

INFORMATION NOTE

Green Waste Subscription Service



At the Operational Management Meeting, held on 13th September 2016, it was RESOLVED to recommend to full Council:

The introduction of a year-round green waste subscription service, at a charge of £30 per waste bin per annum, in order that the service may be ready for implementation from April 2017; and that the income arising from the introduction of the charge, if approved, be reflected within the Councils budget for 2017/18 onwards.

A Green Waste Project Board, comprising Members and Officers, has been established to discuss policy and logistics associated with the introduction of a subscription service. The Board held an initial meeting on 20th October and the following proposals were agreed:

1. Bins will be charged at a fixed price of £30 **per bin per annum**. There will be no refund for a part year subscription, discounts for multiple bins or personal circumstances and subscriptions will be non-transferrable between properties.
2. There will be no 'take back' facility for the collection of non-scheme green bins where residents do not initially sign up to the service. This will be reviewed after 2 years once the scheme has matured, with no refunds on non-scheme bins.
3. A suggested start date of 1st May 2017 was agreed with subsequent years running from 1st April to 31st March. The delayed start in year 1 was proposed to avoid a significant increase in enquiries to the One Stop Shop during March, the busiest time for dealing with council tax enquiries.
4. A full promotion and communication program will support the introduction of the service to ensure maximum publicity and participation. This will commence following the outcome of the full Council meeting in December 2016 with a press release and updates through social media and roadshows. Pre-scheme literature will be delivered in February 2017 highlighting the scheme and detailing the web link for further information. This will be followed by a detailed information pack delivered to all properties through the letterbox in March.
5. The preferred option for residents to enrol into the scheme will be online to include the payment of the £30 annual fee. The process will be the same if the contact is made via phone or in person at the One Stop Shop with CSS specialists assisting to process the subscription.
6. Subscribed bins will be distinguished from non-subscribed bins via scheme stickers detailing the property address. Subscriptions will also be linked against the property address through the in cab technology Bartec that is linked live to the customer service team. Non-scheme bins presented for collection will be rejected, stickered and highlighted on Bartec so that information literature can be distributed to properties to further promote the scheme.

These proposals will feed into the report to be presented to full Council on 5th December 2016. If the scheme receives approval to commence in May 2017 the Project Board will continue to meet on a regular basis to finalise the operational arrangements and agree the supporting IT, finance and communication considerations. The Operational Management Committee will receive regular updates with respect to the progress of the scheme. Based on initial discussions with the IT and finance teams as well as learning from other authorities that have implemented subscription service schemes in

recent years, it is evident that a significant proportion of the first year income will be required for set up costs in particular improved online payment facilities.

A Green Waste Consultation was conducted between 18th March and 13th September, 477 responses were received during this time. The consultation was not statistically or geographically representative but was carried out to obtain a view on the potential introduction of a subscription service. The questions were the same as neighbouring authorities had asked and the results very similar which have been attached as Appendix 1 to this information note.

Other local authorities that have carried out similar research with similar results have reached in excess of 60% participation in the subscription service within the first two years therefore giving officers the confidence that estimates forecast to date will be achieved at Fylde.

The difficult question that asks respondents if they would pay for something that they previously received free was asked with the predictable response. It has been made explicit in the communications to date that the funding for the provision of this scheme is being withdrawn by the County Council and that the District council does not have the resources to fund the scheme without an optional charge.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Appendix 1: Consultation on Green waste Subscription Service

Question 1: How often do you use the Council's green waste recycling service (green bins)?

Answered: 477 **Skipped:** 0

- 51% Every collection
- 44% Sometimes
- 4% Never

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 95% of respondents present a green bin for collection by Fylde Council

Question 2: How often do you use the service – answer all that apply?

Answered: 207 **Skipped:** 270

- 43% Monthly
- 97% Quarterly
- 16% Other

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 97% of respondents present a green bin for collection by Fylde Council, supporting the result of Q1 above

Question 3: Please tell us why you don't use the service – answer all that apply?

Answered: 21 **Skipped:** 456

- 71% Don't produce garden waste
- 10% Home compost
- 5% Take to tip
- 14% Other

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, only 21 respondents do not use the service as they don't generate garden waste for collection by Fylde Council

Question 4: How many green bins do you currently use?

Answered: 445 **Skipped:** 32

- 89% One
- 11% Two or more

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 89% of respondents present at least one green bin for collection by Fylde Council

Question 5: To enable the service to continue, do you think the proposed charges are?

Answered: 467 **Skipped:** 10

- 93% Too much
- 7% Acceptable or unsure

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 93% of respondents think the proposed charges are too high. This is consistent with the initial findings of other subscription schemes where the majority of respondents object to a charge regardless of the amount proposed. Once the scheme is introduced, many acknowledge it is cheaper and more convenient than other disposal routes and support for the scheme increases.

Question 6: Are you likely to subscribe to the service?

Answered: 468 **Skipped:** 9

23% Yes or maybe

76% No

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 76% of respondents indicate they are unlikely to subscribe to the service. This is consistent with the findings from other subscription schemes where the majority of respondents object to a charge regardless of the amount proposed. Once the scheme is introduced, many acknowledge it is cheaper and more convenient than other disposal routes and support for the scheme increases. New subscription services can take as long as 2 years to reach full maturity with maximum participation.

Question 7: As you are unsure, or not likely to subscribe to the Council's service, please tell us how you would plan to dispose of your green waste?

Answered: 426 **Skipped:** 51

24% Home composting

37% Household waste recycling centre

59% Other

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, the majority of respondents would consider alternate means of green waste disposal. This is consistent with the initial findings of other subscription schemes where the majority of respondents initially indicate a preference for using the local tip. Over time the chargeable scheme is recognised as cost effective and convenient and support for the scheme increases. Home composting will be promoted as the most environmentally favourable option in Fylde for residents not wishing to subscribe to the kerbside scheme.

Question 8: How many green bins are you likely to require under the subscription service?

Answered: 442 **Skipped:** 35

45% One

8% Two or more

47% Not applicable

Commentary: Results demonstrate that of the sample surveyed, 53% of respondents would require at least one green bin for collection by Fylde Council and that certainly in the early stages a number will not participate.