

North Yorkshire County Council
Business and Environmental Services

Executive

10 January 2023

Harmonisation of Garden Waste Collection Charging 2023

Report of the Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services

1.0 Purpose Of Report

- 1.1 To seek a decision to request the harmonisation of garden waste collection charges across North Yorkshire for those areas that currently charge for garden waste collection for the 2023/24 season and agree the option for Richmondshire.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Currently each District and Borough, except for Selby District Council, has a slightly different charge for providing a collecting garden waste service across North Yorkshire. An Executive decision was made for fees and charges for the Council to be indexed by a minimum of 6% and applied from April 2023 however, these charges are applied prior to 1 April as collections are seasonal starting in February/March therefore to ensure one harmonised charge for the 2023/24 season the rate will need to be agreed and then applied by the district councils. The current charges and 6% indexation rates are shown in the following table:

Council	2022 Charge	6% indexed
Hambleton	£40	£2.40
Ryedale	£38	£2.30
Richmondshire	£25	£1.50
Scarborough	£38	£2.30
Harrogate	£41	£2.50
Craven	£36	£2.20
Selby	Free of charge	n/a

- 2.2 As noted, Selby District Council currently do not charge for collection of garden waste and as such are excluded from this recommendation. However, this is a non-statutory service and in the interests of fairness to everyone a separate paper is being prepared regarding consulting on the introduction of charges for this service in Selby.
- 2.3 Charges have been frozen for several years for most authorities and therefore now is a good time to review the charges. It is also a good time to harmonise the charge ahead of the formation of North Yorkshire Council such that it is fair to all residents across the county.
- 2.4 The option on which level of charge to harmonise to has been considered, alongside benchmarking charges for this service with other councils delivering this service. The most recent data indicates that taking inflation into account the average cost in the Yorkshire and Humber region was around £44 for fortnightly collections. Set in this context the proposal of harmonising at £43.50 is reasonable. As noted, charges

OFFICIAL

have been frozen for several years and the proposal is harmonised to the Harrogate Borough Council rate which for 2023/24 (including inflation) is £43.50 for the year. The charge for additional bins has been considered as part of this review and determined that the current charge for each district and borough area is reflective having applied the 6% index.

- 2.5 Consideration has been given towards the Richmondshire District Council charge which is notably different as the garden waste bin size is smaller than the other Councils across North Yorkshire. It is not feasible to replace all the garden waste bins in Richmondshire at this stage which leaves two options when considering the 2023/24 fee:
- charge Richmondshire residents the same harmonised fee of £43.50 for a bin half the size of other residents. An increase of £18.50 compared to 2022/23 will result in some residents not renewing their subscriptions and disposing of their garden waste in residual kerbside bins or household waste recycling centres for free, which is less sustainable and reduces savings. Or
 - pro rata the harmonised charge for Richmondshire residents at £25.50. It is anticipated that Richmondshire residents will be offered the standard bin size through 2023/24 in time for the 2024/25 season and at that point in time the charge would move to the harmonised rate; and is the option recommended by officers.
- 2.6 In Selby, where this service is currently free of charge consultation will follow in the coming weeks to understand what demand there is for this service when it is subject to the same charges as all other areas of the county. Garden waste collections are not statutory services but are valued by tens of thousands of households across the county who have been paying for their permit for many years. As a non-statutory service, it is not fair for people who do not use the service to have to subsidise it. This approach looks to provide a service which is self-funding and provided at a reasonable fee which is in line with other council areas.
- 2.7 Therefore, the proposed charge by district and borough area for the 2023/24 season is as follows:

Council	2023/24 Charge
Hambleton	£43.50
Ryedale	£43.50
Richmondshire	£25.50
Scarborough	£43.50
Harrogate	£43.50
Craven	£43.50
Selby	Free of charge

- 2.8 It should be noted that there is potential to lose some subscribers as a result of any increase in fees and charges. However, experience from previous increases is that subscribers remain with the service as it still offers good value. For those subscribers that choose not to renew, typically they choose to compost at home instead.

3.0 Equalities

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equality impacts arising from the recommendations (See. Annex A - EIA Screening Form). It is the view that the recommendations do not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010

4.0 Finance

- 4.1 For the recommended option, based on an annual charge of £43.50 being adopted by all charge district and borough councils and a charge of £25.50 for Richmondshire for 2023/24, the unitary council should expect additional income of up to £350k depending on how many residents subscribe to the service.
- 4.2 If the other option of a standard charge of £43.50 was to be rolled out to all district and borough councils which currently charge, including Richmondshire, the saving could be up to £500k but would be dependent on resident take up of the service.
- 4.3 As noted, if the recommended option was to be agreed, it is the intention to provide the standard bin size in Richmondshire and then to harmonise the charge to be consistent with the rest of North Yorkshire. It is anticipated the cost of providing 240 litre bins will cost £200k depending on how many subscribers choose to take up the standard bin. All existing 140 litre bins that are replaced will be recycled. Having provided standard bins to Richmondshire residents, the charge would then be harmonised with the rest of the Council. At that stage, a further saving of up to £150k (in addition to the saving of £350k in 2023/24) could be achieved depending on how many subscribers take up the service in the 2024/25 season.

5.0 Legal

- 5.1 Garden waste collection is a discretionary service where waste collection authorities are able to make a charge under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012
- 5.2 It should be noted that a national government decision regarding an England-wide approach to recycling is anticipated, following a public consultation in 2021. This could lead to a cap on charging for this discretionary service.

6.0 Climate Change

- 6.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse climate change impacts arising from the recommendation. If people choose not to subscribe to the garden waste collection service, experience from other authorities shows that residents tend to compost at home instead, therefore there is little impact on the environment. A Climate Change Implication is included as Annex B of this report.

7.0 Recommendation

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Executive approve the proposed harmonised rates for garden waste collection charging for the 2023/24 season and request the District and Borough Councils implement the harmonised rate and Richmondshire implement the pro rata rate.

KARL BATTERSBY
Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services

Author of Report: Michael Leah, Assistant Director Travel, Environmental and Countryside Services

Background Documents: None

OFFICIAL

Initial equality impact assessment screening form			
This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	BES		
Service area	TECS		
Proposal being screened	Harmonisation of garden waste collection charges.		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Michael Leah		
What are you proposing to do?	To obtain approval to harmonise garden waste collection charges from April 2023. (Selby District area excluded from this decision as the service is currently free of charge)		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To ensure the cost of the delivering the service is covered by the charge.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No		
Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics			
As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? 			
If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
NYCC additional characteristics			
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	

Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No			
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No			
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	x	Continue to full EIA:	
Reason for decision	<p>The charges will be levied on a range of customers who choose to pay for the services in question.</p> <p>Some of those customers will fall within the group of protected characteristics within the equality act. However, there is no evidence that the charges will disproportionately impact on customers within any of the protected characteristic groups.</p>			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Michael Leah			
Date	23 December 2022			



Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Harmonisation of garden waste collection charging.
Brief description of proposal	To seek a decision from Executive to harmonise garden waste collection charging
Directorate	Business and Environmental Services
Service area	Travel, Environment and Countryside Services
Lead officer(s)	Michael Leah
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Michael Leah, Assistant Director Travel, Environment and Countryside Services
Date impact assessment started	December 2022

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

The authority has three options in reviewing garden waste collection charges:

Option 1 - No change to the existing charges (a 'freeze' on charges)

Option 2 - A minimum 6% increase should be applied to one or more of the charges.

Option 3 – Harmonisation of charging across the County area.

Option 3 provides the most desirable outcome as the increases ensure the authority can cover its legitimate costs in delivering the garden waste collection service.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

The expectation is that option 3 will provide additional income to the Council of up to £600k p.a. depending on how many residents subscribe to the garden waste collection service. This additional income offsets not only the rising costs of delivering the service but also because charges at a District and Borough level have historically been 'frozen' for most Councils.

How will this proposal impact on the environment? N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.		Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where	No impact (Place a X in the box below where	Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where	Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale? Where possible/relevant please include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.	Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.	Emissions from travel		x		As charges are being increased, there is a risk that some existing users of the garden waste collection service choose to dispose of their garden waste at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC). However, experience from previous charge increases is that residents tend to compost at home which creates a positive overall impact.	Provide communication to residents to explain that whilst there is a financial cost of the service it still offers good value.	Provide educational support to residents who choose to home compost.
	Emissions from construction		x		n/a		
	Emissions from running of buildings		x		n/a		
	Other		x		n/a		

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		x		<p>Residents who choose not to subscribe to the garden waste collection service still can compost their garden waste either through HWRCs or through home composting.</p>		
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>		x		<p>n/a</p>		
<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>		x				
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		x				
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>	x			<p>For those residents who choose not to subscribe to the service, there is an increased likelihood that they choose not to cut back the grass and vegetation in</p>		

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
				<p>their garden, giving a mild positive impact to conservation.</p>		
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>		<p>x</p>				
<p>Other (please state below)</p>		<p>x</p>				

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

Not currently aware of any good practice relating to this.

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

An increase to charges for the garden waste collection service may reduce the number of residents subscribing to the service. There is a very small risk that residents will instead choose to dispose of their garden waste at HWRCs therefore increasing traffic movements and associated emissions. Conversely, there is a positive in that some residents may choose to compost at home reducing overall demand and traffic movements.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Michael Leah
Job title	Assistant Director Travel, Environment & Countryside Services
Service area	Travel, Environment and Countryside Services
Directorate	BES
Signature	Michael Leah
Completion date	22 December 2022

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Michael Leah

Date: 23 December 2022