

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

22 February 2016

Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 BULKY HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND FRIDGES/FREEZERS COLLECTION CHARGES

Summary

This report provides details of our current arrangements for collecting fridges/freezers. It also reviews concessions for fridges/freezers and bulky household waste collections and in line with other authorities proposes introducing charges.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 At the last meeting of this Advisory Board Members approved the annual fees and charges for a number of Waste and Street Scene services. While this included approval to introduce a charge for fridges/freezers collections, it was acknowledged that there were a number of operational and contractual implications regarding the collection arrangements.

1.1.2 As such, Officers were asked to review these arrangements with Veolia and report back to the next meeting of this Advisory Board with a detailed proposal and costings for implementation from 1 April 2016.

1.2 Current Position

1.2.2 At present the council collects fridges and freezers free of charge from residents on request, as part of a separate collection service that operates alongside the bulky household waste collection service.

1.2.3 The contract, which is operated by Veolia, initially allowed for the separate collection of fridges/freezers with the removal of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) and separate disposal arrangements. In discussions with Kent County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority, the disposal arrangements have been improved and simplified and although they still require separate treatment at the transfer station, it is now possible to collect and these items with other bulky waste service requests.

1.2.4 As Bulky items (which can include fridge/freezers) are a “prescribed household waste” councils are allowed to make “reasonable” charges for the recovery of their collection costs. This council introduced charges for other bulky household waste collections a number of years ago, but to date fridges/freezers have not been included and have been collected free of charge.

1.3 Concessions

1.3.1 Members may be aware that when charges were introduced for bulky household waste collections, it was also agreed that those residents in receipt of a means tested benefit would be entitled to one free collection request every three months.

1.3.2 Having reviewed these arrangements and in keeping with other local neighbouring authorities it is now proposed to introduce a modest charge for concessions for these service requests. For illustration, a table showing the current charges for bulky household waste collection (including arrangements for fridge/freezers) is at Annex 1.

1.3.3 It is proposed to charge £10.00 per service request (whether as a single fridge/freezer or as part of a bulky household waste request of up to six items).

1.4 Proposed Arrangements

1.4.1 As there were a number of contractual and operational implications associated with changing collection arrangements, a review was carried out in consultation with Veolia who have confirmed their agreement.

1.4.2 I am pleased to report that Veolia have taken a pragmatic approach and reviewed their own charges in line with more efficient collection of items. It is acknowledged that with the introduction of a charge that numbers of service requests may drop and this will impact on their own income. However, there are a number of other areas where operational efficiencies may be applied and we have agreed to assist in working with them where practicable.

1.4.3 In addition to the **£50.00 charge for bulky household waste collection** (up to six items) which has already been approved, it is proposed that the following charges be introduced with effect from 1 April 2016:

- Bulky household waste **concession charge** of £10.00 per service request (where eligible for concession an entitlement of one booking per quarter at this discounted rate).
- Bulky household waste including a fridge/freezer as one of the items, **full charge** of £50.00 per service request.
- Bulky household waste including a fridge/freezer as one of the items, **concession charge** of £10.00 per service request (where eligible for concession an entitlement of one booking per quarter at this discounted rate).

- Fridge/Freezer only **full charge** of £25.00 per service request
- Fridge/Freezer only **concession charge** of £10.00 per service request (where eligible for concession an entitlement of one booking per quarter at this discounted rate).

1.4.4 As a result of introducing these charges it is anticipated that the total number of service requests will reduce, as some residents will find other methods of disposing of unwanted items, including:

- use of commercial companies “take back” service when buying an appliance
- taking items to their nearest household waste recycling centre
- taking items to the Saturday Bulky Waste Vehicle service
- increased use of charity schemes (the Council includes details of relevant charity schemes on its website)

1.4.5 Although fly tipping remains a very real problem and undoubtedly some residents may dump unwanted items, this is likely to be a very small number of offenders. Fly tipping in general will continue to be monitored closely and kept under review. It is worth noting that when charges were first introduced a few years ago, this did not lead to a significant increase in fly tipping.

1.5 Legal Implications

1.5.1 The Council is legally entitled to set fees which allow for recovery of its reasonable collection costs in providing this service.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 At present, although we charge for bulky household waste collections to those that are not in receipt of Council Tax Support, the majority of service requests (approximately 58%) are from those residents that currently receive a free service. As such, there is an overall cost in providing the present service.

1.6.2 However, when introducing the proposed charges, the overall savings are estimated to be around £40,000 per annum. This is made up of both the additional income from each service request and the reduction in expenditure as the total number of requests is likely fall, leading to lower contract costs.

1.6.3 Although we have accurate data regarding the present numbers of service requests, it should be emphasised that future projections are estimated, as there is no accurate way of projecting the actual number of service requests that will be received once charges are introduced.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 A decision is required now on the proposed fee structure for these activities to ensure that the Council has timely and up-to-date arrangements in place to administer service requests when received.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.9 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.10 Policy Considerations

1.10.1 Asset Management

1.10.2 Procurement

1.11 Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED to CABINET that charges outlined in para 1.4.3 of this report be introduced with effect from 1 April 2016 and that future charges and service requests be kept under review.

The Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

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