



Decision Session - Executive Member for
Environment

10 August 2015

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture and Public
Realm)

Extension to Green Waste Collections

Summary

1. This report provides options, as requested by the Executive Member, to extend green waste collections over the winter period in order to improve the service and respond to customer demand.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is recommended to decide on the timing of two additional green waste collections, either:
 - two additional collections in November, or
 - one additional collection in November and one additional collection in January

Reason: To ensure optimum amounts of green waste are collected and to provide an excellent service to customers.

Background

3. Since October 2005, the City of York Council (CYC) has carried out garden waste collections to eligible properties across York, starting with 60,000 properties and growing to more than 66,000 today. There are, however, around 19,000 properties that do not have any garden waste collection. These are in areas where the main method of refuse collection is by sack, and where bins would not be suitable, as well as in areas where the properties do not have gardens.
4. From the outset, CYC's collections took place on a fortnightly basis throughout the year. Starting in winter 2011, however, Members agreed to move the collections from fortnightly to every four weeks during the winter period. During the summer, an average of 327 tonnes of garden waste is collected per week.

During the winter period this average drops to 115 tonnes per week; however, the cost to collect remains the same. The move to four weekly winter collections facilitated a budget reduction whilst maintaining the free service to all eligible properties during the busy spring and summer period.

5. In April 2013 Cabinet agreed, based on the low tonnage collected over the winter, to suspend the service completely during the winter months to help meet budget savings targets. This service change was implemented in late October / early November 2013. The service is now, to all intents and purpose, a seasonal service carried out between the start of April and the end of October each year.
6. At the same time, the basic service was standardised as 1 x 180 litre green wheeled bin collected fortnightly during the April to October collection season. Residents were given the opportunity to have additional garden waste bins emptied from their property for an annual charge of £35 per bin. This subscription scheme only operates during the normal collection period (over the spring and summer) and has attracted a little over 1,500 subscribers. There are no plans to alter payments for this service due to budget pressures.
7. Several residents complained to the Council about the suspension of the winter service and the fact that green waste was not collected during the autumn and winter leaving full green bins from the end of October when the service ceased for winter. In response, a one-off additional collection was introduced in January 2015 in response to customer dissatisfaction about green waste been left in the bins over winter.

Proposals

8. There is now an opportunity to respond in a planned way to create sustainable arrangements to meet customer demand by introducing two additional collections for residents as set out in paragraph 12 below.
9. At the same time we will address options for properties that do not currently have a green waste collection. In previous years additional garden waste collections were funded by local ward committees who would distribute sacks to residents to present garden waste for collection at designated collection points. These collections were discontinued when City of York Council introduced city-wide garden waste collection and ward funds were allocated to other projects.

We will look to explore options for wards, over the next twelve months, enabling them once again to have access to appropriate green waste collection methods where required.

Consultation

10. No formal consultation has taken place, however feedback from residents in various forms has been taken into consideration.

Options

11. There are three options available to the council. These are:
 - a. To maintain the current spring and summer only collections,
 - b. To add two additional collections in November,
 - c. To add one additional collection in November and one additional collection in January.

Analysis

12. Options b) and c) will respond to expressed customer demand which option a) does not.
13. Option b) will be more effective in terms of clearing all of householders' autumn green waste.
14. Option c), on the other hand, will leave the risk of some autumn green waste, particularly fallen leaves, not being collected until mid January which may result in customer complaints; however, it will allow customers to recycle Christmas trees.

Implications

15. **Financial Implications:** A growth item of £64k was included in the July Council budget in order to fund the two additional rounds.
16. **Human Resources:** The additional collections can be staffed within existing arrangements.
17. **Equalities:** An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening shows no equality impacts from these proposals.
18. The report has no additional implications relating to: Human Resources, Legal, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property.

Corporate Priorities

19. The proposals in this report are in line with the Council Plan priority to Place a Focus on Frontline Services.

Risk Management

20. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and to deliver services, leading to damage to the Council's reputation and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations. The level of risk is assessed as "Very Low". This means that periodic monitoring is required of the operation of the new arrangements.

Annexes: None

Contact Details

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Report Approved

All

Wards Affected: All

For further information please contact the author of the report.

Background Papers: None