

**Decision under Delegated Powers  
Garden Waste Collection Charges 2017/18**

**Officer Making the Decision**

Matthew Bradford – Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces

**Recommendation**

That the charge levied on residents for the fortnightly collection of Garden Waste is increased in line with the table below. An increase to £25 / £34 has been previously approved (DD130 15/16), however, this is now being increased by a further £3 to £28 / £37 respectively.

Payment Method	Charge 16/17	Revised Charge 17/18
Direct Debit	£22.00	£28.00
Other	£31.00	£37.00

**Reason**

The increase in charges are required due to:

1. The withdrawal of Recycling Credits for both Garden Waste and Dry Recycling will lead to a combined loss of income of £840,000 per annum by April 2018.
2. The cost of providing the collections increases by RPIX each year.
3. To offset increased costs incurred through the introduction of increased security measures.

**Authority for Decision**

Section 8.3 of the Constitution gives delegated authority to Heads of Service to undertake the periodic review of fees and charges raised within their service area and falling within the scope of the Council's Income and Charging Policy Framework.

**Decision and Date**



Cleansing and Open Spaces  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2017

## Background

1. This decision will increase the charges for the Garden Waste Collection Service by a further £3 per annum for 2017/18 (an increase of £3 per annum had previously been agreed).
2. The main driver for this change is the need to offset the loss of Recycling Credit incentive payments for Garden Waste and Dry Recycling previously made by Leicestershire County Council. The total loss in income as a result of these change is estimated at £840k per annum.
3. The collection of Garden Waste is a discretionary service provided by CBC as an enhancement to the statutory residual waste and recycling collections. The service was introduced in 2006 and has always been chargeable. There is a difference in charge between Direct Debit payers and those paying by other methods. This reflects the cheaper transaction costs for Direct Debit payers.
4. The annual payment is due prior to service commencement and there are no options to spread the cost over the year. This is due to the additional transaction costs of taking payment in instalments. Providing this option would put additional pressures on the budget and make the need for further price increases highly likely.
5. The impact of the changes will be experienced by those residents with gardens. Residents who live in flats, apartments or houses without gardens are not considered to be significantly affected by the proposed change.
6. The security of the Garden Waste Service is being increased with the introduction of secure stickers that display and expiry date for the subscription. It is anticipated that this will reduce the risk of residents continuing to receive the service without having made a payment.
7. Alternatives to subscription to the service are:
  - Home composting. Subsidised composters are available from Leicestershire County Council for £11
  - Taking the garden waste to a Household Waste and Recycling Centre. This is not a viable option for households without the use of a car.
  - Reducing Garden Waste e.g. Removing the grass collection box from the mower and leaving the grass to mulch down.
8. Many authorities charge for the collection of Garden Waste with the average cost nationally estimated to be in the £40 per annum region. Across Leicestershire there is a mixed picture with some authorities charging and others providing the service for free. As a result of the withdrawal of Recycling Credits, it is understood that other district/borough councils in the County will be reviewing their charges, or implementing charges where free collections have been made previously. At the time of writing, each Council had not ratified their proposals for 17/18 onwards. A summary of existing charges is provided below.

Authority	Current Charge 16/17	Notes
Blaby DC	140ltr bin for £21.00 240ltr bin for £31.80	Garden waste collections are made fortnightly during summer (March to November) and monthly from December to February.
Harborough District Council	£40.00	9 month service
Hinckley and Bosworth BC	£24.00	
Leicester City Council	£30 (March to October)	Full subscribed. Waiting list in operation.
Melton BC	£52.00	
North West Leicestershire BC	£0.00	
Oadby and Wigston BC	£0.00	

9. Alternatives to increasing the charges are as follows:
- a. Stop providing the service altogether. This is not considered to be a viable option as many residents value the service that is provided. There are currently 29,000 subscribers.
  - b. Absorb the additional cost of providing the service. This is not viable due to general cost pressures on the Council.
  - c. Make savings in other areas of the service. This is not viable due to other cost pressures on the service and the need to make additional savings/income other than those proposed within this report.
10. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to inform this decision.
11. Consultation has taken place for the first year of the increase as part of the consultation process for the main budget proposals for 17/18. This process has included Scrutiny, consultation with the Rate Payers Association and with the general public via the website. No responses were received regarding this proposal.

### **Financial Implications**

The increase in charges will result in the additional income required to meet the budgeted income £855,600 for 2017/18.

### **Risk Management**

Please see the table below:

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Price increase leads to loss of subscribers	Possible	Moderate	Communications plan to include background on reasons for increases.  Marketing exercise to be conducted during 2017/18 to maximise take up of the service
Increase lead to some negative local press coverage	Possible	Moderate	Press Release to include value for money information. e.g 54p per week for DD payers after increase.

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers:

Equality Impact Assessment