

North Yorkshire Council

Environment Directorate

Executive Member

30 October 2023

Garden Waste Subscription Charge 2024/25

Report of the Assistant Director – Environmental Services and Sustainability

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To obtain approval of the garden waste subscription charge for 2024/25

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 To enable residents to subscribe to the garden waste service for the 2024 season from early January 2024, a decision is required on the garden waste subscription charge for 2024/25. To meet this deadline, this decision is being brought forward ahead of approving the rest of the Environment directorate fees and charges for 2024/25 which will be the subject of a separate report as part of the budget setting process.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 20 June 2023, Executive approved:
- i. That a subscription-based garden waste service be introduced in the Selby area in line with the rest of North Yorkshire at the harmonised rate
 - ii. That in Selby subscription open from 3 July 2023 with the charged service beginning w/c 28 August 2023 and a pro-rata rate of £29 be charged for 2023/24
 - iii. To agree the further harmonisation of the garden waste service across the North Yorkshire Council area including charging periods, subscription periods and winter closedown based on the proposals for the Selby area.
- 3.2 The garden waste subscription charge was harmonised in 2023/24 for all former district and borough Councils excluding Selby area, where charging for garden waste was introduced in July following the approval of (i) and (ii) above.
- 3.3 Work has taken place post vesting day to enable further harmonisation of the garden waste service following the approval of (iii) above.

4.0 OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The current charge for one garden waste subscription is £43.50, with a pro-rata charge of £29 in Selby.
- 4.2 All areas provide a 240-litre wheeled bin for garden waste except Richmondshire, who currently provide a 140-litre wheeled bin and a pro-rata charge has applied in 2023/24.

- 4.3 For the 2024 season the garden waste service will be harmonised for all residents who subscribe across North Yorkshire in the following areas:
- The window for renewing garden waste subscriptions will open to all residents from January 2024 which has been brought forward to reduce customer contact in March at a peak time for customer services.
 - Residents will have the option to subscribe online or by telephone. These methods will be promoted however cheques will also be accepted. Still to be confirmed once review completed
 - The charging period for 2024 will be from Monday 4 March to Friday 6 December 2024
 - The 2024/25 winter closedown period will be December, January and February
 - All residents will have a 240-litre garden waste wheeled bin. Richmondshire residents who subscribe will have their smaller 140-litre wheeled bin replaced with a 240-litre bin for garden waste which requires the purchase of 7,000 additional bins in 23/24 at a cost of £161k to be funded from the environment directorate revenue budget.
 - All residents will receive the same licence for 2024/25 which will be a sticker (subject to confirmation)
- 4.4 Residents in Craven, Hambleton and Ryedale will pay a reduced subscription charge for the 2024 season as their subscription for 2023/24 already includes a payment for March 2024.
- 4.5 It is expected that full harmonisation of subscribing to the garden waste service will take place from 2025.
- 4.6 The total number of garden waste licences purchased for 2023/24 is forecast to be 126,750 generating an annual income of £4.996m which is £302k above the original budget for 2023/24.
- 4.7 The current forecast is £302k above the original budget which is due to Selby achieving an impressive participation rate of 43% since introducing charges with total subscriptions at 18,500 compared to the target of 6,900 exceeding the budget by £355k. In addition, there has been no impact on the level of subscriptions as a result of harmonising the garden waste subscription charge in any of the former district and boroughs who already charged for the service who are collectively achieving 23/24 savings targets already built into the budget.

5.0 PROPOSED CHARGES AND INCOME

- 5.1 To enable the window to open in January 2024 for residents to renew their garden waste subscriptions for the 2024 season, the charge for the 2024 subscription needs to be set.
- 5.2 The proposed charge for 2024/25 is £46.50 which has a 6.9% inflationary increase applied.
- 5.3 The proposed pro-rata charge for 2024/25 is £42.00 which reflects a reduced charge for residents who subscribe in Craven, Hambleton and Ryedale as they have already paid for March 2024 in their charge for 2023/24.
- 5.4 Income from garden waste subscriptions based on current participation rates continuing in 2024/25 at proposed rates would increase budgets by £375k for inflationary price increases, as well as the expected additional waste harmonisation savings of £750k already included in MTFs to reflect the full year charge for Selby waste and remaining harmonisation savings relating to Richmondshire.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Place and Environment - To encourage and assist everyone to reduce, reuse and recycle.
- 6.2 Organisation – To provide good customer service and understand the needs of our customers and to ensure customers can access services in the most appropriate way, with customers being able to self-serve where they are able to do so.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 A lower inflationary increase could be applied to the garden waste subscription charge however the garden waste is a discretionary service where waste collection authorities are able to make a charge under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012. It is therefore considered reasonable to apply an inflationary increase to the current charge.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The financial impact is set out in detail in section 5 of this report. In summary the proposed increase to fees for 24/25 is an increase of 6.9% and is expected to generate an increase in income for NYC of £375k which will be added to existing budgets.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Garden waste collection is a discretionary service where waste collection authorities can make a charge under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equality impacts from the recommendation and there is no adverse impact of any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010. (EIA Screen Form attached at Appendix A)

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 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 as there is no corresponding rise in residual waste tonnages to match the reduction in garden waste tonnages, therefore there is little impact on the environment. (Climate Change Impact Assessment attached at Appendix B)

12.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 To enable the subscription window for the 2024 garden waste collection season to open in January 2024 it is essential that the garden waste subscription charge is set ahead of the rest of the fees and charges for the Environment Directorate.
- 12.2 Agreeing the 2024/25 charge also enables the appropriate communication to residents to promote subscribing to the garden waste service together with the necessary changes to the IT and payment systems to accommodate this.

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 That the Corporate Director of Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Managing our Environment approves:

- i. The full year charge for the garden waste collection service increases to £46.50 in 2024/25.
- ii. The pro-rata charge applicable to residents in Craven, Hambleton and Ryedale is £42.00 in 2024/25.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment Screen Form

Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: Executive Report 20 June 2023 – Selby Area Garden Waste Service

MICHAEL LEAH

Assistant Director – Environmental Services & Sustainability

County Hall

Northallerton

20 October 2023

Report Author – Beckie Bennett, Head of Waste and Environment (Ryedale)

Presenter of Report – Beckie Bennett, Head of Waste and Environment

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

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	Environment		
Service area	Environmental Services including Climate Change and Waste Services		
Proposal being screened	Garden waste subscription charge 2024/25		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Beckie Bennett		
What are you proposing to do?	To seek approval of the garden waste subscription charge for 2024/25.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To apply an inflationary increase to the current garden waste subscription charge and ensure that the cost of delivering the services is covered by the charge. The charge needs to be set ahead of the rest of the Environment directorate fees and charges to enable residents to subscribe to the garden waste service for the 2024 season from early January 2024.		
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.	No.		

partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.				
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full EIA:	
Reason for decision	<p>The charges are levied on a range of customers who may choose to pay for the services in question. 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> <p>Of the local North Yorkshire characteristics, those on lower incomes may be impacted however there are other free options for the disposal of garden waste such as HWRCs and home composting plus residents are also encouraged to share bins to split the cost.</p>			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)				
Date				

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

Version 1: 6 October 2023

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 the summary section of the form below.

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

Title of proposal	Garden Waste Subscription Charge 2024/25
Brief description of proposal	To seek a decision for the subscription charge for garden waste collections for 2024/25
Directorate	Environment
Service area	Environmental Services including Climate Change and Waste Services
Lead officer	Beckie Bennett, Head of Waste and Environment (Ryedale)
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Not applicable
Date impact assessment started	6/10/23

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 subscription charge for 2024/25 has been calculated by applying a minimum inflationary increase of 6% with rounding to propose a reasonable annual charge.

This provides the most desirable outcome ensuring a harmonised charge for garden waste collections across the county and that 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 proposed charges apply an inflationary increase to the current charges in line with the financial policy when setting budgets. The additional income generated assumes the number of residents subscribing remains constant, offsets the rising costs of delivering the service and harmonises the garden waste service across the county.

<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 greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel		X		<p>Charging for the garden waste service does represent a potential risk that some existing users of the garden waste collection service choose to dispose of their garden waste at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). However, charging has been in place for a number of years and the evidence suggests that residents tend to compost at home which creates a positive overall impact.</p>	<p>Provide communication to residents to explain that whilst there is a financial cost of the service it still offers good value.</p>	<p>Provide educational support to residents who choose to home compost.</p>
	Emissions from construction		X		N/A		
	Emissions from running of buildings		X		N/A		
	Emissions from data storage		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>
Other		X		N/A		
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		X		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.		
Reduce water consumption		X		N/A		
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)		X		N/A		
Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers		X		N/A		
Enhance conservation and wildlife	X			For those residents who choose not to subscribe to the service, there is an increased likelihood		

<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>that they choose not to cut back the grass and vegetation in 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>N/A</p>		
<p>Other (please state below)</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>N/A</p>		

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

N/A

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.

Residents have a choice whether or not to subscribe to the garden waste collection service and if people choose not to subscribe experience shows that residents tend to compost at home or use household waste recycling centres. There is no corresponding rise in residual waste tonnages to match the reduction in garden waste tonnages, therefore there is little impact on the environment by charging for this service.

There is a 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	Beckie Bennett
Job title	Head of Waste and Environment (Ryedale)
Service area	Environmental Services including Climate Change and Waste Services
Directorate	Environment
Signature	Beckie Bennett
Completion date	6 October 2023

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):

Date: