

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE - OUTCOMES OF TRIAL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment And Health
Relevant Head of Service	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental Services
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The report contains details of the trial garden waste service which is running from March to November 2010 and recommendations for future service delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) **the preferred option for the future of the service, from the four options as summarised in paragraph 5.3, be approved together with any subsequent increase to the Capital Programme 2010/11 be approved and funded from the saving in grant as detailed in this report; and**

RESOLVE that

- 2) **Officers explore options for the sharing of the service with Bromsgrove District Council, including roll out of the service across the whole Borough, as part of the transformation programme of environmental services during 2011/12; and**
- 3) **Members note the outcomes of the trial garden waste collection service.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January 2010 Members agreed that a trial chargeable garden waste collection service would be operated across two trial areas of the Borough during 2010.
- 3.2 The service was offered to approximately 4,800 households and began in March, running to the end of November at a charge of £35 per customer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 A garden waste service is a key way of increasing performance against NI 192 which measures the amount of household waste re-used, recycled and composted.
- 4.2 The trial service was offered to around 4,800 residents across two trial areas in the west and east of the Borough. There was a greater level of customer take up in the west (10.5%) than the east (2.6%) with the overall take up rate at 6.7%.
- 4.3 62% (a very high response rate) of customers who have used the trial service responded to a user survey and all those who responded (with one exception) said that they would continue to use the service.
- 4.4 All districts in Worcestershire offer a chargeable garden waste service (see Appendix 2 for full details).
- 4.5 We know that an amount of biodegradable garden waste is disposed of in grey bins and also that a lot of residents use orange sacks to dispose of garden waste in the summer months. A small percentage of Redditch's grey bin waste is currently landfilled and the majority is sent to be treated at an energy from waste facility in Warwickshire but there is a need to support the county wide approach and reduce the amount of biodegradable waste which is disposed of.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of running the trial garden waste collection service is approximately £12k and is funded by income generated.
- 5.2 Originally it was estimated that the trial would result in a shortfall of £6k based on a 10% take up but this has been mitigated by not having to hire in vehicles and optimising use of existing fleet.
- 5.3 There are four options for moving forward as summarised below:
 - a) Stop the service;
 - b) Maintain the existing level of service in two trial areas;
 - c) Extend the trial service in an area where we expect to get a higher level of take up (see appendix 3 for a list of proposed streets);

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

- d) Stop the trial in the east and increase west trial to cover 10,000 properties;
- e) Extend the service to all suitable properties across the Borough.

5.4 The estimated cost of identified options for the future service based on a charge of £35 per customer, are detailed in the table below:

	OPTION b	OPTION c	OPTION d	OPTION e	OPTION e
Service components	Maintain existing trial areas	Add 5,000 properties to west trial, maintain east	Stop in east and increase west trial to cover 10,000 properties (figures based on 10% take up)	Borough wide approx 30,000 properties (10% take up)	Borough wide approx 30,000 properties (7% take up)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Publicity printing & delivery	3	5	8	30	30
Operational costs (staff & vehicles & Fuel)	9	27	27	86	86
<i>Total cost of running service</i>	12	32	35	116	116
Income received	12	30	35	105	74
Shortfall	-	2	0	11	42

Estimated charge per customer to cover cost of service	£36	£37	£35	£39	£55
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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

Additional wheeled bins required (approx £21 each)	Already have bins	£11k*	£16k	£63k	£44k
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*for the extension of the area to 5,000 properties, green bins can continue to be used

5.5 For any revision to the service a number of bins would have to be purchased for customers. There is currently a £15k saving within the service area relating to grant received for waste management. It is proposed that this saving be utilised to fund capital costs arising from the additional bins. Option c and d could be funded from this saving. Approval of Option e would result in additional funding being identified or an increase in charge to the customer of between £39 and £55.

5.6 It should be noted that there will be a requirement to purchase brown bins if the service is rolled out across the town on a long term basis. However, the type of bin would depend on who provided the service, which will be looked at as part of the transformation programme for environmental services in 2011/12. Therefore brown bins should not be purchased until the outcome of the transformation process is known.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the Council has a duty to collect household waste, which includes garden waste generated by households, but may make a charge for its collection.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) 2009 sets the Partnership a target of 43% recycling/composting by 2014. As a signatory to the JMWMS, Redditch Borough Council has committed to play its part and increase its re-use/recycling/composting rate (NI 192) and provision of a garden waste collection service helps to do this. All other Worcestershire districts provide residents with a chargeable waste collection service (see Appendix 2).

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

7.2 Currently, the majority of residual waste collected in Worcestershire is land filled. The Partnership needs to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill in order to meet Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme limits in future years. Whilst the majority of residual waste collected in Redditch is disposed of through an energy from waste facility in Warwickshire, there is a need to consider Redditch's arrangements in a county wide context.

7.3 Unless the service is offered Borough wide, it is recommended that residents continue to be offered the option of purchasing up to two orange sacks per fortnight for the disposal of extra household waste. During the summer months orange sacks are often used for the collection of garden waste.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

Provision of good quality, customer focused waste collection services meets the Council priority of a 'Clean and Green' Borough.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 A risk management plan will be developed as part of the roll out of the service, should this be agreed. The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- a) loss of income due to lack of customer take up;
- b) failure to increase performance (NI 192) and meet county wide targets set in the JMWMS;
- c) County Council levied Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) penalties if limits for the amount of biodegradable waste landfilled in Worcestershire are exceeded;
- d) failure to secure a local delivery point for the disposal of the garden waste increases running costs and the risk of under recovery

9.2 These risks will be entered into the risk registry.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

9.3 All risks are being managed as follows:

- a) loss of income and lack of waste collected leading to poor performance will be minimised through effective promotion and maximised efficiency of the collection service, looking for ways to minimise hire costs etc.
- b) an option to mitigate any loss of income is to stop the service completely whilst options for a shared service are considered as part of the transformation of environmental services;
- c) Negotiations are currently underway with WCC to source a local delivery point and it is likely that this will be in place for March 2011.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 1 20% of residents across Worcestershire and Herefordshire have said that they would be prepared to pay for a collection of garden waste (JMWMS consultation, May 2009). Other Worcestershire authorities have found that there is a demand for the service (see Appendix 2). Full details of customer consultation carried out as part of the trial are included in section 19.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The needs of all customers are considered in the delivery of waste collection services, including the garden waste service. Assisted collections, different sized bins and information on the service in different formats are all available to residents upon request.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 In accordance with the JMWMS, it was agreed that the service should aim to be cost neutral.
- 12.2 Members may wish to consider increasing the charge of the service to reduce the risk of running at a deficit. The charges made by other Worcestershire districts are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 12.3 The option of sharing the service across Redditch and Bromsgrove is one which will be explored further as part of the transformation programme for environmental services during 2011/12.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

12.4 The aim is for the service to be self financing including provision / replacement of bins to existing customers

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 In 2009/10 **2,216** tonnes of garden waste were taken by residents to the Household waste site which involves residents using their own vehicles to transport small amounts of waste. If we estimate that each load weighs 100kg, then this equates to over 22,000 separate visits. Whilst operating the service increases transport emissions, there is potentially a reduction in the number of individual public visits to the Household Recycling Centre.

13.2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment which forms part of the JMWMS, states that “***options which have area wide green waste collections secure more benefits overall than other options because of increased tonnages of waste recycled, principally biodegradable waste***” (SEA p.38).

13.3 The service has an impact on climate change indicator NI185 due to increased transport emissions. The table below includes estimated figures for the trial service. Mileage has been minimised by the size of vehicle used and next year, we will be able to dispose of the garden waste locally rather than transporting it to Pershore.

	Mileage undertaken	Resultant CO2 kg/ tonnes
Collection mileage	3855	10,140
Disposal mileage	6820	17,939
Total mileage	10,675	27,979

13.4 In 2008/09 the total carbon arising from the council’s fleet was 590 tonnes. Transport emissions from the trial service will have added approximately 6.3% to overall fleet emissions but if we consider collection only this would be 2.3%. If the service were to be rolled out across the town, this would result in an estimated increase of 13.7% on the total carbon emissions from the council’s fleet (based on one vehicle working for 32 weeks).

13.5 Garden rounds are larger than ordinary collection rounds as they need to cover a wider area, however they are based on existing geographical rounds to ensure that rounds are as efficient as possible in terms of transport distances.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

13.6 Whilst Redditch Borough Council's waste currently goes to an energy from waste facility, diverting biodegradable waste from this route could provide capacity for other Worcestershire waste to be diverted from landfill.

13.7 There may be indirect benefits relating to public attitude as given the opportunity to recycle more can lead to additional sustainable behaviours.

13.8 There was a risk that a garden waste collection would reduce the amount of home composting. However, door step surveying found that the delivery of publicity in the two trial areas seemed to have increased the number of residents that have taken up home composting. In accordance with the Waste Hierarchy, our initial aim was to prevent waste and our publicity materials promoted home composting as the best way to deal with garden waste, ***“our garden waste collection service is specially designed for residents who generate a lot of garden waste but don't have sufficient home composting facilities.”***

13.9. It is likely that statutory CO2 targets will be introduced in the future.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Agency staff would be employed to operate the service if it is agreed that it will be further rolled out during 2011. This would continue until the preferred option of service delivery has been identified as part of the transformation programme.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Since the introduction of targets for increasing the amount of waste recycled and composted (NI 192), one of the key reasons for providing a garden waste service has been to improve performance. As part of the trial 52 tonnes of garden waste have been collected for composting to the end of August. Performance against NI 192 for the first quarter of 2010/11 has been estimated at **25.5%** compared to the first quarter of 2009/10 which was 28.22%.

15.2 Now that all other Worcestershire authorities provide a similar collection of commingled recyclables and also a garden waste collection (with a food waste collection in Wychavon), Redditch's performance in comparison with Worcestershire districts is reducing as shown in the table below:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

Authority	Estimated NI 192 Outturn 2010/11
Bromsgrove DC	40%
Malvern Hills DC	33%
Redditch BC	29%
Wychavon DC	44%
Worcester City	35%
Wyre Forest DC	29%

- 15.3 The following table shows the number of fly-tips reported by the public and reported by cleansing crews in the two areas where the trial collection service is taking place, there has not been a reduction in fly-tipping levels in the two trial areas:

Area	Number fly-tips April – Sept 09	Number fly-tips April – Sept 10
East	170	199
South West	59	97

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

There are no direct community safety implications.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct health inequalities implications.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

Full details of the outcomes of the trial service are included at Appendix 1. It has allowed us to assess: level of customer demand, costs, operational and administrative impacts and effective publicity.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 19.1 As part of the trial several pieces of customer consultation were completed including. The comments made by residents from the two pilot areas who did not take up the service are summarised in the table below:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Comment	No. comments made
Already compost / have shredder	11
I'm retired and it gives me something to do (go to the tip)	9
Garden not big enough to create that much waste	8
Cost + it should be taken away with the "normal" waste	6
We have a gardener and they take the waste away	4
Not interested	5
Not happy with additional cost / already compost / go down tip / Put it in grey bin	5
Appalled its not free. Already compost. Put rest in grey bin	2
Brilliant service. Are you going to keep it?	1
Lost leaflet. Want service, leaflet given	1

19.2 A face to face survey of residents who used the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) to dispose of garden waste for composting was also completed. 52 people were surveyed and these were from many different parts of the Borough. 10 people who we spoke to were in the garden waste pilot area and their comments are summarised below:

- a) 2 people in the west area had not heard of it but said they would take up the service;
- b) 8 people said they had not taken up the scheme because they didn't have enough garden waste, they felt it was too expensive or because they prefer to bring it to the tip themselves.

36 people who we spoke to were not in the garden waste pilot area and their comments are summarised below:

- a) 13 people said it was too expensive;
- b) 13 people said they didn't have enough waste for a regular collection;
- c) 7 people said they would take it up if it became available to them;
- d) 1 person said that if they got too old to drive they would use it;
- e) 1 person said they like bringing it to the HRC;
- f) 1 person had about 5 compost bins but brought bigger stuff to the HRC.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

19.3 The majority of people use the HRC over the summer months only and it was once a month or less that they came to use the HRC to dispose of garden waste. Overall everyone we spoke to preferred the method of contact via a leaflet through the door and the majority of people we spoke to were older residents (age 50+).

19.4 During August a postal survey was carried out of all residents who used the trial service. There was a very positive response to the survey with a 62% response rate and all those responding saying that they were happy with the service and would use it again, with one exception where a resident had found they did not produce enough garden waste.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No
Climate Change Manager	Yes

21. WARDS AFFECTED

There are a number of affected wards and these vary depending on the preferred option; appendix 3 gives a full list of affected streets.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Outcomes of trial garden waste collection service
Appendix 2	Details of the garden waste services offered across Worcestershire
Appendix 3	Proposed list of streets for extension of trial service
Appendix 4	Garden Waste Strategy – Overview & Scrutiny Referral

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft Revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2009

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