

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 24 June 2024

Title: Terms and Conditions for Garden Waste Collection Service

Portfolio(s):	Environment Climate Emergency	Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor H Johnson; Councillor S Graham
---------------	----------------------------------	--------------------	--

Report from Service Area: Environment

Responsible Officer: Sam Dand, Director of Environment (Tel: 0191 643 3442)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

Garden waste collections are currently provided to residents free of charge. Brown bins are collected between the months of March and November, and collections stop between December to February.

The introduction of a £30 charge to households for an opt-in garden waste collection service was approved by full Council at its budget-setting meeting on 15 February 2024 as part of the 2024-2028 Financial Planning and Budget Process.

This report seeks Cabinet's approval of the Terms and Conditions for the garden waste collections service.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) approves the draft Terms and Conditions for the garden waste collection service, attached as an Appendix to this report and as set out in section 1.5 of this Report.
- b) authorises the Director of Environment to keep under review the Terms and Conditions for the garden waste collection service and if considered appropriate, following consultation with the Cabinet members for Climate Emergency and the Environment, the Director of Resources and the Head of Law, vary the Terms and Conditions for the garden waste collection service, including (but not limited to) the level of charge for the provision of the garden waste collection service.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 10 May 2024.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this Report relate to the following priority in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2021 to 2025:

- A thriving North Tyneside, and
- A green North Tyneside

The introduction of a charge for garden waste collections will support the sustainability of Authority's finances and continue to promote recycling.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

Inflation, housing growth and sustainable waste management commitments, including the new government 'Simpler Recycling' reforms, are increasing contract costs and creating additional pressure on the Authority's delivery of its waste collection services.

As part of the 2024-2028 Financial Planning and Budget Process, the Authority analysed financial and performance data and identified key areas of demand on waste budgets going forwards.

As a result of that process, the introduction of a charge of £30 for garden waste collections was approved by full Council on 15 February 2024 at the budget-setting meeting. Currently, a brown bin for garden waste is provided to residents and is collected free of charge by the Authority. Brown bins are collected between the months of March and November, and collections stop between December to February. From March 2025, the same service will be provided, but only to those residents who subscribe to the service for £30 per annum. The introduction of a charge brings the Authority into line with other waste collection authorities around the region who charge for the collection of garden waste, although the proposed fee of £30 is the lowest across the seven North East local authorities.

Officers have established a working group comprising representatives from across the Authority to deliver the project, including a communication and marketing campaign, the reorganisation of collection rounds, development of payment methods and a set of Terms and Conditions for the new subscription service. The Terms and Conditions are appended to this Report and cover key areas such as service description, application and payment process, refunds and information on which materials are eligible for collection.

It is forecast that approximately 22,000 households will subscribe for the chargeable garden waste collection service, which would generate a gross income of £0.660m per annum.

A communication plan is in place to support the introduction of the subscription service. This will include briefings for Members, promotional materials, letters to residents, information in the Our North Tyneside Magazine and social media, and community engagement events across the borough and throughout summer 2024. A "Frequently asked questions" document has been prepared and will be added to the Authority's website and will be updated regularly to enable customer queries to be answered efficiently and effectively.

It is intended that letters to residents will be distributed in July 2024 shortly after approval of the Terms and Conditions and residents will be given until the end of November 2024 to subscribe to the garden waste collection service.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet agrees to the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 of the Report.

Option 2

Cabinet does not agree to the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 of the Report and requests a different set of terms and conditions for the introduction of charges for garden waste collections from March 2025.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

- The Terms and Conditions support the decision to introduce a charge for the collection of garden waste and inform residents of the details of the service.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Proposed Terms and Conditions for the garden waste collection service.

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Nelson, Head of Environmental Sustainability, 0191 643 6467

Kimberley Pye, Head of Environment and Safer Neighbourhoods, 07974 569 908

David Dunford, Senior Business Partner, 0191 643 7027

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) 2024-2028 Financial Planning and Budget Process: Elected Mayor and Cabinet Budget and Council Tax Requirement Resolution for 2024/25 and appendices
- (2) Government Consultation Response (November 2023) to the "Simpler Recycling" public consultation.
- (3) Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are positive financial implications directly arising from the introduction of charges for garden waste collections.

It is expected that approximately 22,000 households will subscribe for the chargeable garden waste collection service, which would generate a gross income of £0.660m in the 2024/25 financial year. This additional revenue was included in the Authority's 2024-2028 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), approved by full Council on 15 February 2024. The wider implications of the introduction of the charge are also included in the MTFP.

2.2 Legal

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report. Local Authorities have a legal obligation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to collect household waste. The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 allows a charge to be made for the collection of household garden waste. Following consultation on Simpler Recycling, the government confirmed in its consultation response that local authorities will be required to provide a garden waste collection service where it is requested but, as is currently the case, they can continue to choose to charge for this service. Householders will be able to make their own decision about whether they wish to use this optional service or make other arrangements.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal consultation

The report is based on a range of discussions, workshops and meetings with relevant officers across a number of Directorates and services. Internal consultation has also taken place involving the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency.

2.3.2 Community engagement

The proposal to introduce a £30 subscription fee was included in information that accompanied the borough-wide council budget consultation, which ran from 29 November 2023 to 21 January 2024. The budget consultation was extensively promoted to residents and stakeholders and included an online survey and face-to-face sessions.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications from approving the attached Terms and Conditions. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed as part of the Budget process.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no direct environment and sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive

- Director of Service

- Mayor/Cabinet Member

- Chief Finance Officer

- Monitoring Officer

- Assistant Chief Executive