

SUBJECT: GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION REPORT JANUARY 2023

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 18TH JANUARY 2023

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To gain approval to implement the most viable garden waste collection service based on customer responses on consultation to meet the full cost recovery for the service. Service will be £50 per bin for 20 collections March through November.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 Approve the preferred option below. The preferred option based on number of responses indicates that we can deliver a viable service to those residents at the required level.

2.2 Approve an annual uplift in service charges of RPIx at November 1st of preceding year

2.3 Implement for 2023/24 season

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Garden waste collections are a non-statutory chargeable waste collection service. The service can recover full costs of recovery but should not charge for the disposal element.

3.2 Monmouthshire moved from a chargeable weekly sack collection to a chargeable fortnightly wheeled bin collection in 2020/21. This was to improve the service for residents, improve health and safety for collectors and reduce the MCC financial contribution following annual reductions of grant funding from Welsh Government.

3.3 The original proposal was to charge £35 for the service running March 1st to November 30th. This was consulted on widely and the report was taken through Select Committee and through a Member Workshop where a revised fee of £28 was agreed and taken through Council for approval.

3.4 As part of the recommendations from Select Committee and the Member workshop we also introduced “cost price” compost bins and water butts through the Reuse shops.

3.5 Home composting remains the most environmentally friendly and financially prudent ways of dealing with grass cuttings. It adheres to the waste hierarchy and proximity principles, offsets carbon of collection and provides a peat free soil improver. The introduction of a garden shredder to our Bentyg Library of Things makes home composting a viable option for hedge and tree prunings to be included in home composting. Food waste is collected weekly so there is no need to include food matter in home composting and this should reduce concerns over pests and smells.

3.6 The £28 substantially reduced the council contribution to the scheme in 2021/22 but did not provide a full cost recovery model as proposed. There was no increase in costs in 2022/23. At £28 the scheme provided excellent value for residents and despite initial concerns about customer loss this resulted in an additional 2000 customers registering. This has increased the number of vehicles and staff delivering the service and with

increased costs of vehicles, fuel, wages, receptacles etc the service required a MCC contribution of £240,000 in 2022/23.

3.7 The Council is facing significant budget pressures moving forward. The renewal of garden waste service charges does not align with the annual Budget Plan and Fees and Charges Review and a decision on increasing charges needs to be taken pre-budget review.

3.8 To redress this imbalance and implement a full cost recovery model a consultation with existing customers was carried out in November/December 2022 in readiness of the service delivery for 2023/24. Appendix 1

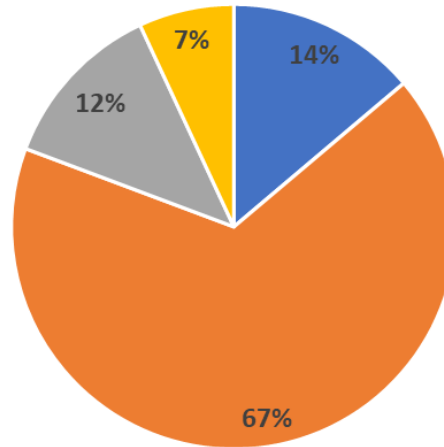
3.9 The service is currently provided to 14,361 customers with 17,000 bins (approximately 1/3 of households). The subsidy is borne by all households at £6 per household.

3.10 Current customer base

Row Labels	Count of Address
Bulwark and Thornwell	831
Caerwent	299
Caldicot Castle	402
Caldicot Cross	430
Cantref	365
Chepstow Castle and Larkfield	530
Croesonen	224
Crucorney	173
Devauden	145
Dewstow	359
Drybridge	409
Gobion Fawr	156
Goetre Fawr	341
Grofield	149
Lansdown	226
Llanbadoc and Usk	634
Llanelly	579
Llanfoist Fawr and Govilon	488
Llangybi Fawr	201
Llantilio Crossenny	114
Magor East with Undy	869
Magor West	417
Mardy	263
Mitchel Troy and Trellech	
United	336
Mount Pleasant	482
Osbaston	506
Overmonnow	244
Park	303
Pen Y Fal	321
Portskewett	495
Raglan	374
Rogiet	322
Severn	334
Shirenewton	400
St Arvans	312
St Kingsmark	481
Town	225
West End	267
Wyesham	355
Grand Total	14361

3.11 The consultation results showed an overwhelming 67% of respondents supporting a continuation of the service at £50. The results of the consultation and small selection of qualitative data are set out below. Full results and responses are included as Appendix 1 and 1A.

Q2. The options below seek to reduce the current subsidy and deliver a viable service for our customers and residents. Please select your preferred option:



- Cease collections - I would not use the service as laid out in any of the options above.
- Keep the service frequency as it is (fortnightly wheeled bin collection) for £50 per bin per year (20 collections).
- Reduce the frequency of the collections to four weekly for £42.50 per bin per year (10 collections).
- Reduce the frequency of the collections to six weekly for £35 per bin per year (6 collections).

“Couldn’t afford anymore than £28! Rather have green bags provided and take to Five Lanes myself”

“Please do not change the frequency. As it stands even being collected every two weeks the bins smell. If the frequency is extended the green material will break down further and will stick in the bins and will not be possible to empty. In addition I subscribe to the number of bins I need (two), so if the frequency is extended then I will need more bins which I do not have room for nor the finances. It's an important service which we need to keep and encourage people to have gardens for the environment and wildlife.”

"This is truly outrageous, we pay enough for council tax as it is and mainly for services that I don't use, why don't you charge for council tax in the same way as garden waste collection? If you use it you pay for it....I don't use schools, libraries etc so why should I fund people that do.
Get a grip!"

“£50 per bin per fortnight is still of value if the alternative is to drive to Five Lanes with waste bags.“

“Get your issues of course but £50 is too much given that some councils do not charge at all?”

“It's a very useful service if you have a large garden and live a long way from with recycling centre. Both those things apply to us. Happy to pay extra for it. Would rather this than see other services cut back.”

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 Garden waste collections is a non-statutory chargeable service where residents opt-in. There are a number of options open to residents to treat garden waste that do not opt-in, including, home composting (MCC provide cost price home composters through the reuse shop), delivery of material to one of the Household Waste Recycling Centres, community composting at participating allotments etc.
- 4.2 The impact of increasing the charges will be felt by those on low incomes but at present the 14,361 customers are subsidised by all residents who may also be on low income without using the service.
- 4.3 We will continue to provide home composting bins at cost price. Home composting is environmentally friendly, meets waste proximity principles and provides a soil improver at source.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Options appraised included “do nothing” “Uplift to £50 for existing service” “full cost recovery with service options”
- 5.2 We know that the garden waste collection service is currently being subsidised by £240,000 and “do nothing” would increase the subsidy year on year. Given current increases in demand for service at £28 by 2023/24 we would need an additional vehicle plus crew. An additional 2000 customers would increase service costs by £200,000 and increase income by £56,000 leaving a total subsidy requirement of £384,000
- 5.3 An “uplift to £50” is included as part of the consultation and this gives customers the option of service provision
- 5.4 “Full cost recovery with frequency options” provides customers with options and each option provides a viable model to reduce subsidy.
- 5.5 Consultation results Appendix 1

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 Customer retention
- 6.2 Reduction in subsidy
- 6.3 Sales of home composting bins

7. REASONS:

- 7.1 Reduce the subsidy on a non-statutory service
- 7.2 Ensure the waste hierarchy and proximity principles for waste treatment are maximised
- 7.3 Protect the environment and resources for future generations.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Any reductions in service may result in redundancy situation will be addressed through capitalisation and all efforts will be made to redeploy individuals.

9. CONSULTEES:
Scrutiny
Cabinet Member
Customers
Communities and Place Directorate Management Team

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

11. AUTHOR: Carl Touhig

12. CONTACT DETAILS: carltouhig@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Is my report exempt?

In some instances it may be necessary to submit a report to a committee but withhold the whole report, or part of that report, due to the sensitive nature of information contained within it.

There are specific circumstances in which a report may be considered exempt which are set in legislation. When writing your report bear in mind the following circumstances to consider whether your report should be exempt;

Local Government Act, Schedule 12A, Part 4;

12. Information relating to a particular individual
13. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
14. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
15. Information relating to any consultation or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
16. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
17. Information which reveals that the authority proposes –
 - a. To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b. To make an order or direction under any enactment
18. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

If you are unsure if the report should be exempt or not you should contact Democratic Services or the Monitoring Officer for further advice and guidance. The principal to bear in mind however is that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

If your report is to be exempt you should let Democratic Services know as soon as possible if you have not already done so when adding the item to the forward plan of the relevant committee.

When submitting your report to Democratic Services for publication with the agenda you must also include an exemption certificate which give details as to why the report is exempt and not for publication. This certificate will be publicly available with the agenda in place of the report so the reasoning for the exemption should be made clear on this form. The exemption certificate is available overleaf.

Further information on definitions and exemptions is available within the Local Government Act at the following link; <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12A>

SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS

Meeting and Date of Meeting: Insert date and meeting

Report: Insert report title

Author: Insert author

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the background paper for the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

Exemptions applying to the report:

[Enter the section and reason of the exemption, as defined by the Local Government Act set out above e.g – This report will be exempt under paragraph 12 of Schedule 12A – Information relating to a particular individual]

Factors in favour of disclosure:

Openness & transparency in matters concerned with the public

Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:

[Give a brief indication of what information would be disclosed and the impact of its disclosure]

My view on the public interest test is as follows:

Factors in favour of disclosure are outweighed by those against.

Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:

Maintain exemption from publication in relation to report

Date: Insert date

Signed: Signed by report author

Post: Insert post

I accept/I do not accept the recommendation made above

Signed: [Signed by Chief Officer / Head of Service / Chief Executive]

Date: Insert Date