

ENVIRONMENT AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Tuesday 10th March 2020 |
| Report Subject | Update on Garden Waste Charges in Flintshire |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member Streetscene and Countryside |
| Report Author | Chief Officer for Streetscene And Transportation |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2018, the Council's Cabinet approved the introduction of a set charge for the collection of kerbside collected garden waste where a resident signs up to a subscription scheme. Throughout the last two years of collection, the fee stood at £30 per bin with a sticker issued and affixed to the bin to identify those subscribed to the scheme.

In July 2019, as part of the annual fees and charges review, the charge for the collection service was increased and a new tag system has been implemented to identify those bins registered to the service.

This report provides Scrutiny with an update on the 2020 garden waste collection season since the revised changes have been implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1. | That Scrutiny notes the work undertaken on the 2020 garden waste collection scheme. |
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REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW OF GARDEN WASTE CHARGES |
| 1.01 | <p>There is no statutory duty on the Council to collect garden waste; however garden waste collections contribute significantly to the overall recycling performance through both the brown bin collection service and the garden waste collected at our Household Recycling Centres (HRC's).</p> <p>The WG Waste Collections Blueprint (2011) recommends that this discretionary service is offered as a chargeable service, which should help to</p> |

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| | reduce landfill and generate revenue for the provision of other statutory services, such as dry recycling and food collections. |
| 1.02 | <p>The collection service is currently provided from the beginning of March to mid-December each year and provides residents with a 140L brown bin (for garden waste), which is collected alternately with a 180L black bin (for residual waste) on a fortnightly basis.</p> <p>The garden waste collected is taken to the Council's 'open windrow' composting facility in Greenfield, where it is turned into soil conditioner, which is then made available to residents, free of charge, at the Council's HRC sites.</p> |
| 1.03 | In April 2015, Cabinet approved the introduction of a charge where more than one brown bin was being used by residents, previously these bins were collected free of charge. Around 2,200 residents subscribed to this service which generated a revenue income of around £50,000 to the Council. |
| 1.04 | <p>In line with the Corporate Charging and Income Policy it is important that all discretionary services achieve full cost recovery. Subsequently, Cabinet approved the introduction of the £30 subscription charge for the collection of garden waste in January 2018. In the first year of the subscriptions, 33,871 permits were sold generating an income of £1,016,130</p> <p>In January 2019, Cabinet agreed to continue the garden waste subscription scheme and agreed that the fee would remain at £30 per bin with the fee then being reviewed as part of the annual fees and charges review. In the second year of the subscription scheme, 32,564 permits were sold generating an income of £976,925.</p> <p>The reduced number of subscriptions in the second year being due to the reduced number of second and third bin collections.</p> |
| 1.05 | <p>In July 2019, Cabinet approved an increase in charge for the garden waste subscription within the annual review of portfolio fees and charges. The agreed charging structure for the 2020 season was set as:</p> <p>£32.00 for payments made on or before 29th February 2020</p> <p>£32.00 for ALL online payments throughout the season</p> <p>£35.00 for payments made after 1st March 2020 when residents choose to pay over the phone or use a payment kiosks at Flintshire Connects for cash payments</p> <p>The scheme is limited to three brown bin subscriptions per property. Should any additional brown bins be purchased these will remain at a charge of £30.00 per bin (this does not include the collection of the additional bin).</p> |
| 1.06 | <p>The 2020 subscription process has been open to applications since October 2019. This was to encourage residents to make their applications as soon as possible online and take advantage of the early payment offer.</p> <p>The 2020 season has been promoted widely since this time via a number of means:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet drop to all Flintshire properties • Public engagement events • Flintshire’s website, including promotional story • Press releases • Flintshire’s social media • Email to residents (My Account, .Gov registered subscribers) |
| 1.07 | <p>To date 19,000+ subscriptions have been received with all residents paying the rate of £32. Of those subscribed, 68.79% have made their application via the online payment system and 30.76% have paid via phone or in person.</p> <p>This has generated an income of in excess of £600k (£38k+ generated by the additional £2 per bin).</p> <p>Compared with previous years’ trend analysis, the service has seen applications submitted throughout the year, up until the end of the collection season (December). However, for comparison purposes, to date there have been in excess of 5,000 more applications this season than at the same time in the 2019 season.</p> |
| 1.08 | <p>For the 2020 season, a tag system is being used instead of a sticker to identify those properties subscribed to the scheme. The tag will be fixed to the handle of the brown bin (by the resident) and must be clearly visible to the collection crew. Tags are being sent directly to residents along with instructions of how and where to attach them to the brown bin Appendix 1.</p> <p>The tag and information packs are being compiled and distributed by Streetscene’s support service team to reduce any late delivery and quality issues.</p> <p>The tags are made from 100% recyclable polypropylene, which can be recycled with the normal household plastic recycling at the end of the year or if they are no longer required.</p> |
| 1.09 | <p>Permit packs are currently being distributed to all registered properties in preparation for the start of collections. In the pack the resident will receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter with start dates etc. • The terms and conditions for the collection service • 2020 garden waste tag with unique reference number • Privacy Notice |
| 1.10 | <p>The garden waste collection service will run from 2nd March 2020 until 13th December 2020 (inclusive) and will continue to alternate with the residual waste (black bin) collection on a fortnightly basis.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | The financial benefit from the charge will provide full cost recovery against the cost of delivering the service. |

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| 2.02 | The delivery and receipt of the payments and tags places a high demand on the support services team. |
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| 3.00 | IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT |
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| 3.01 | A delivery project team is established and monitors the delivery of the garden waste scheme throughout the season. |
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| 4.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
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| 4.01 | Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transportation. |
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| 4.02 | Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
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| 4.03 | Cabinet Committee |
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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
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| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – Information leaflet for affixing tag |
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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
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| 6.01 | <p>Link to WG Blue print: http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Municipal%20Sector%20Plan%20Wales%20-%20Collections%20Buleprint.pdf</p> <p>Website and payment link: https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Bins-Recycling-and-Waste/Garden-Waste-Collection-Service.aspx</p> |
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| 7.00 | CONTACT OFFICER |
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| 7.01 | <p>Contact Officer: Stephen O Jones Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk</p> |
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| 8.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
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| 8.01 | <p>WG – Welsh Government MWC – Managed Weekly Collections HRC - Household Recycling Centres</p> |
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