

REPORT TO: Cabinet – SCDC
Executive Councillor for Environmental Services
and City Centre, Environment and Community
Scrutiny Committee - City

LEAD OFFICER: Trevor Nicoll

September 2018

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service Collection Policies and Procedures

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to agree a single “Waste Collection Service Policies and Procedures” document setting out the service that Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS) will deliver for the residents of both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. This is a key decision as it would both result in significant effects to the service budget; and has significant effects on communities living or working in an area that comprises two or more wards or electoral divisions.

It was first published in the July 2018 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Cabinet (SCDC) and Executive Councillor (City Council):
 - (a) approve this report and associated ‘Waste Collection Policies and Procedures’ document as a whole and in particular the three major changes to policy as detailed below:
 - (i) Introduction of chargeable additional garden waste bins (SCDC only)
 - (ii) Change to monthly organic collection during December, January and February (City only)
 - (iii) Change to 6am start time for domestic waste services (City only)
 - (b) Delegate to the relevant Lead Director and Lead Member in each authority to approve minor updates to this document to ensure operation efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. There are a range of reasons for the recommendations:
 - (a) The document brings together policies agreed over a number of years into a single, accessible place for Members, residents and staff.
 - (b) The new policies and procedures are modern, clear, transparent and reflect industry best practices.
 - (c) The uniformed policies and procedures across the service will reduce confusion and increase satisfaction for residents and staff.
 - (d) The changes provide opportunities to improve efficiencies within the service.



GREATER CAMBRIDGE SHARED WASTE

- (e) The policy maintains a free discretionary green bin waste service for all residents, provides the option to subscribe to additional capacity, if required, and will generate additional income.

Background

5. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council formed a shared waste service in 2015, with an operation launched in February 2017. Over the last 18 months, a number of the collection policies and procedures have been aligned to ensure that residents receive a modern, efficient and reliable service.
6. Over this period, we have standardised the collection method, reporting, communication and recently IT system. At the same time, we have reached a recycling rate in the region of 50% and ensured we collect 99.7% of bins on their scheduled collection day. To ensure we provide residents with a truly uniform and high-quality service, drive operational efficiencies and address financial pressures, there is an opportunity to adopt standardised policies and procedures and ensure that they are clearly documented.
7. There are three major policies that have been reviewed and could be aligned across the GCSWS collection area:
 - (i) Charging for additional garden waste bins (SCDC only)
 - (ii) Organic green bin winter collection schedule (City only)
 - (iii) Standardised collection start time for domestic waste service. (City only)

Considerations

8. The following paragraphs will provide details on the consideration made for each of the following major policy recommendation:
9. **Charging for additional green bin for the collection of garden waste**

The provision of a garden waste collection service is a wholly discretionary service, and a charge can be levied for it under The Controlled Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2012. The current service for residents in the shared service is that residents may have up to 4 green bins for the collection of food and garden waste. The first green bin is largely used for mixed food and garden (organic) waste, but additional bins are requested due to extra garden waste that the resident needs to dispose of.
10. Cambridge City residents receive the first green bin for organic waste free of charge; if residents wish to have additional green bins for garden waste they pay an annual fee of £35 per bin (2018/19). Residents in South Cambridgeshire can currently have up to 4 green bins free of charge. There are currently about 1,200 additional green bins in the City and 3,000 additional green bins in the District.
11. 95% of councils that offer a garden waste service charge for additional garden waste bins. Those councils introducing a charge for additional bins do not experience a noticeable reduction in tonnage collected as residents tended to value this service, rather than undertaking home composting or visiting HRCs. Locally, all Councils in Norfolk and Suffolk charge for the collection of all garden waste bins (including the

first bin) ranging between £40 and £55. The table below details the charges levied in Cambridgeshire.

	Charge for first bin	Charge for additional bin(s)
Cambridge City	Free	£35
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Free	£48
Fenland District Council	£40	£40
Huntingdonshire District Council	Free	£40
Peterborough City Council	£45	n/a
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Free	Free

12. The recommendation is to retain a single, free, green organic bin and implement a new chargeable garden waste collection service for additional green bins only across South Cambridgeshire, leading to a uniform additional green bin policy across the whole service area.
13. Assuming a 75% take-up by residents, this policy will raise £80,000 income for South Cambridgeshire DC in a full year to help offset the cost of providing this discretionary service and encourage residents to consider alternative ways of disposing of their garden waste. It is proposed that the billing period would operate from October to October to be in line with Cambridge City additional garden waste billing cycle. A communication campaign to residents will be undertaken from October 2018 with the changes being effective for collections from 1st March 2019. To support residents with this change it is proposed that the additional service is discounted for the first year, with residents paying a reduced rate of £20 per additional bin until October 2019.
14. **Organic collection schedule for winter period**
The current position for residents in Cambridge City is that they receive fortnightly green bin collection throughout the year. Residents in South Cambridgeshire receive fortnightly green bin collection for nine months of the year, changing to monthly collections during the winter (December, January and February).
15. The reason that SCDC moved to a monthly collection during the winter period is to better match service provision with the actual service demand from residents. The tonnage of material presented by SCDC residents reduces by up to 75% during the winter period compared to peak summer levels, yet the Council still provided the same frequency of collections despite the lower service demand. There is a similar change in the Cambridge tonnages of a 60% decrease in midwinter compared to peak summer levels. In SCDC there was no impact on the overall amount of garden waste collected and therefore overall recycling performance when the frequency of winter collection changed in 2014. Due to the reduced temperature during the winter period the risk of odours and/or flies developing in these bins is minimal.
16. The recommendation is to provide a fortnightly service to Cambridge City residents for nine months of the year and then provide monthly collection during the winter months, usually December, January and February. A number of other local

authorities operate a total suspension of organic collections during the winter period for up to four months.

17 Standardised collection start time for domestic waste service.

The current position for the service in Cambridge City is that collection should not start before 7am. Collections in South Cambridgeshire start at 6am. This difference in start time causes difficulty for managing the staff and confusion to residents as we specify two start times to residents depending on location. With the later start we are now also experiencing delays due to morning traffic entering the city on congested trunk roads. By moving to a 6am start we would move approximately 25 HGV movements off the A10 during this peak period.

18 An additional benefit from an earlier start time would be that more bins would be collected prior to residents leaving for work so these bins could be taken back in, reducing the issue of bins on pavements.

19 Since June the service has been trialling an earlier start time in the City due to health and safety concerns from the extended hot period. The service will continue with this trial until a final decision has been made, as over the three month period we have had no additional noise complaints and the collection crews support these changes. This change in practise means that vehicles leave the depot between 6:15 - 6:20am, leading to them starting to collect in the City from 6:30am onwards.

20 During this period GCSWS has carefully reviewed which locations would be most suitable for an earlier start time and would monitor and amend these start locations if required over time if any issues arise.

Implications

21 This report has taken into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues. Areas of concern have been detailed below.

Financial

22 There are currently approximately 3,000 additional garden waste bins in South Cambridgeshire and it is estimated that if the additional green bin service was chargeable, at least 75% of residents would sign up for the service, with the remaining residents choosing other options such as home composting or using the recycling centres.

23 It is estimated that this change would generate approximately £80,000 per year for South Cambridgeshire DC, based on a £35 per additional bin charge.

Climate Change

24 We believe that these changes would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Vehicles would not be delayed on trunk roads during morning peak periods and collection vehicle mileage would be reduced as we currently collect very limited amounts of organic material for residents' bins during the winter period.



Consultation responses

- 25 The Shared Waste Board has been involved with the development of the paper.
- 26 Staff and Trade Unions have previously been consulted on bringing forward the start time to 6am across the service.
- 27 GCSWS has consulted with Environment Health Officers in the City. Their advice is that whilst there is no legislation stopping earlier waste collections, there is a concern that some residents may be disturbed by an earlier collection start time. This concern will be mitigated by carefully planning collection routes so that earlier collections avoid potentially more sensitive residential areas. Learning will also be taken from the many city waste authorities that already operate early morning and late-night collections.

Appendixes

Appendix A - Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service Collection Policies and Procedures document

Report Author: Trevor Nicoll – Head of Shared Waste Service
Telephone: (01954) 713154