
Report of: Head of Service (Waste Strategy and Infrastructure)

Report to: Chief Officer Waste Management

Date: 18th April 2017

Subject: Charging for Replacement Wheeled Bins

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): All wards		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

A combination of reduced funding and cost pressures means that the Council will need to deliver £81.8m of savings by March 2018. On 8th February 2017, Executive Board recommended to Full Council that the revenue budget for 2017/18 be approved. This revenue budget included proposals to charge for replacement black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) wheeled bins. The revenue budget was subsequently approved by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.

It is estimated that this proposal would generate combined income and savings of £240,000 per year.

The Council has consulted widely with residents to identify any issues that may arise during implementation and has taken these on board when designing the processes that support charging for wheeled bins.

Recommendations

The report recommends that the Chief Officer Waste Management note the contents of the report, and approve the decision to implement charges for replacement, black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) bins, in line with the revenue budget agreed by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report considers the implementation of charges for replacement black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) wheeled bins in line with the revenue budget approved by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.
- 1.2 It outlines the issues raised during public consultation and describes the policies and processes that will be introduced to address these issues when charges are implemented.
- 1.3 It recommends that charges are implemented in line with the policies and processes described.

2 Background information

- 2.1 A combination of reduced funding and cost pressures means that the Council will need to deliver £81.8m of savings by March 2018. On 8th February 2017, Executive Board recommended to Full Council that the revenue budget for 2017/18 be approved. This revenue budget included proposals to charge for replacement black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) wheeled bins.
- 2.2 The revenue budget was subsequently approved by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.
- 2.3 This budget included a savings target of around £2 million for Waste Management Services with £240,000 of this saving being delivered through the introduction of charges for some household bins.
- 2.4 Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows the Authority to specify the way in which household waste must be contained and presented for collection. Whilst the Council is statutorily obliged to collect household waste free of charge, it is not obliged to provide containers for free.
- 2.5 The Council is able to charge for replacement bins under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and all our neighbouring West Yorkshire authorities (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield) already do so. The majority of Core Cities, including Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and Nottingham, also charge for replacement wheeled bins.
- 2.6 Charging for the replacement of communal, large (770 and 1100 litre) bins has been in place for a number of years. Landlords, managing agents and leaseholders of these properties are already responsible for arranging this. Waste Management are not seeking to change this policy.

3 Main issues

- 3.7 Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows the Authority to specify the way in which household waste must be contained and presented for collection. Generally this means that household waste must be presented for collection in wheeled bins. There are some exceptions, for example where a property is unsuitable for wheeled bins and the waste is presented in bags. In

these cases the resident is expected to own a non-wheeled 'hand bin' for waste storage. The same legislation allows local authorities to charge for the replacement of the container that is specified.

- 3.8 Should residents refuse to buy a bin or provide their own, the Council is entitled to serve legal notice requiring them to buy a bin or to provide their own (which must meet the specification set out within BS EN840). Should householders fail to comply with this notice, enforcement action can be taken.
- 3.1 In developing the proposals for charging, Waste Management have undertaken significant benchmarking with other Local Authorities, and benefited from their experience of implementing similar policies.
- 3.2 Rates charged by other authorities vary a great deal (from £10 to £30) with the average price per bin being around £20. Some authorities charge for all bins in all scenarios, but others only charge for general waste bins. Leeds City Council has made the decision to charge for black (residual waste) and brown (garden) waste bins only, to ensure that residents continue to be incentivised to recycle as much as possible via the green bin service.
- 3.3 The majority of residents use a 240 litre wheeled bin, the cost of which will be £15.40. Smaller 140 litre wheeled bins will be available at the same price. Non-wheeled hand bins (for properties unsuitable for wheeled bins) will cost £10 and in very limited cases larger 360 litre bins will be provided at £31.80 each.
- 3.4 These charges compare very favourably with the charges in other authorities. The charge is only a contribution and covers only a cost equivalent to the actual cost to the Council of the bin itself. It does not cover the cost of delivery, or any administration. The service is therefore provided at a significantly subsidised rate. Because this is only a contribution to the cost, the bins remain the property of the Council.
- 3.5 Following implementation, all local authorities consulted saw a significant reduction in requests for wheeled bins (of up to 50%) following the introduction of charging. Charging for wheeled bins means that residents are more likely to look after their bins, and less likely to ask for additional wheeled bins unnecessarily or to which they are not entitled. This reduction in demand delivers savings in administration time and therefore costs. Waste Management also expect this reduction in demand to result in a significant reduction in the delivery time for wheeled bins, from the current 6 weeks to 10 working days.
- 3.6 Other local authorities have not seen an increase of any significance in uncontained waste or associated environmental issues. All the authorities consulted with had encountered residents refusing to pay for a bin, but these cases were very few. All were dealt with using existing legislation.
- 3.7 Following consultation with residents (see section 4.1 below), Waste Management have developed supporting policies and processes to address concerns:
 - If a collection crew reports that a bin has fallen into the back of the collection vehicle, or has been damaged by the Service's operations, the resident will not be

charged for a replacement. The crew will order a replacement bin at that point. However, bins that are damaged due to general wear and tear, or through householder misuse, will be charged for;

- Waste Management Services recognise that there will be some instances where they will need to exercise discretion, when a resident or household has been identified as being in financial hardship or is vulnerable. These cases will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Criteria have been developed to assess where households genuinely cannot afford a replacement wheeled bin. In these circumstances, where the criteria are met, residents will be provided with a reconditioned replacement bin without charge.
 - Whilst some residents have raised concerns that charging for wheeled bins may lead to an increase in thefts of wheeled bins, this is not borne out by learning from the large number of other local authorities who have implemented this policy. Rather, the number of bins being replaced due to theft is likely to fall, as residents take more care to keep their bins off the street and in a secure place. Waste Management Services will not therefore offer concessions where wheeled bins are stolen, other than in the case of financial hardship as outlined above.
- 3.8 Detailed 'Frequently Asked Question' responses and communications materials have been developed to support the implementation.
- 3.9 Residents will be encouraged to order and pay for replacement bins online via the council's 'MyLeeds' portal. 'MyLeeds' is a portal for residents to self-serve over a number of different service areas, including Waste. However, if residents are unable to access the Internet they can order replacement bins over the phone via Customer Services, or using self-service computers at Council One Stop Centres, Community Hubs and libraries.
- 3.10 Where Waste Management find that, at point of delivery, a bin is not required, or where a resident cancels the order before the bin is delivered, a full refund will be provided. Refunds will also be provided if the order is cancelled on the day of delivery, but the bin will need to be recovered first and must have been unused by the resident.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.2 Prior to consideration of the budget proposals by Executive Board and the subsequent agreement of the budget at Full Council, the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability was made aware of the proposal and is supportive of the approach.
- 4.1.3 Following the decision on the budget at Full Council, the Council sought views from residents about the proposals before they were implemented. This was to enable the service to address any issues or concerns when developing the supporting policies and processes. 926 consultation responses were received.
- 4.1.4 Around a quarter of respondents supported the proposal explicitly.

4.1.5 The main issues raised were:

- If the bin was damaged by the collection crew it would not be fair to charge for a replacement;
- Provision needs to be made for those households who cannot afford a replacement bin, otherwise this will lead to localised environmental problems;
- The policy may lead to a rise in bin thefts.

4.1.6 Given that this proposal was part of the 2017/18 Revenue Budget reports to Executive Board and Full Council, Elected Members have had opportunity to identify any issues arising from the proposals.

4.1.7 Waste Management has considered all the issues raised and sought to address them when developing supporting policies and processes. Section 3 above describes these policies and processes, and how the consultation issues raised have been addressed.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.8 An EDCI screening was undertaken on the 10th April 2017. Consultation on this screening was also undertaken with the Council's Equality Team.

4.2.9 Several negative EDCI impacts were identified, but all were addressed through identified actions and the development of supporting policies and procedures outlined above.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The recommendations in this report will support the delivery of the Council's revenue budget for 2017/18.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 It is anticipated that this proposal will deliver net savings of £240,000 per annum.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The Chief Officer Waste Management has authority to undertake this decision under the relevant scheme of delegation.

4.5.2 It is deemed to be a Significant Operational Decision as it is below £250,000 in value, and is ancillary to the overall budget decision made by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The major risks to the Council are outlined in section 3 above. The largest risk is any negative environmental impacts resulting from residents failing to order replacement bins, or refusing to pay for replacement bins. Supporting policies and procedures have been developed to mitigate these risks.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The proposals to charge for replacement black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) wheeled bins were included in the Revenue Budget report to Executive Board on 8th February 2017, and approved by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.
- 5.2 Following this, a robust set of supporting policies and procedures has been developed, based on benchmarking with other Local Authorities, public consultation, and consultation with Elected Members and with the Council's Equality Team.
- 5.3 It is estimated that this proposal will generate combined income and savings of £240,000 per year.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Waste Management is recommended to note the contents of the report, and approve the decision to implement charges for replacement black (residual waste) and brown (garden waste) bins, in line with the revenue budget agreed by Full Council on 22nd February 2017.

7 Background documents

- 7.1 Council Budget Motion – Report to Full Council, 22nd February 2017
- 7.2 2017/18 Revenue Budget and Council Tax – Report to Executive Board, 8th February 2017