

EXECUTIVE DECISION BRIEFING PAPER

Garden Waste Suspension 2022



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides supporting information for the Executive Decision to suspend the Garden Waste Collection Service for the remainder of the 2022 season. This decision is to be taken to help address the identified £13.6m shortfall in the Council's 2022/23 budget. A single 2 week collection cycle will be provided from the 15 August to ensure each household is offered a final collection for this season. This decision does not relate to the 2023 season.

2. BACKGROUND

The Council provides a 2 weekly Garden Waste household collection to 58,398 households across the City. This is a non-statutory service which the Council provide without additional charge to our residents, unlike many other Local Authorities who levy a charge for collections.

As the service is seasonal the Council employ Agency staff from March to November to bolster our workforce. There are 14 Agency employees currently allocated to this service.

The Service was temporarily suspended for 4 weeks from the 18 July 2022 and is due to recommence on the 15 August 2022. This suspension was due to a high level of absenteeism across other waste services which was impacting on our Service Standards. The decision to suspend the service for the remainder of the 2022 season is wholly linked to the opportunity to help mitigate the Council's forecast budget deficit for this year.

3. FINANCIAL

Taking into account fuel, vehicle costs and Agency staffing costs the forecast saving if this service is suspended from the 26 August 2022 for the remainder of the season will be £200k.

This saving will reduce by approximately £30k for each additional 2 week collection cycle we deliver.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Collections could continue but this would not achieve the identified financial saving.

Collections could be suspended immediately resulting in a slightly higher saving, however this would leave residents with fully or part filled wheelie bins and would contradict our previous communication that Services will restart on the 15 August 2022.

The collection frequency could be reduced, i.e monthly collections, but again this would not achieve significant savings as the Agency staff used to deliver the service would still need to be retained.

5. IMPACT

5.1 Residents.

The Council hold email addresses for each participating household who receive the service and will therefore directly notify them of the change. As we intend to deliver a full collection cycle prior to suspension, giving each household a single final collection, residents will be aware to ensure they are

able to make other arrangements such as home composting or taking items to the tip for garden waste materials accumulated after their last collection.

5.2 Agency staff.

Of the 14 Agency staff used to fulfil this service the Waste Service will retain 5 of them to temporarily backfill substantive posts for general and recycling collections. This does however mean that we will end the assignments for 9 individuals earlier than planned. These Agency staff will be given over 2 weeks of notice which is in excess of the single week required by either party. The Agency have advised that there is significant demand for people for other positions, including some positions elsewhere in the Council, and therefore foresee no issues with securing alternative roles.

As Agency staff are only required to provide 1 week of notice many are likely to leave the Council much sooner leaving us unable to fully resource the service leading to delays in collections.

5.3 Environment

Mileage by refuse lorries will reduce considerably thus reducing emissions and use of fuel. However, there will likely be an increase in private car journeys made to the Recycling Centres as residents dispose of Garden Waste.

Garden Waste also contributes towards the Council's Recycling statistics and therefore if more residents home compost this will lead to a reduction in our Recycling proportions.

6. RISK

Should the implementation of a decision be delayed it is likely Agency staff will start to leave and secure employment elsewhere, this would leave the Council unable to fully resource the service leading to delays in collections.

7. DECISION SUMMARY

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Mark Shayer, is to approve the following:

- The suspension of the Garden Waste Collection Service for the remainder of the 2022 season.