

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET26 January 2023Report by Director of EnvironmentADDITION TO CHARGING FOR SERVICES 23/24**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet following the Charging for Services exercise carried out within the Environment Department and reported to Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022. At that Cabinet it was advised that a further report would be brought to a future meeting outlining new charges / services for the Garden Waste Permit Scheme (Item No.33 of original report).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. The Cabinet is asked to approve the following Garden Waste Scheme proposals in order to commence sales of permits for the 2023/24 year:

- a) an increase in the charge for the Garden Waste Permit 2023/2024 from £40 to £60 which is more than inflation; and
- b) the introduction of a new charge for an additional garden waste container for participating households of £60 for an additional permit; plus £60 to cover the cost of a new container including delivery.

**BACKGROUND**

3. At Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, a charging for services report was brought to Cabinet for approval. One of the proposals was to increase the charge to collect garden waste by more than inflation.

4. This proposal was part of a range of budget options being consulted on over Autumn. Cabinet agreed to delay the decision on whether to increase garden waste charges until the result of the consultation was available. In addition the exact scale of the budget challenge would not be known until after the December announcement by the Scottish Government. Following the Scottish Government budget announcement it has now been confirmed that the Council settlement will be close to the expected flat cash position and that there remains a substantial budget challenge.

**REPORT**

5. The main objective of charging for services within the Environment Department is to, where possible, ensure that the actual full costs to the department are recovered. More recently, where it was thought there would be no detrimental effect on the up-take of a service, charges have been increased to generate additional income. This builds on the report of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, Income Generation and Commercialisation, which promotes a positive culture of commercialisation.

6. Due to above inflation rises in processing costs, gate fees and the rise in fuel costs it is proposed that a garden waste permit is increased from £40 to £60 per annum. This is above the current inflation rate of 12.3%. The proposed increase, should sufficient participants continue with the scheme, is expected to generate revenue that will support full cost recovery of the Garden Waste Scheme and also generate a small amount of additional income.

7. As an enhancement to the current service it is proposed that residents can purchase an additional bin for garden waste, with a limit of 5000 bins being set for operational reasons. An additional bin, including delivery, would cost £60 as a one off purchase, to cover costs of supply. The second bin would require an additional permit at £60 per annum.

8. A decision on the charge for Garden waste cannot be delayed until the Council's budget meeting in March 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 for the following reasons:

- To allow appropriate time for a mail drop to residents regarding the 23/24 scheme, scheduled w/c 30<sup>th</sup> January and w/c 6<sup>th</sup> February
- To ensure adequate time to update internal systems and changes for the 23/24 scheme
- To avoid cross over with the Council Tax reminder letter that is issued each year
- To ensure continued service and that residents have sufficient time to purchase a permit in advance of scheme renewing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023

9. Feedback from the budget consultation is still being collated but early feedback shows that refuse collection was a key concern for respondents when looking at Environment Department's potential savings. 48 respondents to the public consultation suggested the Council should consider increasing charges and/or altering the collection cycle.

10. In terms of the funding available to the Council, detailed figures are being prepared for the 1<sup>st</sup> March Council meeting. However the initial assumptions made when the budget consultation was being prepared have proved to be relatively accurate and the Council has a funding gap of circa £19m for 23/24.

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

11. The increased cost of the permit and addition of new services will assist in full cost recovery and contribute to savings proposals by increasing income in 2023/24.

## **CONSULTATION**

12. This report has been prepared in consultation with the Accountancy Section. Increased charges for the Garden Waste Scheme also featured in the recent public consultation on the Council's overall savings proposals.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

13. There was no partnership working associated with this report.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

### **Equalities**

14. It has been identified that this may have an impact on low income households. There is however an instalment process to help spread the cost for any financial hardship cases.

## CONCLUSIONS

15. Increasing the charge for a garden waste permit will assist towards recovery of full costs, and contribute to 2023/24 savings proposals.

16. The new offer of an additional garden waste bin for participating households will assist towards the Environment Department's income generation and savings targets.

17. An early decision from Members will allow the Neighbourhood Services to commence the sale of Garden Waste Scheme Permits from w/c 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

18. The Cabinet is asked to approve the following Garden Waste Scheme proposals in order to commence sales of permits for the 2023/24 year:

- a) an increase in the charge for the Garden Waste Permit 2023/2024 from £40 to £60 which is more than inflation; and
- b) the introduction of a new charge for an additional garden waste container for participating households of £60 for an additional permit; plus £60 to cover the cost of a new container including delivery

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from: Andrew Corry, Head of Operations on 0141 577 3458 or [andrew.corry@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.corry@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

Convener contact details

Councillor Danny Devlin  
(Convener for Environment and Housing)

Home: 0141 580 0288  
Office: 0141 577 3107/8

January 2023

BLANK PAGE