

## REPORT FOR DECISION

### ENTER REPORT TITLE

Enter title of relevant Cabinet Member

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Agenda Item: Garden Waste Subscription Rate for 2019

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Key Decision? YES

Local Ward Members If any Wards are particularly affected insert the name of the Ward Members and their Ward. Ensure that the Ward Members have been consulted.



## CABINET MEMBER DECISION

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In April 2017, Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough Councils approved the introduction of a charge for the garden waste service from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.
- 1.2 The annual subscription charge for 2018 was set at £36 per bin and payable upfront in one instalment. The charge for 2019 now needs to be determined so that the preparatory work for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the service can be completed on time.
- 1.3 The Lichfield Cabinet report (which was similar to the Tamworth Council report) approved that the Director of Place and Community, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Operational Services, Leisure & Waste were granted delegated authority to set the pricing for future years.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the subscription rate for the Garden Waste Service in 2019 remain at £36 per bin.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The decision to introduce the charge was made because of the severe financial pressure being imposed on local Councils by government funding cuts as part of its strategy to balance the large deficit in the national revenue budget. In addition to facing a cut in the revenue support grant the County Council gave notice that they needed to cut the amount of Recycling Credit paid to the District Councils for the diversion of garden waste from landfill in order to help alleviate their own financial pressures. As local authorities are not legally obliged to collect garden waste offering residents a subscription service was deemed to be the only option to safeguard its future provision.
- 3.2 Whilst the financial outlook remains extremely challenging the County Council has postponed the date it intends to start cutting the Recycling Credit until 2019/20 which has reduced the pressure on both districts to raise the subscription rate in 2019. In addition the first year of the service has been extremely successful with more than 39,000 subscriptions being purchased which is significantly higher than the 33,750 target contained in the budget. There is also strong evidence from other authorities which charge, that the higher the charge the lower the uptake so an increase could be self-defeating. At £36 the charge would be below the national average which is currently £41.20.

#### Alternative Options

1. Consideration was given to increasing the charge however this was dismissed for the reasons given above.

#### Consultation

1. Consultation has taken place with Tamworth Borough Council who have also agreed to maintain the subscription rate at £36 per bin.

Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining the subscription rate at the 2018 level reduces the risk that the income generated by the charge will fall in 2019. The subscription target for 2019 hasn't yet been agreed and this will be done as part of the budget setting process and in consultation with Tamworth Borough Council.</li> </ol>
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Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Joint Waste Service plays a key role in assuring we have a clean, green and welcoming place. Being financially stable is a key element of the Council's aspirations to be Fit for the Future.</li> </ol>
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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The charge could have a disproportionately higher impact on residents on low income because the proposal does not include any concessions. However, all residents have the option to dispose of their garden waste by other means which do not incur a charge.</li> <li>2. An Equality Impact Analysis was completed prior to the introduction of the charge ascertained that there is unlikely to be an adverse impact on specific groups with a protected characteristic.</li> </ol>
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Crime & Safety Issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There was a concern that charging for garden waste could cause an increase in fly-tipping, however to date this has not been a significant issue.</li> </ol>
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	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Low participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Below average charge</li> <li>• Effective promotion of the service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green</li> </ul>
B	Adverse publicity when the charge for 2019 is confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A communications plan will be devised which will fully explain why the charge remains in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green</li> </ul>

Background documents: Cabinet report dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Relevant web links