

COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE

No 196

Service Area: Waste Management **Further Enquiries to:** Vicki Harris

Date Prepared: 03 June 2014 **Direct Line:** 01225 718523

KERBSIDE GARDEN WASTE CONSULTATION

Background

The Council faces significant financial pressures with reduced funding from central government, increased service demand and inflation and these pressures are likely to increase. We need to make savings to help the council deliver its priorities of protecting vulnerable people, boosting the local economy and bringing communities together.

One way of achieving some savings towards this is by changing the way the garden waste collection service is delivered at the kerbside in Wiltshire. The Council currently delivers a fortnightly non-chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service to those residents that request the service.

The Council's Cabinet agreed to undertake a public consultation exercise to gain residents' views on potential future changes to the current kerbside garden waste collection service.

Consultation Options

The consultation will give residents a number of options for how the kerbside garden waste collection service could be changed to make savings.

1. A three month suspension of the non-chargeable kerbside garden waste service with no collections taking place in December, January and February.
2. A five month suspension of the non-chargeable kerbside garden waste service with no collections taking place in November, December, January, February and March.
3. To introduce a chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service instead of the current non-chargeable service.

Whatever the outcome, residents would still be able to take garden waste, including Christmas trees, to any of Wiltshire Council's 11 household recycling centres free of charge or compost at home using the Council's subsidised garden and food waste compost bins.

Option 1 - Three month suspension of the non-chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service

The non-chargeable collection service would continue to be fortnightly but we would only collect residents' bins or bags from March to November, with no collections taking place during December, January and February each year.

While some people do produce garden waste during these months, the amount of garden waste residents present for collection reduces significantly and very small amounts are collected across the county during these months. This makes collections less cost effective as collection vehicles still have to pass each property but collect less garden waste.

In 2013/14, almost 90% of garden waste was collected between March and November, with 5,000 tonnes collected in December, January and February.

This option is likely to deliver the lowest level of savings of the three options.

Option 2 - Five month suspension of the non-chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service

Again, the current non-chargeable collection service would remain fortnightly but with this proposal no collections would take place during November, December, January, February and March each year.

The amount of garden waste collected throughout these months is low compared to the remaining months of the year. In 2013/14, almost 75% of garden waste was collected between April and November, with 11,500 tonnes collected in November, December, January, February and March.

Suspending garden waste collections during these months would allow the Council to make savings, while still collecting garden waste during the spring and summer when people most need the service.

This option should deliver more savings than the option for a three month suspension of the service.

Option 3 - Introduce a chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service

This proposal is for a fortnightly chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service, which would replace the current fortnightly non-chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service.

Residents who wish to continue receiving a fortnightly collection of garden waste bins or bags would pay a service charge each year (proposed to be £35 per bin in 2015/16). No concessions would be available.

Many of Wiltshire's neighbouring councils already charge for garden waste collections and the annual service charge proposed in Wiltshire (£35 in 2015/16) would be less than some others charge (see table below).

Area	Price per year
Bath and North East Somerset	£38.50
Dorset Waste Partnership	£40
Somerset Waste Partnership	£46.50

This service would run throughout the year (except for two weeks over the Christmas period) and would be optional, so if residents did not want the service they would not be charged. Residents would have to opt in to the service by signing up, even if they already have a bin or bags from the previous non-chargeable service.

If residents sign up for this service, they would keep their existing bin or bags. Additional bins would be available at the same annual charge of £35 per bin.

This proposal would mean that the Council would only collect garden waste from those residents who have opted to receive the service and have paid for it.

If at least one in four Wiltshire households decided to pay for the service, this option is likely to deliver the highest level of savings of the three options.

Consultation process and communications

Residents will be asked to indicate which of the options above would best suit their needs by completing a short questionnaire.

Residents will be able to respond to the consultation by completing the questionnaire online, by post or by telephone.

We shall be promoting the consultation and encouraging residents to respond to the consultation using a wide range of methods, including:

- Printing the form in the July 'Your Wiltshire' magazine
- Chairman's announcements and issuing leaflets at all community area board meetings

- Sending the consultation via the email distribution list that the Council holds of over 3,000 residents
- Making leaflets available at libraries, leisure centres, Wiltshire Council offices and town and parish council offices (where possible)
- Displaying information on Wiltshire Council's website and partner websites
- Sending a link to parish and town councils through the parish newsletter
- Press releases
- Social media
- Any events that the waste team and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust waste team attend throughout the summer.

Timescales and next steps

The consultation will run from 1 July 2014 until 1 September 2014.

Once the consultation period has ended the results, including comments received, will be collated and analysed by the Council. These results along with a report will be presented to Cabinet in October 2014. It is anticipated that any changes which Cabinet decide to implement would commence during 2015.

More information

If you require any further and more detailed information about the consultation process and options please contact the officers below –

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