

**SUBJECT: GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION REPORT JANUARY 2023
(SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FOLLOWING PLACE SCRUTINY 12TH JANUARY)**

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 18TH JANUARY 2023

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

This supplementary information follows on from the Place Scrutiny meeting on 12th January 2023.

The Chair of Place Scrutiny requested that the timeline and rationale for publishing the Cabinet Report before the Place Scrutiny discussion be acknowledged. It is not usual protocol to issue the Final Cabinet Report pre-scrutiny but the closure of the customer survey, Christmas, New Year and the need to open the registration process in January has resulted in a shortened timeline. The supplementary information to this report is requested by the Place Scrutiny Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 The supplementary information is considered alongside the main Cabinet Report.
- 2.2 Cabinet take account of the Recommendation 2.2 in the main report and revise as follows – “To approve an annual uplift based on RPIx or less where a previous years income exceeds full cost recovery and the annual charge would be reviewed and revised.”
- 2.3 To include a new recommendation in main report 2.4 “to provide an additional collection in January in recognition of changes to leaf fall season and to collect Christmas trees”

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 There was recognition by the Place Scrutiny Committee that £50 is a substantial rise given the current cost of living crises. It was also recognised that 67% of customers are willing to pay more to retain this important service and the producer pays principles provide a more equitable system for all residents.
- 3.2 There was a request to clarify the costs of the service and the rationale for a £50 charge.
 - The current service has 14,316 customers with 17,000 bins. 17,000 bins @ £28 give an income of £480,000
 - The current service will have costed £720,000 to deliver for the year 2022-3. £620,000 on vehicles, collection staff, fuel, on-board telematics etc and an additional £100,000 on bins, delivery, registration charges etc. No provision has been made for management and back-office costs to run the service.
 - The difference between the Income and Expenditure leaves a deficit of £240,000 that is currently subsidised by all households.
 - Based on the survey results, it is anticipated that there will be a reduction of customers by (at least) 14% who said they would cease the service if any price rise

was imposed. A further 7% of respondents opted for a 6 weekly collection, so it is likely that there will also be some loss of those customers.

- Based on a loss of 15% of customers, we would have 14,450 bins in service.
14,450 bins @ £50 gives an income of £722,500
- Income @ £50 equals £722,500 vs £720,000 expenditure.

3.3 The legislation regarding chargeable waste services require cost recovery only. The £50 would not deliver a profit over and above running cost based on the assumptions above. The Committee made recommendations for consideration by Cabinet if the assumptions above are incorrect and this results in an over achievement of budget in year.

- Further investment in home composting advice and reduced cost home composters
- Reduced price water butts for customers, cost price for non-customers
- A reduced cost service in 2024/25 for low income households
- Include an additional collection in winter to take account of changes in seasons due to climate change eg later leaf fall.

3.4 Recommendation 2.2 to base future service cost uplifts on RPIx was also raised. It was recognised that service deliverability and costs are reliant on the customer base and therefore future service costs are unpredictable and not based purely on RPIx. The revised Recommendation for 2.2 is set out above to take this into account. If the cost recovery is exceeded in a singular financial year the members of the Scrutiny committee were keen that the service area reviews the cost of the service to the residents and that this is revised for the subsequent year.

3.5 Consideration of part-payments and easy installment type payments were discussed. This would be very difficult to administer through the current booking system payment portal but will be investigated in future years.

3.6 The Scrutiny Committee also requested comparison to other local authorities. Some local authorities provide a free of charge garden waste collection. This is usually where the local authorities are failing to meet recycling targets and need the additional garden waste tonnage to meet the target which are statutory. Each authority funds waste and recycling services differently and prioritises funding based on wider need across the Council. Welsh Government advocate charging for garden waste collections (as set out in their blueprint for collection services). Where local authorities charge, this charge is similar to Monmouthshire. In 2022/23 service charges were:- Powys £40, Forest of Dean £45 and Pembrokeshire £52 for fortnightly collection of 240ltr bin. Many more local authorities are reviewing charging for garden waste in response to budget pressures.

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

4.1 The Committee commented on the EQIA section. If the service had ceased or became unaffordable, residents unable to take garden waste to the household waste recycling centres would also be unlikely to be able to collect a compost bin from the reuse shops on site. Where residents want to purchase a compost bin and can't attend the site, we will look to provide delivery through the recycling warden service in response to this point.

5. **CONSULTEES:**
Cabinet Member
Customers
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Place Scrutiny 12th January 2023

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