

## **GARDEN WASTE FEES AND CHARGES 2024-25**

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Cabinet recommend to Council, the adoption of the proposed garden waste fees as set out in appendix 1 of this report, applicable from 1 April 2024.

### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Fees and charges for the 2024-25 garden waste year need to be agreed earlier than normal to allow customers to subscribe this autumn so that the wheeled bins being introduced can be delivered in time for 1 April 2024.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The council operates a subscription-based garden waste service. The service currently has around 21,000 customers (1 in 4 households). The service is a fortnightly collection, using a reusable bag.
- 3.2 All other councils in Hampshire also collect garden waste as a chargeable service. NFDC's charges for this service have historically been among the lowest in the County. Service costs have risen in recent years and as Councils in Hampshire look to move to a more consistent approach, these charges have been reviewed.
- 3.3 In response to national and regional changes in the approach to management of waste and resources, as well as a desire to ensure that local goals are met, the Council approved a new Waste Strategy in July 2022. This Strategy includes moving from the reusable sack service to a wheeled bin service. These wheeled bins will be introduced ready for 1 April 2024.

### **4. GARDEN WASTE FEE AND CHARGES**

- 4.1 The new service will have a simplified charging structure, with a new annual fee. Service charges for the new garden waste scheme are shown in appendix 1. These new charges (£65) are equivalent to the median charge from across all Hampshire councils for the financial year 2023-24. The highest charge in Hampshire this year is Hart DC, at £80. These charges also reflect the increasing costs of staff and fuel in recent years.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the new service will be rolled out using a 240l wheeled bin. The new bins have twice the capacity of one of the current reusable bags and will therefore represent an increase in the capacity of garden waste that the majority of our customers will receive for their annual payment.
- 4.3 The wheeled bins will be delivered to customers in the period December 2023 to March 2024. The exact delivery schedule will not be determined until the number of subscribers are known.

- 4.4 To prepare for this, customers will be asked to sign up for the new service during October and November this year. Customers signing up during this period will receive the “early-bird” discount in the form of no bin supply charge for their first bin. Customers signing up after this period, and customers requesting more than one bin initially, will incur the supply charge.
- 4.5 In future, customers will be able to sign up for the full 12-month service at any point during the year, rather than having to wait until the subscription year resets on 1 April.
- 4.6 The table below shows how many customers currently use the service, broken down by the number of bags they use, what capacity they are provided with and what the price is. It also shows how the capacity provided and the price will change in future. For example, it shows that customers with one bag will see the capacity provided increase by 100%.

	<b>No. customers at end of 22/23</b>	<b>Price these customers would pay in 2024/25 if current price + 5% inflation is applied (reusable bag service)</b>	<b>Capacity provided in bags</b>	<b>Price these customers will pay in 2024/5 if they require capacity equivalent to current capacity (in wheeled bins)</b>	<b>Capacity provided in wheeled bin</b>
<b>1 bag</b>	11,675	£43	120l	£65	240l
<b>2 bags</b>	7,850	£65	240l	£65	240l
<b>3 bags</b>	995	£87	360l	£130	480l
<b>4 bags</b>	433	£109	480l	£130	480l
<b>5 bags</b>	89	£131	600l	£195	720l

- 4.7 An additional document has been created to update the terms and conditions for the garden waste collection service. This document reflects the policies set out in the main waste and recycling collection policy document, accounting for the move to wheeled bins for this service and the new ways of working. The new garden waste terms and conditions will be implemented in line with the service change to wheeled bins in April 2024. In line with that policy, bins will remain the property of NFDC.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The 23-24 base budget for garden waste income is £1.13m. Assuming that the number of customers remains consistent, the subscription income in 2024-25 would increase by £0.33m to £1.46m. This increase will cover increased direct operating costs following increases in fuel and salary and will make a contribution towards the Council's Medium Term forecast budget deficit, in support of protecting other council services.

## **6. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are none.

## **7. PLACE & SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENTS**

- 7.1 Following a vote, in which a majority of members were in support of the recommendation, the Panel recommended to Cabinet the adoption of the proposed garden waste fees as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, applicable from 1 April 2024. The Panel were reminded that this was a discretionary service provided by the Council and were given reassurances on the accessibility of the collection vehicles to residents in less accessible parts of the District. Some members were concerned with the rise in service costs and highlighted that this may dissuade some residents from subscribing to the service.

## **8. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS**

- 8.1 The changes to the fees and charges set out in the report have been carefully considered looking at other similar collection services.

The increased capacity of the wheeled bin compared to the current bag service will be of great benefit to many garden waste customers, enabling them to recycle more garden waste without heavy lifting.

The new charge will align with the average charge from other Hampshire authorities and will still offer our residents very good value for money.

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### **Background Papers:**

[Waste Strategy 2022-27](#)

## Appendix 1

<b><u>ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO</u></b>			
<b><u>PROPOSED SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024/25</u></b>			
			<b>Proposed Charge 2024/25 £</b>
<b><u>GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION FOR COMPOSTING</u></b>			
	Collection Charge for 12 month period, per 240 litres (up to maximum 5 bins)		65.00
	Bin supply charge per bin* - including replacement bins		25.00
*customers signing up for <b>1 bin</b> as part of the initial sign-up period in 2023 (dates TBC) will <b>not pay</b> the <b>bin supply charge</b> . Any <b>additional</b> bins will incur the charges shown above.			