

Decision under Delegated Powers Garden Waste Collection Charges 2018/19

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:

Payment Method	Charge 17/18	Revised Charge 18/19 (effective 1 st May 18)
Direct Debit	£28.00	£40.00
Other	£37.00	£45.00

Reason

The increase in charges are required due to:

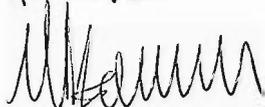
1. The withdrawal of Recycling Credits will lead to a total loss of income of £840,000 per annum by May 2018.
2. The cost of providing the collections increases by RPIX each year.
3. To offset increased costs incurred through the introduction of increased security measures.
4. To meet the income targets established by the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy

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

APPROVED



MATT BRADFORD – HEAD OF CLEANSING AND OPEN SPACES

21/3/18

Background

1. This decision will increase the charges for the Garden Waste Collection Service to £40 per annum for Direct Debit payers, and £45 per annum for non Direct Debit payers.
2. The main driver for this change is the need to offset the loss of Recycling Credit incentive payments 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 administration 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. 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.
7. 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 18/19 onwards. A summary of existing charges is provided below.

Authority	Current Charge 17/18	Notes
Blaby DC	140ltr bin for £24.00 240ltr bin for £36.80	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	£40 Direct Debit £45 Non Direct Debit	March to October
Melton BC	£57.00	Operated independently by the Council's Waste Contractor
North West Leicestershire BC	£0.00	
Oadby and Wigston BC	£0.00	A £35 per year charge has been approved by OWBC and will commence from April 2018.

8. 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 approximately 33,000 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.

9. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to inform this decision.

Financial Implications

The increase in charges will result in the additional income required to meet the projected income in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the additional income required to meet the 2018/19 budgeted figure of £1,214K.

Risk Management

Please see the table below:

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Price increase leads to loss of	Possible	Moderate	Communications plan to include background on reasons for

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
subscribers			increases. Marketing exercise to be conducted during 2018/19 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 77p per week for DD payers after increase. Service still provides good value for money and is comparable to amounts charged by other authorities.

Key Decision:

Yes

Background Papers:

Equality Impact Assessment