

## REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE



<b>DATE</b>	<b>4th October 2007</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>Environment</b>
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**Waste Container Charging Policy Review****PURPOSE**

1. To report on the review of the Waste Container Charging Policy for charges introduced by the Council in April 2005
2. To seek approval for the Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007

**RECOMMENDATION**

3. That the Executive note the findings of the review of the Waste Container Charging Policy for charges introduced by the Council in April 2005.
4. That the Executive approve the Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

5. The current charging policy has proved successful in its aim of encouraging residents to take more responsibility for the care of wheeled bins and so there have been fewer losses and thefts of bins reported.
6. The recommended amendments to the charging policy ensure that the most vulnerable in our community in terms of access to the waste collection service are not disadvantaged by the policy and any loss which is the fault of the contractor will not be charged for.
7. To remove any charges will require significant growth in the Streetscene budget and may increase demand for wheeled bins and this is therefore not recommended.
8. The new charges proposed, support and encourage recycling and also encourage home composting, which is a better environmental option (BEO) than a green kerbside collection. Home composters can be supplied free by the County Council
9. Since the introduction of charging in 2006, there have been four complaints, which

have been dealt with through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

10. The purpose of the charge proposed for pest control services is to prioritise resource for key services such as rodent treatment which will remain free of charge. At the time of writing, a report on Pest Control was taken to the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2007. Officers plan to update Members on the outcome of the 2<sup>nd</sup> October meeting in advance of the 16<sup>th</sup> October Executive meeting.

## **SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS**

11. The current policy is a blanket charge for the replacement of any residual waste wheeled bin. All recycling containers are supplied free of charge. The review of the charging policy reports that the current policy has been successful in its aims as follows;
  - A reduction in the number of wheeled bins left in streets following collection.
  
  - A significant reduction in requests for wheeled bins, particularly requests for a second wheeled bin. This has been reduced from 4750 requests in 2005/06 to around 800 requests in 2006/07 and since the new contract, 418 have been requested.
  
  - The tender made by Veolia ES and accepted by the Council, was made on the basis of an annual replacement rate of 1,000 bins per year as a result of the charging policy remaining in place. If this charge was to be removed and demand returned to previous levels the cost could increase by an additional £60,000 per annum.
12. The charging policy raised income of £11,237 in 2006/07 and is on track to raise income of £10,000 in 2007/08. This additional money has been invested into service improvements in the new waste and cleansing contract.
13. Four complaints have been received since the implementation of the charging policy. All complaints are expressing dissatisfaction with the charge as their bin was stolen. One complainant has gone to the Ombudsmen, complaining about the charge saying that the council should replace the bin as council tax is paid and that the council only collect waste presented in wheeled bins. The Council response is to explain the reason for the charge and the council's legal right to make such a charge.
14. The Environment and Housing Committee supported the principles of the charging policy but did not support the introduction of a charge for wheeled bins at new build properties.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION**

15. The Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007 will not require growth to the Streetscene budget.
16. The removal of any charges will have significant cost to the council both in terms of loss of income of £10,000 but also in additional contractor costs estimated to be an extra £60,000 and therefore this is not recommended.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

17. The Environmental Service Charging Policy 2007 will encourage recycling as recycling boxes are supplied free of charge and residual waste wheeled bins have a charge. The new charges proposed will encourage home composting which is a better environmental option than kerbside recycling, particularly at rural properties.
18. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Charging Policy and the amendments have reduced the risks of disadvantage to members of the community who have special needs such as a disability or those who are elderly.

## **DETAILS OF CONSULTATION**

19. Councillor Margaret Lishman - Executive Member for Environment  
David Brown - Director of Environment  
Sarah Schofield- Head of Streetscene  
Stev Snaith - Senior Accountant  
Environment and Housing Scrutiny Committee

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

20. Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007 at Appendix 1
21. Charging Policy Review August 2007 at Appendix 2
22. Equality Impact Assessment: Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

**PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Angela Culleton**

**ALSO:**

**Sarah Schofield**

## Appendix 1

This document is the final document and once approved will be available to the public.

### Environmental Services Charging Policy 2007

#### Aims of the policy

- 1) To encourage residents to take responsibility for their bin and to bring it in after the bin collection service
- 2) To reduce the demand for replacement wheeled bins following the dramatic increase in demand in 2005
- 3) To minimise requests for a replacement bin when there is already a bin at the property
- 4) To introduce charges for peripheral services to reduce demand so that resources can be prioritised for core services
- 5) To be fair to all residents of the borough

### Legal framework

Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 makes provisions for receptacles for household waste. The local authority can specify the kind and number of the receptacle required for the occupier to place waste for collection. The local authority can provide the receptacles free of charge, propose a single payment or periodical payments for such receptacles or require the occupier to provide them.

### Environmental Services Charges 2007

#### Waste Container Charges

	Recycling Containers	
1.	Provide blue box, clear sack and white sack recycling containers free of charge	FREE
2.	Provide first green waste bin free of charge	FREE
3.	Charge for additional green waste bins to encourage home composting (BEO)	£20.80
4.	Charge for bio-degradable sacks for green waste to encourage home composting at rural properties. (BEO)	£1
	Residual Waste Containers	
3.	Charge for lost or stolen refuse wheeled bins unless; a) the occupier receives assisted collections of residual waste b) the wheeled bin is damaged or lost into the wagon during the collection process by the contractor	£20.80
4.	Where a bin is exchanged for a smaller bin, provided free of charge.	FREE
9.	Charge for wheeled bins provision at new build properties.	£20.80

10.	Where a bin is exchanged for a larger bin, this will be free of charge, however, there will be an approval process for 360 litre bins.	FREE
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In addition the following points of clarification are made in relation to the charges;

- Landlords will be advised to bring wheeled bins indoors of empty properties as wheeled bins will be collected from vacant properties to prevent theft.
- A stock of second hand bins will be retained for provision free of charge in the discretion of the Contract Manager.
- Properties which report a stolen or lost bin and are found to have a bin will not be supplied with a second bin and the full charge will be made and a note will be made of the fraudulent claim.
- Where an area is to be cleared of wheeled bins which are left out on the street between collection, properties which are notified to bring their bins in then leave it out, will be required to pay for a replacement in full, if their bin is removed.

Other charges

	Pest Control Services	
1.	Flea and bed bug sprays	£35

## Appendix 2

This is a background document for information which sets out the full review and full recommendations including options which are not recommended and are therefore not included in the final policy

# Wheeled Bin Charging Policy Review August 2007

## Aims of the policy

- 6) To encourage residents to take responsibility for their bin and to bring it in after the bin collection service
- 7) To reduce the demand for replacement wheeled bins following the dramatic increase in demand in 2005
- 8) To minimise requests for a replacement bin when there is already a bin at the property
- 9) To be fair to all residents of the borough

## Legal framework

Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 makes provisions for receptacles for household waste. The local authority can specify the kind and number of the receptacle required for the occupier to place waste for collection. The local authority can provide the receptacles free of charge, propose a single payment or periodical payments for such receptacles or require the occupier to provide them.

## Charging Policy Review

In 1990, the council supplied each property with a wheeled bin, which remains the property of the council. Demand for replacement wheeled bins was high since this introduction and there were numerous reports of wheeled bins being left out on streets between collections and being burnt out and vandalised. In April 1995, the alternate week recycling and refuse collection system was introduced and demand for wheeled bins increased even further. 30% of these requests were found to be for a second bin, which is not permitted under the scheme. The service could not meet the demand for wheeled bins both in terms of delivery resources available and also resource to take and log requests and so back logs were created.

A CPI project was undertaken on the supply and delivery of equipment in late 2005/6 and this project demonstrated that there was a significant increase in demand for wheeled bins but that 30% of requests for replacement bins were found to already have a bin at the property and 20% were repeat requests for wheeled bins due to the back log in requests. The charge for replacement wheeled bins was introduced from 1st April 2006 in order to encourage residents to take responsibility for their bins and take them in after collection. In this way the number going missing or getting stolen would be reduced so demand for wheeled bins would fall.

The charge was made across the board at a rate of £20 per replacement bin. The charge covers the delivery and cost of the replacement bin.

Since the introduction of the charge;

- Back streets are clearer of wheeled bins as reported by Technical Officers and Contractor inspections which has allowed better cleaning of back streets and reduced the number being stolen, lost or vandalised.
- Therefore the demand for wheeled bins was significantly reduced from 4750 requests in 2005/6 to around 800 requests in 2006/7.
- This reduction in demand meant that the Council did not incur additional costs for Household waste containers in the new contract. The budget allocated for the supply, delivery, repair, exchange and removal and replacement of residual waste containers is £31,320.
- Since the introduction of the charge, Streetscene has received four complaints about the charge, which have been dealt with through the Council complaints procedure.
- Income from the sale of replacement wheeled bins is shown below. This income offsets a portion of the cost of replacement household waste bins.
  - 2006/07 Actual      £11,237
  - 2007/08 Estimate   £10,000
  - 2007/08 to date    £3,704
- No charge was introduced for bin exchanges for larger bins or smaller bins which remains a considerable cost in terms of delivery and collection resource and supply of the bigger bin.
- The standard of delivery has vastly improved with the new contractor, 99% of requests have been provided within the two week period.

## Options for Change and Recommendations

### Recommended modifications of Current charges

	Options	Cost	Recommendation
1.	Provide blue box, clear sack and white sack recycling containers free of charge	No Change	Recommended
2.	Provide first green waste bin free of charge	No Change	Recommended
3.	To charge of £20.80 for lost or stolen refuse wheeled bins unless; a) the occupier receives assisted collections of residual waste b) the wheeled bin is damaged or lost into the wagon during the collection process by the contractor	Slight change and within the new contract so nil cost	Recommended
4.	Where a bin is exchanged for a smaller bin, it will be provided free of charge.	No Change	Recommended
5.	Landlords will be advised to bring wheeled bins indoors of empty properties as wheeled bins will be collected from vacant properties to prevent theft.	No cost	Recommended
6.	A stock of second hand bins will be retained for provision free of charge in the discretion of the Contract Manager.	£1,000 cost	Recommended

### Recommended New charges

	Option	Cost	Recommendation
7.	Additional green waste bins will be charged to encourage home composting (BEO)	£20.80 per bin £200 per annum	Recommended
8.	Bio-degradable sacks for green waste will be charged at £1 per sack to encourage home composting at rural properties. (BEO)	Cost neutral	Recommended
9.	To charge for wheeled bins provision at new build properties.	£650 income	Recommended
11.	Properties which report a stolen or lost bin and are found to have a bin will not be supplied with a second bin and the full charge will be made and a note will be made	Income will contribute to £10K income target	Recommended



	of the fraudulent claim.		
12.	Where an area is to be cleared of wheeled bins which are left out on the street between collection, properties which are notified to bring their bins in then leave it out, will be required to pay for a replacement in full, if their bin is removed.	Income will contribute to £10K income target	Recommended

#### Options Not recommended

	Option	Cost	Recommendations
10.	Where a bin is exchanged for a larger bin, it will be provided with a charge of £20.80 for 240 litre bins and £35 for 360 litre bins.	£350 income	NOT recommended as may be a problem in the longer term should the resident be assessed as no longer requiring a larger bin.
13.	To remove the charge for replacement wheeled bins	Change £10,000 lost income £62,640 additional cost <b>£72,640 TOTAL</b>	NOT recommended
14.	To remove the charge for replacement bins for bins lost and reported on the day of collection. Difficult to administer and potential to be unfair, costly in management resource	Change £5000 lost income £32,320 additional cost <b>£37,320 TOTAL</b>	NOT Recommended
15.	To remove the charge for replacement bins when moved house. Difficult to administer and potential to be unfair, costly in management resource	Change £5000 lost income £32,320 additional cost <b>£37,320 TOTAL</b>	NOT Recommended

[Appx](#)