in the region of 30-40% in authorities who introduce charges to previously free services. In Wyre, who introduced charges in 2016, the take up rate has been 83%, which is very high and quite exceptional.
- 5.10 Some council's outsource kerbside garden waste service, sometimes to a third sector organisation. This option may be considered by the working group.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 Financial matters are noted in the report.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 All legal implications are covered within the report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1 Changes to the current provision [e.g. charging for collections] would be a change to current

council policy. Many councils are now making charges for such collection services or are considering the introduction of charges, as highlighted by the L.G.A.

- 8.2 The formation of the working group will allow for all options to be explored prior to a further report to council next year.
- 8.3 Should the council decide to make changes to the current collection service a community consultation can be carried out on options and proposals.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The kerbside garden waste collection service is a popular service that operates across the borough. Tonnages from collected material contribute significantly to the borough recycling rate, which in 2015/16 stood at 31.83%.
- 9.2 The introduction of charges for this service may lead to a reduction in tonnages collected for recycling and an increase in tonnages collected for disposal, both of which will affect our recycling performance. However, in light of reductions to budget as highlighted in 5.5 above, this option may be worthy of consideration by members.

No background papers.