

Overview of Responses and Recommendations

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service				Head of Service: Mark Edwards Author: Jackie Ward	15 February 2018 Version 2 (Exec)
Proposal:	To charge an annual subscription of around £50 per household for the collection of garden waste in 2018.				
Total income 2017/18:	£0	Initial expected income 2018/19:	£900,000	Expected income 2018/19:	The annual expected income from this proposal is £900,000 however in 2018/19 this will be significantly less due to the scheme commencing on 1 July 2018
No. of responses:	<p>In total, 777 responses were received, 37 of which were incomplete. Of those that responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 749 identified themselves as residents of West Berkshire • 39 as council employees • 25 as Parish/Town Councils • 3 as District Councillors • 4 as service providers • 5 as partner organisations • 24 as other 				
Key issues raised:	<p>643 responses (86.9% of valid responses) disagreed with the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed annual subscription is not affordable. • The costs for garden waste collection should be covered by taxes. • A negative impact on poorer households. • Concerns raised regarding an expected increase in fly tipping and its impacts. • Concerns raised regarding greater amounts of waste being placed in black bins. • Concerns around an expected increase in the use and frequency of bonfires. • Concern raised regarding the impacts to the elderly or vulnerable. 				

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns raised regarding the ability of those with restricted mobility to use waste management alternatives, e.g. those who could not make use of recycling centres. Concern raised regarding those without transport. The level of savings proposed were questioned as to whether they are achievable. The possibility of non-subscribing residents using their neighbours' bins without agreement. Negative impacts on recycling and waste performance. 		
Equality issues:	<p>The Stage One Equality Impact Assessment identified that there might be an impact on those that are unable to pay for the service. This impact could be mitigated as there are disposal services at the Household Waste Recycling Centres in Newbury and Padworth. The site staff at the Household Waste Recycling Centres should already provide assistance when requested. However, those that are unable to drive to the recycling centres may be disadvantaged. The impact is mitigated further as there are other options for disposal including composting garden waste at home and arranging for food waste to be collected as part of the council's ongoing free food recycling collection.</p> <p>The consultation raised issues surrounding the impact on low income households which may find the service unaffordable. This included target groups such as the elderly and disabled that in addition may not be able to use the alternative waste management options, for example those who could not drive to the recycling centres, therefore a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.</p>		
Suggestions for reducing the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	By making the subscription to the service free to some applicants or introducing a concession rate to those applicable such as the elderly.	See the Equality Impact Assessment for more detail.	
	Either lower the cost of the subscription or continue to provide the service at no	These suggestions may reduce the impact but would not make the savings.	

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	additional cost.		
	Through the use of means testing to determine payment value	These suggestions may reduce the impact but would not make the savings.	
	By changing the proposed collection frequency, for example to monthly so as to reduce the cost.	These suggestions may reduce the impact but would not make the savings.	
	Making use of a pay as you throw policy, charging based on how much waste is produced or how many collections are required.	These suggestions may reduce the impact but would not make the savings.	
	By offering a payment method with less impact such as [monthly] direct debit.	The council is currently considering this suggestion.	
	Supporting home composting.	The Council already supports home composting and will continue to do so. More information is available at www.westberks.gov.uk/compost	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	By improving Council efficiencies.	The Council has already made a significant amount of changes which has improved the efficiency of the Council and will continue to do this going forward.	
	By changing the collection frequency, for example by reducing the frequency of rubbish or garden waste collections.	The council is currently considering this suggestion.	

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	Amending 3rd party arrangements. For example, renegotiating waste contracts to reduce the overall cost.	Amendments to the Waste Contract have already been made and further changes are being considered.	

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Suggestions for income generation:	Suggestion	Council response
	Increase council tax.	This would be a matter for Full Council to decide
	Sell the recyclate to generate revenue such as selling compost produced from green waste.	The Council already receives a share of the income received from the sale of recyclate and compost.
	A variety of suggestions were received about charging for all sorts of other services.	These would be a matter for Full Council to decide.
	Increase enforcement activities.	In line with the Council enforcement policy we already peruse enforcement action where feasible.
	Petition government to increase Council funding.	This would be a matter for Full Council to decide.
	Implement change in the use of council spaces, for example by hiring out unused office space or changing office location to a site with lower cost.	This would be a matter for Full Council to decide.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By undertaking community engagement or promoting composting at home/within the community. • Through the use of shared bins. • Taking neighbours or local community waste to a recycling centre.[NB: legal implications apply] 	

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Conclusion and recommendation:

Feedback has not uncovered any issues which would prevent the Council from continuing with the proposal outlined in the consultation.

The change in service would not commence until 1 July 2018, therefore the quantity of savings in the first year will reflect this.

In summary, it is recommended that the new chargeable garden waste collection service is operated as follows:

- To continue to receive a fortnightly garden waste collection households should subscribe online, paying £50 per year.
- Subscribers would receive an information pack.
- The subscription period would run for 12 months (from July to June).
- Non-subscribers will continue to be able to recycle food in their green bin.
- Non-subscribers' green bins will be removed on request.
- Non-subscribers' bins containing garden waste will not be collected.

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