

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

12TH JANUARY 2012

SUBJECT:	PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR BRIAN KENNY, ENVIRONMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Members with information relating to the proposed expansion of the garden waste collection service. Since the previous roll out of garden waste bins in 2008, there have been a number of new housing estates that have been developed as well as pockets of the Borough missed from previous rollouts that have been identified by officers as needing a garden waste collection service. The last two years have seen an increase in complaints from residents who are not part of the garden waste collection service, but have gardens and would like to be able to recycle their garden waste, to avoid trips to local household waste recycling centres and to avoid taking up valuable space in their residual waste bin.

1.2 The benefits to the Council include increased recycling performance and increased householder access to service at no additional cost.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Approve the restructure and expansion of the garden waste collection service to all remaining known individual dwellings with gardens where it is economical to collect from.
- (2) Approve the Waste Infrastructure Capital Grant (WICG) spend of up to £68,640 to purchase bins for the expansion of the service to initially provide bins at no cost to residents.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 Officers have identified extra properties (since the last expansion of the garden waste service) that have gardens and require a garden waste collection service. Garden waste makes up around 2.6% of the waste in residual bins, despite having wide coverage on the garden waste scheme. Residents currently excluded from the service are allowed to dispose of their garden waste in the

residual bin as the Council have a legal obligation to collect garden waste, classified as household waste (although local authorities can specify quantity). Therefore, offering this service to all individual dwellings with gardens (where it is economical to collect from) will improve Wirral's recycling performance and reduce the amount of biodegradable waste destined for landfill.

This is a popular service and the Council has received hundreds of requests from residents who want to join the scheme. Elected Members in some wards affected have also requested that officers expand the service, in response to direct householder requests they have received.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Current service

The Council has expanded the garden waste collection service by rolling out brown bins to properties in three phases since 2006. There are currently 108,000 properties across the Borough with a collection service. The service contributes significantly to the Council's recycling rate, which allowed Wirral to recycle 19,275 tonnes of garden waste in the last financial year, some 14.65% of Wirral's household waste.

The garden waste collection contract with Biffa has previously released savings to the Council as a result of the Council tendering for a new garden waste-processing contractor in 2009. The saving to the Council was reported to Cabinet on the 15th January 2009 and resulted in a saving of £151,710 (a one vehicle reduction in the contract) due to the new processing contract providing an in-borough delivery point. This resulted in Biffa not having to make costly and time consuming visits to direct deliver to Hapsford, Cheshire, the previous processing contractors location.

The original business case for the garden waste processing tender projected that Biffa would be able to offer more than just one vehicle saving back to the Council. Biffa therefore agreed that they would review their operations after a sufficient amount of time had passed to test out this business case in terms of the effect on operations. The review has now been completed and has identified enough spare capacity to expand the service without the need to commission an additional collection vehicle. Biffa would be unable to offer a further financial saving back to the Council instead of expanding the service, as the same amount of vehicles would be required to service 108,000 households as it would to service all existing households and the additional 3300 (111,300).

4.2 Current bin allocation policy

The Council's current bin allocation policy, approved by Members on the 27th November 2008 for implementation for the 1st April 2009, states that charges will be made to either developers or householders for bins for new builds occurring after a planned roll out of a new service. Developers are made aware of the policy during the planning process. Therefore, all householders in new build accommodation built after the main service roll out in 2008 are not entitled to receive garden waste bins free of charge.

As part of the expansion, there are 5 new build locations representing 373 properties. As part of the recommendations of this report, officers have included these in the expansion at no cost to the developer or the resident as the majority of the planning applications were submitted prior to the Council's household waste and recycling containers policy implementation. Officers also believe that to encourage maximum take up of the scheme and therefore the efficiency of the service, the bins should be offered free to these households. Waste Capital Infrastructure Grant, carried forward from previous years is available to fund the purchase of all bins required for this roll out.

The remaining properties were missed off the original roll out and are therefore are entitled to a free first garden waste bin under the terms of the Council household waste and recycling containers policy, should the scheme be expanded to them.

4.3 Wards Affected

Since the last roll out in 2008, a further 3300 properties (162 streets) have been identified as needing a garden waste collection service. These properties represent a number of new builds and pockets of properties missed from previous roll outs, mainly in Tranmere, Birkenhead, Rock Ferry and Seacombe (a list of properties is attached as Appendix A). A summary by Ward is presented below.

Ward	Number of properties
Bebington	63
Bidston and St James	90
Birkenhead and Tranmere	1295
Bromborough	95
Cloughton	11
Eastham	22
Leasowe and Moreton East	78
Liscard	112
New Brighton	40
Oxton	192
Prenton	24
Rock Ferry	820
Seacombe	405
Upton	39
Wallasey	11
West Kirby and Thurstaston	3

4.4 Implications on the existing collection round

Due to the expansion, Biffa have confirmed that all of the existing collection rounds will need to be restructured. This will involve a borough wide re-calendar of 108,000 properties plus the additional 3300 properties. The existing two-year calendar is due to expire in September 2012 so the new calendar will replace this, but be delivered earlier, requiring no additional expenditure from the communications budget, than that already in place.

4.5 Schedule of Activities

It is proposed that the new roll out will take place in spring 2012. It is anticipated that it will take no longer than 2 weeks to complete the deliveries of bins to properties. Residents in the expansion areas will receive a pre-notification letter prior to the delivery of bins to give residents the chance to opt out of the service or to request a smaller bin. All residents will receive a new garden waste calendar; where day changes are applicable to existing properties, the calendars will state this clearly.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Officers have not identified any significant risks associated with this proposed roll out. The roll out has been scheduled for the Spring to avoid risks of winter weather delaying the project, and to ensure that the calendar print and delivery costs are funded from the 2012/13 budget, which has provision for this activity from within the communication element of the overall budget.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 As the Council does not have to provide a separate collection of garden waste by law there are a number of other options that could be considered for the properties identified within this report as follows:

- Do nothing – This option would result in continued complaints against the Council from residents that are currently not on the garden waste collection service.
- Promote Home Composting – This option would prevent some of waste being collected by the Council, instead, being composted by householders on their own premises.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Council has consulted Biffa over the proposed expansion of the collection service. The Environment Cabinet Portfolio Holder has been kept informed of progress on this work stream and is supportive of the recommendations in this report.

7.2 Residents will receive a pre-notification letter prior to the delivery of bins to give residents the chance to opt out of the service or to request a smaller bin.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no perceived implications for the above groups.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 There are revenue and capital cost implications for this proposal around the purchase of bins, communications materials, as well as the ongoing cost of dealing with the processing of the extra garden waste that will be collected. The below table provides details on the breakdown of each cost.

Activity	Cost	Budget comments
Bin purchase and delivery to householders	Range of £62,073 – £68,640	Waste Infrastructure and Capital Grant (WICG).
Communications printing and distribution costs for additional properties.	£400 – for 3,300 pre-notification letters	Contained within the existing Waste and Environment Communications Budget.
Garden waste processing cost	Circa £10,000*	Existing Waste and Environment Budget for 2011/12 offset by recycling credit income.

* Members should note that the annual processing cost might vary due to seasonal variation in garden waste.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no perceived equality, discrimination or human rights implications. Equally Impact Assessments are currently in place for waste and recycling collection services.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The proposals within this report will not have any significant impact on Carbon emissions. However, some residents currently home composting may stop doing so if a garden waste bin is provided. Officers will include a section encouraging residents to home compost in the information sent out promoting the new scheme. Conversely, those residents currently transporting garden waste to household waste recycling centres will make fewer journeys. Diverting garden waste from the residual bin offers the best carbon saving advantages.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications regarding the above.

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APPENDICES

N/A

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Provision of Household Waste and Recycling Containers Policy – November 2008, Cabinet.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	15 th January 2009