
CLEANSING & AMENITIES GARDEN WASTE STRATEGY

BACKGROUND

A non-chargeable garden waste (trial) collection service had been operated in Pewsham area of Chippenham for a number of years. This scheme uses smaller 110L bins. Due to the popularity of the scheme, North Wiltshire District Council and the Wiltshire Waste Partnership, decided to make this service available to others in North Wiltshire. As this was an additional service to the weekly waste collection, a charge was made to residents in other parts of the district to join the scheme at £25 per year for the provision of a 240l bin.

The chargeable garden waste collection scheme was introduced during the summer of 2005 and was initially rolled out only in certain parts of Chippenham, Corsham and Wootton Bassett. Wiltshire County Council provided funding for the purchase of 5,400 brown 240ltr wheeled bins. Cleansing and Amenities was also given additional funding to cover the costs for a freighter and the manpower to run the service.

Our recycling target for 07/08 is set at 10%. During 2006 the scheme was advertised to all residents of North Wiltshire to register their interest to join the scheme and work began in early 2007 to incorporate those registered onto the scheme and rounds. Some properties were unable to join the scheme due to their rural location or where the number of residents interested was too small that it would be uneconomical in terms of both cost and time to include them at this time. The size of the freighters means that there are some areas where we cannot gain access. To purchase a small vehicle and employ crew to provide a service to difficult access areas would not be economically viable.

Since starting the next stage of the scheme in August 2007 we now have a total of 6413 240ltr bins purchased and it continues to grow as residents become more and more aware of the scheme. On the basis of 56,697 households and our current take up our performance target is currently 11.3%.

The scheme is chargeable, currently £25 a year and £10 for each additional bin.

PEWSHAM AREA

In order to bring the Pewsham area in line with the rest of the district we needed to introduce an annual charge with effect from September 2007.

Pewsham residents were given the option to keep their existing 110ltr bin for an annual charge of £17 and £8 for any additional 110ltr bins or to pay £25 for the provision of a 240ltr bin. The offer of £17 for a small bin was valid only to 31st December 2007. Residents were also advised that they

could keep their 110ltr bin and make use of it for storage, if they decided that they did not wish to participate in the payable service. We now have a total of 594 paid 110ltr bins.

EXPANDING THE SERVICE08/09

Our new target for 08/09 is 15% or a participation in the scheme of 8504 households. This equals an increase of 2091 customers/bins purchased (as a lot of households have purchased 2 bins) required to participate in the scheme. The scheme was originally planned as self funding, but due to the reduction in price per bin from £30 to £25 and the fact that the scheme was rolled out across the district rather than a more focused approach, it is currently running at a loss of £50,000. Financial forecasts and costs for 2007/08 and 2008/09 are attached.

We therefore need to devise a strategy that tackles the need to increase participation, but does so on a self funded basis. This is a delicate balancing act as taking on too many new customers will increase both the resources required and the cost. In reality, therefore, the only way to achieve this is to have a very focused approach to where new customers are added and also increasing prices.

It is proposed that new charges which will be set from Apr 08/09 of £26 for a 240ltr garden waste bin and £40 for 2 bins. This price increase will take effect from 1 Apr . 08.

Work is currently taking place to identify areas to target and this will be presented at a future SIB

ACTIONS:

1. Submit new prices for approval.
2. Ensure new prices are advertised to the public, via web site and annual renewal letters.
3. RMS system to be amended from 1 Apr for new prices.
4. Write letter to all residents who have not taken up the offer of 110L bin for £17 to promote the service and 240L bins for £26 by mid Feb 08, then follow up by door knocking those that have further not responded.
5. Households who purchased their 110L bin were sent labels to distinguish their bins for pick ups. It has been reported that some of these labels have fallen off. New waterproof and peel resistant labels to be ordered Feb 08. Crews will then check and deliver new labels where required.
6. There is a requirement to increase the take up of garden waste bins in the Pewsham area. Letters sent to residents during August 07 stated that they had until 31 Dec 07 to purchase a 110L bin at a cost of £17. This will be extended until mid Mar 08.

AIMS FOR 2008/09

The Cleansing and Amenities department are currently undertaking a Service Improvement Project. During 2008/09 a Communications Campaign will also be running alongside which include targets for promoting the garden waste scheme and recycling.

The aim to increase participation is to target households not currently on the scheme located in streets where there are already properties participating. This will incorporate all the major towns.

ACTIONS:

1. Produce a list of households that can be targeted by Feb 08.
2. Decide which garden waste rounds can accommodate additional bins by end Mar 08.
3. Produce and send leaflet including a freepost return envelope to these households by end Mar 08.

Ensure that Refuse department, Customer Services, IT and Communications team are all involved/and aware of the changes and processes.

OTHER ACTIONS/THOUGHTS

1. There will be a requirement for 2,500 new garden waste bins to be purchased during 08/09. Approval is sought from the Project Manager to purchase these bins and call off the bins for delivery to the depot in blocks of 500.
2. There is a requirement to send out a leaflet encouraging 'No Garden Waste in Domestic refuse bin' leaflet to all households and to advertise across the district. This will be followed up later in year with the recommendation to enforce this under Section 46 notices. This will need to go to Committee for endorsement. Spot checks should then be enforced. This should also be incorporated onto the web site.
3. Spot checks should be enforced on all households who currently have a 2nd refuse bins and those that apply for one. As a 2nd bin is a one-off payment we are not encouraging these families to have a garden waste bin and to recycle. 2nd bins should be a yearly charge and subjected to a waste audit visit in order to promote recycling boxes and garden waste bins.
4. Reiterate info to Customer Services that we cannot take households onto the scheme if they are on a small vehicle round.
5. Review required for all households on small vehicle and van rounds.
6. There is a need to encourage those householders who live on farms / or have a large garden to home compost rather than have a garden waste bin.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM ROLLOUT 2007

1. Agency costs need to be monitored and assigned to the garden waste scheme.
2. Staff employed for delivery of garden bins need to have a familiarity with North Wiltshire district.
3. Overtime costs need to be monitored and assigned to the garden waste scheme.
4. A unique Budget code should be used for all costs against the garden waste scheme in order to ascertain correct financial figures and monitoring.

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