

**REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR**

**TO: EXECUTIVE**

**DATE: 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2017**

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## **WASTE COLLECTION, RECYCLING and STREET CLEANSING**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To report the results of the public consultation exercise on the waste service; and in the light of the survey to consider the proposals for the making of significant savings on this service.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the Council's thanks to all those who responded be given via a press release and social media posts.
- (2) That the following proposals intended to achieve the savings indicated and totalling £433,625 be recommended to the Council at its next meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2017.
- (3) That with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 the household refuse collection service change to fortnightly residual refuse collection with four weekly recyclable waste; and that the other reductions, efficiencies and changes set out in paragraphs 9-14 be approved.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To reduce the net cost of the service and help achieve a balanced budget.

1. At the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September the Executive considered a report on possible changes to the refuse collection service intended to achieve savings in the region of £300,000. It resolved that Option 3 – fortnightly residual refuse collection with four weekly recyclable waste collection - be recommended to Council as the preferred option.
2. The Executive also resolved that that a consultation exercise be undertaken on the proposed savings options identified in the report and the results of this exercise be reported to Council for consideration.
3. The consultation was carried out between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 26<sup>th</sup> November. It was publicised via press releases and social media posts. Respondents were able to complete the survey

online on the Council's website and paper copies were made available at a number of public access points. There were 2237 responses, 2136 online and 101 in paper form.

4. As well as questions on the household refuse collection and recycling service the survey also asked questions on charging for bulky household waste collection and replacement bins; increasing the charge for garden waste collection and introducing a booking system for winter collections; and reducing the levels of manual and mechanical street cleansing services.

5. These are the headline results of the survey.

**Refuse/recycling collection**

56% strongly agreed or agreed with introducing 4 weekly collections for brown bins and paper/card and retaining 2 weekly collections for grey bins. 44% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

12% strongly agreed or agreed with introducing 3 weekly collections for grey bins, brown bins and paper/card. 88% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

**Charging for bulky household refuse collection**

51% strongly agreed or agreed with introducing a £10 charge. 49% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

**Administrative charge for replacement bins**

34% strongly agreed or agreed with introducing a £15 charge for replacement bin delivery. 66% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

**Garden waste**

65% strongly agreed or agreed with introducing a booking system for collections over the December- February period. 35% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

30% strongly agreed or agreed with increasing the subscription charge by £5 per bin. 70% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

**Street cleansing**

23% strongly agreed or agreed with reducing the level of manual street cleansing by 10%. 77% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

18% strongly agreed or agreed with reducing the level of main road cleaning and removal of fly tipping, graffiti and flyposting by 14%. 82% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

A detailed analysis of the responses is in preparation and will be circulated as an appendix to this report.

**Other savings suggestions**

Respondents were also given the opportunity to make other savings suggestions.

The main themes of these were

- General comments about council cuts to services/wages/staff
- Suggestions around other strategies to deal with less bin collections including different frequencies, heavy fines for fly tipping, littering and dog fouling, opening recycling centres,

more bins, pay more for extra collections, create efficient recycling system so council profits from re-usable materials

- Schemes such as litter picking for people in unemployment, offenders and volunteers
- Increasing or creating fines for other offences such as illegal parking, litter outside takeaways, speed cameras
- Stronger enforcement against people not paying council tax
- Devolving some services to parish councils
- Schemes to attract businesses/encourage businesses to pay for local services
- Educating people, particularly young people into not littering and to recycle more

These suggestions are being analysed and will be the subject of a further report to the Budget Executive and Council meetings in February.

## Comments

6. Members are reminded of the target of savings of c £300,000 from changes in the collection service itself.
7. In addition savings proposals for charging for bulky household refuse collection (£90k), administrative charge for replacement bins (£45k) and reduction in mechanical sweeping (£81,280) form part of the Management Team proposals to achieve a total saving of £1.2 million in 2018/19. In other words a total of **£516,000** on the waste and cleansing service. To achieve this figure it would be necessary to implement the option of a move to 3 weekly collection rather than 4 weekly recycling and retention of 2 weekly residual; and to implement the three savings proposals mentioned above in full.
8. There is a majority for the Executive's **preferred option of 4 weekly collections for brown bins and paper/card and retaining 2 weekly collections for grey bins**. The saving from that and including staffing restructure (£30,000), changes to sickness procedures (£15,000), reduction in non –contractual vehicle repairs (£15,000) plus additional trade waste income (£40,000) would be **£190,000**. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.
9. There is a majority for introducing a **£10 charge for bulky household collection**. Members will be aware this is a longstanding Management Team budget option. A proforma giving more detail is attached. The saving would be **£90,000**. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.
10. Whilst two thirds of respondents were opposed to the introduction of a **£15 charge for replacement bin delivery** it was apparent from the survey that 80.5 % of respondents have never needed to use the service in the last three years. Members will again be aware that this is a longstanding Management Team budget option. The saving would be **£45,000**. A proforma giving more detail is attached. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.
11. There is a majority in favour of introducing a **booking system for garden waste collections** over the December – February period. The saving would be **£13,000**. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.

12. Whilst over two thirds of respondents were opposed to a **£5 increase in the garden waste subscription scheme**, such an increase would bring the service closer to paying for itself. It is an optional service. The saving would be **£35,000**. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.
13. It is clear from the survey that respondents are strongly against **reductions in street cleansing**. There are three elements to this:
- Reduction in level of fly tipping/litter picking work (£43,000)
  - Reduction in manual street cleansing (£25,000)
  - Reduction in main road mechanical sweeping (£81,250)
14. In response to the survey results Members may wish to adopt an approach of focussing activity on areas with the worst problems and go ahead with just the manual street cleansing reduction and 50% of the mechanical sweeping reduction (i.e. reduction of one vehicle rather than two). The saving would be **£60,625**. The Executive is recommended to recommend this to the Council.
15. The total saving from the revised proposals would be **£433,625**.

## IMPLICATIONS

- Policy:** The Council's current policy is to provide in house delivery of an alternate weekly collection of recyclable and residual materials. The move to a different collection frequency would be a significant policy change.
- Financial:** The review of the refuse collection service seeks annual savings of c£300,000 in the collection service in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan. In addition there are proposals to achieve a further £216,250 savings.
- Legal:** No implications arising directly from the report.
- Risk Management:** No implications arising directly from the report.
- Health and Safety:** No implications arising directly from the report
- Sustainability:** No implications arising directly from the report
- Community Safety:** No implications arising directly from the report
- Equality and Diversity:** Equality Impact Screening has been undertaken. Existing arrangements such as assisted collections and additional bins for those with larger families or short term needs will remain in place.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Consultation Survey Analysis

Appendix 2 Proformas for Budget options