

REPORT TO	DATE OF MEETING
Cabinet	6 April 2016

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SUBJECT	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	ITEM
Garden and Food Waste Collections	Neighbourhoods and Streetscene	Mark Gaffney	6

SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report details the options available to the Council following the recent decision by Lancashire County Council (LCC) to request districts to cease co-mingled (mixed) garden and food waste collections. This position has also been influenced by LCC’s recent decision to “moth ball” some of the facilities at the Farington Waste Recovery Park and operate part of the site as a transfer station. A transfer station is a waste facility where waste is taken to in small quantities before being “bulked up” for larger volume transport to a disposal facility.

All of the Council’s corporate priorities are firmly embedded in our waste management and recycling services, especially Clean, Green and Safe and Efficient, Effective and Exceptional Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet agrees:

1. That from 1 June 2016 the Council will cease to collect co-mingled garden and food waste in line with the request from LCC as the Waste Disposal Authority.
2. That from the 1 June 2016 the Council will cease to collect separate food waste from those properties receiving this service.

DETAILS AND REASONING

Background

In 2010 the Council introduced co-mingled garden and food waste collections as part of the brown bin service. This enabled those properties with a garden (43,000) to receive a weekly collection of food waste by alternate week use of their grey and brown bins. To give residents in other properties without a garden (such as terraced etc.) the same level of service, a separate weekly food waste collection via a caddy system was also introduced. Participation rates are low at circa 35% for the 4,000 properties which are offered the service.

This report details the options available to the Council following the recent decision by Lancashire County Council (LCC) to request districts to cease co-mingled (mixed) garden and food waste collections. This position has also been influenced by LCC’s recent decision to “moth ball” some of the facilities at the Farington Waste Recovery Park (WRP) and operate part of the site as a transfer station.

In relation to the above LCC has told all districts that from 1 April 2016, as the Waste Disposal Authority it will no longer be accepting mixed garden and food waste.

The Council's understanding is that residual waste (grey bin waste) will no longer be treated at Farington Waste Recovery Park. Whilst the Council will still deliver this waste to the site, the waste will be "bulked up" for large volume transport to an alternative site. Dry recyclables (blue bin and green box materials) will still be delivered to Farington Waste Recovery Park for processing at the site with operations subject to on-going review. Processing of garden and food waste (brown bin or caddy waste) will cease from 1 April with separate windrow facilities procured for garden waste composting. No facilities will be provided for separate food waste collection.

The Council's Position - Mixed Garden / Food and Separate Food Waste

LCC's agreed budget includes requesting districts to cease mixing food waste with garden waste collections. A request from LCC was received in January 2016 to this effect with an implementation date of 1 April 2016.

Should the Council decide to continue collecting food and garden waste together LCC would look to pass on the extra cost of in vessel composting, which would no longer be available at Farington Waste Recovery Park, as opposed to their new preferred and lower cost method of wind row composting. In vessel composting is necessary for processing mixed food and garden waste due to the Animal Bi Product regulations which prohibit open air wind row processing due to the risk of animals and birds spreading a foot and mouth risk. LCC are unable to give the exact differential in cost at this time but have indicated that this is expected to be in the region of in-between £50 - £60 per tonne with transport included. The Council currently collects in excess of 9000 tonnes which would equate to between £450,000 and £540,000.

LCC will also no longer be providing facilities at the Farington Waste Recovery Park for separate food waste processing. LCC has offered the Council a chargeable service for the processing of this waste at an alternative site with an indicative cost of £30 per tonne. The Council only collects circa 100 tonnes of this material so the approximate cost would be £3,000.

Officers have been in discussions with LCC about a proposed implementation date for ceasing the mixed collection of garden and food waste. LCC has said that it is agreeable to an extended period until the 1 June 2015 to enable the Council to take decisions and publicise the changes to the residents.

The pattern across Lancashire is that districts are acceding to LCC's request. Some districts do not collect co-mingled garden and food waste so are not affected by the changes.

Should the Council decide to agree to LCC's requirement to remove food from garden waste then those properties with a garden (43,000) will no longer receive the opportunity for a weekly collection of food waste by alternate week use of their grey and brown bins. All food waste would have to be disposed of in the grey bin for a fortnightly collection. Should this be the Council's decision then it is also proposed that consideration should be given to ceasing the separate food waste collections from properties without a garden (terraced etc.) to ensure the Council is offering the same level of service across the borough. These properties would also have to dispose of all food waste via the grey bin.

Communications

LCC has worked with each district individually and agreed a communication campaign bespoke to each district and is contributing to the costs of the campaign. Therefore should the Council agree to the request from LCC, there should be no costs other than officer time, PR, publicity and communications with LCC covering any material, leaflet, bin sticker costs etc. It should also be noted that to change resident behaviour in a matter such as this will be a long term process of communications.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these.

FINANCIAL	<p>The cost of continuing the current levels of service based on LCC's indicative costs would be in-between £453,000 and £543,000. This would be an additional cost to the Council's approved revenue budget for 2016/17 and for future years.</p> <p>Should the Council agree to LCC's requirements and cease co-mingled collections of garden and food waste and also ensure consistency of service by ceasing separate food waste collection, a small saving would be achieved. Initial discussions with FCC, the council's waste partner, have indicated a saving of circa £13,000 due to reduced collection costs from ceasing separate food waste collections. This would impact positively against the revenue budget for 2016/17 and in future years.</p>
LEGAL	<p>The Council has a statutory obligation to collect and LCC a statutory obligation to dispose of household waste. However, garden waste is not classified as household waste so the collection and disposal of garden waste is not a statutory service. LCC therefore has the discretion to charge should the Council not agree to LCC's request to cease co-mingling garden and food waste.</p>
RISK	<p>Should the Council not agree to LCC's request to cease co-mingling garden and food waste, there will be a significant budget pressure due to LCC's indicative charges outlined in the report.</p> <p>Whilst it is difficult to measure the impact at this stage, there will certainly be a reduction in recycling performance should the proposals in this report be approved, resulting in all food waste being collected with the residual waste via the grey bins.</p>
THE IMPACT ON EQUALITY	<p>There are no equality impacts as a result of the proposals in this report. The Equality Impact Assessment covering the waste service is subject to regular review.</p>

OTHER (see below)

<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None