

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SCHEME**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Environment Portfolio Holder requested the Environment Review Panel to advise him on the merits of introducing a Garden Waste Collection Scheme. Extensive research has been carried out to produce a practical and workable scheme and the Panel have now advised the Portfolio Holder of their views (Environment Panel Minute 34, 11 November 2004 refers). This report reflects their recommendations, but also recognises developments since the Panel's discussions.
- 1.2 The Expenditure Plans report considered by Cabinet in November included funding for the implementation of a Garden Waste Scheme from 1 April 2005. The budget for 2005/06 would not be approved by Council until February 2005. The Easter weekend is 25 to 28 March 2005 and it is considered beneficial to be able to have a collection scheme in place for this holiday period. In order to do so, it is necessary to obtain approval for the scheme at the meeting of the Council in December.
- 1.3 The Council has been set a Statutory Recycling Target of 40% in 2005/06. The Council's waste strategy, approved by Council on 13th September 2004, points out that it will be very difficult and expensive for the Council to achieve the 40% recycling target. The Council's Waste Strategy proposes a garden waste collection scheme as a means of boosting the recycling rate and of providing a more sustainable option for dealing with garden waste. It is anticipated that the implementation of this phase of the scheme will result in an increase in recycling rates of approximately 3%.
- 1.4 Currently, green waste taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centres does not contribute towards the District's recycling performance.
- 1.5 Analysis of Hampshire's waste carried out by Project Integra in 2002 revealed that about 30% of Hampshire's waste is garden waste. This is a substantial proportion of the waste stream.
- 1.6 Hampshire County Council has been awarded a grant of £5m for 2004/05 and 2005/06 for improvements to Waste Management in the county. This grant was awarded by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Part of this grant (approximately £120,000) is available to purchase a vehicle for a garden waste collection scheme in the New Forest. The Council have also submitted a subsequent request to DEFRA for additional funds of £22,700 for the start up costs which will be incurred in 2004/05.

2.0 GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SCHEME

2.1 The Environment Panel recommended the following

2.1.1 Material to be collected

Compostable garden waste such as grass cuttings, prunings, weeds, and dead leaves etc. Non-compostable garden waste such as soil or stones would not be accepted. The collected material would be composted and so it is important to collect good quality, biodegradable garden waste

2.1.2 Collection Vehicle

The best method of collection would be a refuse collection vehicle dedicated to the collection of garden waste. A refuse collection vehicle would have the capacity to deal with large volumes of waste and would be able to compact low-density material. The purchase price of the vehicle would be funded by a DEFRA grant.

2.1.3 Collection Area

When the Environment Review Panel considered this issue, it was suggested that the collection area should be based around Totton, Ashurst, Lyndhurst and the Waterside. Discussions are however continuing with the County Council on a collection point to be used for holding this waste until it can be taken, in bulk, to the composting station. To be most efficient, the collection area needs to be based around the disposal point.

It is proposed that approximately 20,000 properties will be offered the opportunity to take part in the first phase. The financial projections have been based on an 18% participation rate, with 6% of these properties purchasing additional sacks. It is envisaged that the scheme should be rolled out to the rest of the District by the end of the 2005/06 financial year. The main constraints on doing so would be the need to maintain the scheme on a self-financing basis.

2.1.4 Collection Container

It is suggested that reusable 110 litre polypropylene sacks are used with a maximum weight limit of 20kg. These sacks can be issued to the householder in return for an annual collection charge and re-used for each garden waste collection. The use of alternative collection systems such as wheelie bins or biodegradable sacks does not always guarantee good quality garden waste. Where residents have already purchased Council grey Garden Waste Sacks, these will be collected for a further three months after the start of the Garden Waste Collection Scheme.

2.1.5. **Collection Frequency**

By offering a collection every fortnight, the council would be able to extend collections of garden waste to a wider area of the District. Households would be issued with a calendar showing clearly the garden waste collection days. Fortnightly collection would allow the garden waste to be of sufficient quality for composting.

2.1.6 **Collection Charge**

An annual charge is suggested in the form of a licence fee. To cover the running costs of the scheme an annual charge of £25 for the first bag and £15 for each subsequent sack is suggested. This compares favourably with the cost of the grey sack scheme but with the added benefit that the material is recycled.

2.1.7 **Disposal Point**

The exact details of the disposal point for garden waste are to be determined by the waste disposal authority (Hampshire County Council). It is important that the waste is delivered to the composting site as quickly as possible to prevent the material from deteriorating. Hampshire Waste Services and Hampshire County Council have agreed in principal to provide a local delivery point for garden waste collected in the New Forest.

2.1.8 **Timing**

The proposed starting date is 14 March 2005 in order to include Easter 2005 and the spring season.

2.1.9 **Grey Sack Scheme**

It is intended that the sale of grey sacks should be phased out, as each area gains the benefit of the new collection service. Grey sacks that have already been purchased would need to be honoured, but the scheme would be actively phased out in the longer term.

2.2 It is proposed that the Cabinet accept all of the recommendations from the Environment Panel recognising that the exact collection areas need to be finalised and that this is done by the Assistant Director Commercial Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2.3 For the sake of clarification, it is proposed that the annual collection charge for the Garden waste scheme will be £25 for the first bag and £15 for each subsequent bag, such charges applying in full regardless of when a resident joins the scheme during the year. These charges will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's expenditure plan process (fees and charges).

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is proposed that the DEFRA grant should be used to purchase a garden waste collection vehicle. Making an annual collection charge would cover all of the running costs of the scheme. Hampshire County Council would meet the cost of processing the garden waste into compost.

ANNUAL RUNNING COSTS (to nearest £100)

	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	Future years £
Expenditure			
Re-usable sacks	7,500	0	2,500
Vehicle costs	700	18,980	18,980
Employees	7,500	67,380	62,880
Promotional activities	8,000	0	2000
Sack Deliveries	2,000	500	1,000
Licenses	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total	26,700	87,860	88,360
Income			
3,600 bags @£25	3,300	90,000	90,000
1,200 extra bags @ £15	700	18,000	18,000
Reduction in Grey Sack Sales		-20,000	-20,000
Total	4,000	88,000	88,000
Net cost	22,700	-140	360

It is not proposed that there should be any concessions offered in the charging structure, as this is a voluntary service.

- 3.2 The Expenditure Plans considered by Cabinet in November 2004 identified a net expenditure bid of £19,860 in 2005/06 and the scheme breaking even from 2006/07. The figures shown in paragraph 3.1 largely reflect the transfer of the 2005/06 net expenditure into 2004/05, principally to cover the one off set up costs of the scheme. As detailed in paragraph 1.5, a bid has been made to DEFRA for funding to cover the supplementary estimate but at this stage it is not known if this will be successful
- 3.3 In addition to the costs shown there would be a requirement to replace the vehicle in 7 years time. The capital cost of the vehicle is about £120,000. No allowance has been made for depreciation, although the intention would always be for this scheme to be self financing and therefore it is anticipated that demand for the scheme by Year 7 would provide sufficient income to cover the lease costs for a new vehicle

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Recycling garden waste into compost is undoubtedly good for the environment. This scheme should be viewed as a more sustainable alternative to the current grey garden waste sack system. The green waste collected would be composted rather than go to landfill and the end product re-sold to a very well developed market.
- 4.2 A promotion is intended to promote the use of garden waste composters as part of this scheme. It is important that any scheme introduced by the Council does not deter people from composting their waste at home and does not attract waste into the municipal waste system. This has been taken into account in developing the proposals.
- 4.3 A successful garden waste collection scheme should reduce the number of car journeys to the Household Waste Recycling Centres and should help to reduce congestion at these sites at peak times.

5.0 PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder supports the introduction of a garden waste collection scheme, as set out above, and as supported by the Environment Review Panel.

6.0 RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That Cabinet approve the implementation of the Garden Waste Collection Scheme, as set out in Section 2 of this report, with effect from 14 March 2005, subject to Council approval of the supplementary estimate set out below; and
- (b) That the Council be requested to approve a supplementary estimate of £22,700 in 2004/05 and amend the expenditure plans for 2005/06 onwards.

Further information

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Background Papers

Published Documents