

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

Why we consulted?

Over the past eight years we've had to find savings worth £55m, while at the same time responding to an increase in demand for services. This is due to a reduction in funding from central government which has seen the Revenue Support Grant (worth £33.7m to the council in 2011/12) fall to just £100,000 in 2018/19, ahead of being phased out completely in 2019/20.

We've found these savings by becoming more efficient at what we do, reducing our workforce by over 20% over the past seven years, reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. We've also had to make difficult decisions about reductions to some public services. However, throughout this difficult and challenging period we've done our best to protect services.

In 2018/19 we have to find a further £10m worth of savings or additional income, to ensure we deliver a balanced budget. We're proposing that a significant amount of these savings will come from within the council, through making further efficiencies such as re-tendering contracts. However, a number of proposals, amounting to £1m, have been identified from services that will impact the public. It was these proposals that made up the Budget Proposals 2018/19 consultation.

Approach

We published all the public facing proposals on our website on 27 November 2017 with feedback requested by midnight on 10 January 2018.

Respondents were directed to a central index pageⁱ, which outlined the overall background to the exercise, and provided links to each of the individual proposals on our Consultation Portalⁱⁱ.

Each individual page included further details on the specifics of what the proposal contained and what we thought the impact might be, along with any other elements we'd taken into account. Feedback was then invited through an online form and through a dedicated email address. Hard copies of the proposal documents and surveys were also made available on request, and responses were also accepted verbally and by letter.

As well as publishing the consultations on our website, we emailed members of the West Berkshire Community Panel (around 700 people) notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions. Heads of Service also made direct contact with those organisations directly affected prior to them being made publicly available.

We issued a press release to local media, local MPs, all District Councillors and Parish Clerks on the 27 November 2017, and further publicised our consultations through our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Finally, we placed posters in our libraries and made them available to WBC Councillors to put up in their wards.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

Proposal Background

Since 2008, we've collected garden waste free of charge and in 2011 we added food waste to this service. The garden and food waste is taken to the waste facility at Padworthⁱⁱⁱ for composting and almost half of everything we recycle comes from this collection service.

Proposal Details

To charge an annual subscription of around £50 per household for the collection of garden waste from 2018. This works out at less than £2 per collection.

Residents will be able to opt in to the subscription service. Subscribers will continue to use the green bin and will receive a bin sticker to show that the service has been paid for. The green bin can be put out with recycling every fortnight.

Subscribers will still be able to put food in the green bin for recycling.

Non-subscribers will stop receiving a garden waste collection, however, if desired, we can still collect food for recycling and will provide a kerbside food caddy on request. Caddies can be put out with recycling every fortnight.

The existing extra chargeable green waste collection service will stop. Residents will be able to request additional bins as part of this subscription service and additional charges will apply.

There will be no service concessions.

Legislation Requirements

Charging for garden waste collection is allowed under the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012^{iv}. Over half of councils already charge for this service.

Charging for the collection of food waste, recycling and rubbish is not allowed.

Consultation Response

Number of Responses

In total, 777 responses were received, 37 of which were incomplete.

Summary of Main Points

- The proposed annual subscription is not affordable.
- The costs for garden waste collection should be covered by taxes.
- A negative impact on poorer households.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

- Concerns raised regarding an expected increase in flytipping and its impacts.
- Concerns raised regarding greater amounts of waste being placed in black bins.
- Concerns around an expected increase in the use and frequency of bonfires.
- Concern raised regarding the impacts to the elderly or vulnerable.
- Concerns raised regarding the ability of those with restricted mobility to use waste management alternatives. For example, those who could not make use of recycling centres.
- The level of savings proposed were questioned as to whether they are achievable.
- The possibility of non-subscribing residents using their neighbours' bins.
- Negative impacts on the recycling and waste performance.

Summary of Responses by Question

1. Are you...?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses	
	Number	Percent
A resident of West Berkshire	749	88.2%
Employed by West Berkshire Council	39	4.6%
A Parish/Town Councillor	25	2.9%
A District Councillor	3	0.4%
A service provider	4	0.5%
A partner organisation	5	0.6%
Other	24	2.8%
Total	849	100.0%

2. What type of property do you live in?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Other (please specify)	20	2.6%	2.7%
Detached	357	45.9%	48.7%
Semi-detached	266	34.2%	36.3%
Terraced	79	10.2%	10.8%
Flat	11	1.4%	1.5%
Total	733	94.3	100.0
Not answered	44	5.7%	
Total	777	100.0	

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

Other (please specify):

- End of terrace
- Mobile home
- Parish council
- Sheltered housing flat
- Residential retirement estate
- Village environmental group

3. Do you have a garden?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	710	91.4%	98.9%
No	8	1.0%	1.1%
Total	718	92.4	100.0
Not answered	59	7.6%	
Total	777	100.0	

4. How do you currently manage your garden waste?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	Number	Percent	
Compost at home	267	22.9%	37.2%
Use my green bin	696	59.8%	97.1%
Use the sacks for garden waste provided by the council	4	0.3%	.6%
Subscribe to the extra green waste bin service	16	1.4%	2.2%
Use a shared green bin	10	0.9%	1.4%
Take it to the Newtown Road Household Waste Recycling Centre / Padworth Waste Facility	149	12.8%	20.8%
My garden doesn't produce waste for recycling	2	0.2%	0.3%
Other	20	1.7%	2.8%
Total	1164	100.0%	162.3%

Other (please specify):

- Through the use of bonfires.
- By taking garden waste to a recycling centre.
- Composting garden waste at an allotment.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

5. Do you put food in your green bin?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	475	61.1%	66.8%
No	236	30.4%	33.2%
Total	711	91.5	100.0
Not answered	66	8.5%	
Total	777	100.0	

6. How often do you put out your green bin? During Summer / Autumn

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Fortnightly	642	82.6%	90.2%
Monthly	47	6.0%	6.6%
Never	5	0.6%	0.7%
Other (please specify)	18	2.3%	2.5%
Total	712	91.6	100.0
Not answered	65	8.4%	
Total	777	100.0	

7. How often do you put out your green bin? During Winter / Spring

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Fortnightly	448	57.7%	63.9%
Monthly	175	22.5%	25.0%
Never	40	5.1%	5.7%
Other (please specify)	38	4.9%	5.4%
Total	701	90.2	100.0
Not answered	76	9.8%	
Total	777	100.0	

Other (please specify):

- Very infrequently.
- Only as and when required.
- Every other month.
- Put out every week.
- Does not have a green bin to put out.
- Put out mainly in the summer months.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

8. How far do you agree with the proposal to introduce an annual subscription for garden waste collections?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Agree	41	5.3%	5.5%
Neither agree or disagree	44	5.7%	5.9%
Disagree	643	82.8%	86.9%
Don't know	12	1.5%	1.6%
Total	740	90.2	100.0
Not answered	37	9.8%	
Total	777	100.0	

The main comments were:

- The proposed annual subscription is not affordable.
- The proposal is considered to be fair, resulting in residents paying for what they use.
- Concerns raised regarding an expected increase in flytipping and its impacts.
- The costs for garden waste collection should be covered by taxes.
- Concerns raised regarding greater amounts of waste being placed in black bins.
- Concerns around an expected increase in the use and frequency of bonfires.
- Concerns raised regarding the potential impact on or reduction in quality of the general environment and gardens.
- The level of savings proposed were questioned as to whether they are achievable.
- Concern raised regarding the impacts to the elderly or vulnerable.
- Expected increases in vermin and their control.
- Council efficiencies questioned, with comments made regarding where or how improvements could be made.
- Concerns raised regarding the ability of those with restricted mobility to use waste management alternatives. For example, those who could not make use of recycling centres.

9. What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people? For example, do you think it will affect particular individuals more than others?

- Negative impacts on poorer households.
- Negative impacts on the elderly or vulnerable.
- An increase in flytipping and its impacts.
- Be mindful of those who have restricted ability to use waste management alternatives. For example, those with limited mobility that cannot make use of recycling centres.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

- Be aware of the impact on those who manage a greater amount of green waste. For example, where street vegetation encroaches on a household.
- The negative health and nuisance impacts of increased occurrences of bonfires.
- An awareness of the potential impacts on or reduction in quality of the general environment and gardens.
- The possibility of non-subscribing residents using their neighbours' bins.

10. If the decision is taken to proceed with this proposal, do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the impact on those affected? If so, please provide details.

- By making the subscription to the service free to some applicants or introducing a concession rate to those applicable such as the elderly.
- Either lower the cost of the subscription or continue to provide the service at no additional cost.
- Through the use of means testing.
- By changing the proposed collection frequency, for example to monthly so as to reduce the cost.
- Making use of a pay as you throw policy, charging based on how much waste is produced or how many collections are required.
- By improving the controls and enforcement of flytipping.
- By offering a payment method with less impact such as direct debit.
- Supporting home composting.

11. Do you have any other suggestions as to how these savings might be delivered within this service? If so, please provide details.

- By improving Council efficiencies.
- By changing the collection frequency, for example by reducing the frequency of residual waste or organics waste bins.
- By increasing council tax to incorporate the cost of the subscription.
- Selling the recyclates to generate revenue such as selling compost produced from green waste.
- Amending 3rd party arrangements. For example, renegotiating waste contracts to reduce the overall cost.

12. Do you have any suggestions on how we might increase income, either in this service, or elsewhere in the council? If so, please provide details.

- Increase council tax.
- Improve internal Council efficiencies.
- Sell the recyclate to generate revenue such as selling compost produced from green waste.
- Charging for bespoke services provided by the council, such as the removal of fly tipped waste from private land, or the provision of garden maintenance services to households.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

- Increase enforcement activities.
- Petition government to increase Council funding.
- Implement change in the use of council spaces, for example by hiring out unused office space or changing office location to a site with lower cost.

13. Is there any way that you, your community, or your organisation, can contribute in helping to alleviate the impact of this proposal? If so, please provide details of how you/they can help.

- By undertaking community engagement or promoting composting at home or within the community.
- Through the use of shared bins.
- By making use of bonfires.
- Taking neighbours or local community waste to a recycling centre.

14. How might you manage your food waste if the decision is made to charge for the garden waste collection service?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	Number	Percent	
Subscribe to the garden waste collection service	76	7.7%	12.4%
Order a kerbside food caddy	122	12.4%	19.9%
Compost at home	133	13.5%	21.7%
Take it to the Newtown Road House	39	4.0%	6.4%
Put it in my rubbish bin	437	44.5%	71.3%
Reduce my food waste	37	3.8%	6.0%
Don't currently recycle food waste and will continue to put it in my rubbish bin	58	5.9%	9.5%
Other	81	8.2%	13.2%
Total	983	100.0%	160.4%

Other (please specify):

- Through composting at home.
- By making use of bonfires.
- Feeding food waste to pets or wildlife.
- Making use of the residual waste bin.
- Utilising a separate food caddy.
- By fly tipping food waste.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

15. If the decision is made to charge for the garden waste collection service and you don't subscribe to it, what would you do with your green bin if we let you keep it?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Other (please specify)	128	16.5%	21.6%
Use it for storage at home	90	11.6%	15.2%
Use it in the community (please specify)	1	0.1%	0.2%
Make it into a water butt	25	3.2%	4.2%
Make it into a home composter	76	9.8%	12.8%
Prefer the bin to be taken away	262	33.7%	44.2%
Don't have a green bin	11	1.4%	1.9%
Total	593	76.3	100.0
Not answered	184	23.7%	
Total	777	100.0	

Other (please specify):

- Use for independent garden waste management.
- As additional waste storage.
- Will dispose of the bin.
- Expect the council to collect it.
- Do not know or will decide in future.

16. Did you know we collect the following for recycling?

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not answered (%)
Paper and cardboard	79.3	0.0	20.7
Cans	78.9	0.4	20.7
Aerosols	54.4	23.7	21.9
Glass jars and bottles	79.0	0.1	20.8
Plastic bottles	79.2	0.1	20.7
Textiles	53.8	23.9	22.3

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

17. Do you use the kerbside recycling service?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	584	75.2%	94.8%
No	32	4.1%	5.2%
Total	616	79.3	100.0
Not answered	161	20.7%	
Total	777	100.0	

Those that answered No (please specify):

- Do not understand the current service or are not aware of the service.
- Do not have a bin.
- Do not have the time.
- Not interested in recycling.

18. How often do you put your recycling out for collection?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Other (please specify)	22	2.8%	3.8%
Fortnightly	551	70.9%	94.3%
Monthly	11	1.4%	1.9%
Total	584	75.2	100.0
Not answered	193	24.8%	
Total	777	100.0	

Other (please specify):

- Alternate weekly.
- Garden waste varies / when I need to.
- Monthly.
- Weekly.
- Weather dependent.

19. Would you recycle other materials if the collection could be provided?

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not answered (%)
Other plastics like tubs and trays	75.8	2.3	21.9
Cartons	74.8	2.6	22.7
Small electrical items	71.0	4.9	24.1
Batteries	71.8	4.8	23.4

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

Other (13.3%) (Please specify):

- Yes / all recyclable material.
- Yes, if it is a free service
- Foil.
- Plastic.
- Plastic bags.
- No.

20. How many people live in your home on a permanent basis?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Live on my own	71	9.1%	11.7%
2 - 4	484	62.3%	79.9%
5 - 6	49	6.3%	8.1%
7 - 8	1	0.1%	0.2%
More than 8	1	0.1%	0.2%
Total	606	78.0	100.0
Not answered	171	22.0%	
Total	777	100.0	

21. Have you been approved for a larger rubbish bin?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	26	3.3%	4.3%
No	469	60.4%	77.6%
Don't know	109	14.0%	18.0%
Total	604	77.7	100.0
Not answered	173	22.3%	
Total	777	100.0	

22. How often do you put your rubbish bin out for collection?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Other (please specify)	12	1.5%	2.0%
Fortnightly	586	75.4%	96.2%
Monthly	11	1.4%	1.8%
Total	609	78.4	100.0
Not answered	168	21.6%	
Total	777	100.0	

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

Other (please specify):

- Every 4-6 weeks.
- Weekly.
- Variable.
- Every couple of months.

23. What do you put in your rubbish bin the most?

(N.B. respondents were able to tick more than one option)

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	Number	Percent	
Aerosols	101	4.9%	16.9%
Cans	49	2.4%	8.2%
Cardboard	55	2.7%	9.2%
Cartons	177	8.7%	29.6%
Glass jars and bottles	43	2.1%	7.2%
Paper	56	2.7%	9.4%
Pet waste	152	7.4%	25.5%
Plastic bottles	57	2.8%	9.5%
Plastic tubs and trays	334	16.4%	55.9%
Other non-recyclable packaging (plastic, polystyrene)	517	25.3%	86.6%
Food waste	188	9.2%	31.5%
Nappies	54	2.6%	9.0%
Small electrical items	89	4.4%	14.9%
Textiles	65	3.2%	10.9%
Other	104	5.1%	17.4%
Total	2041	100.0%	341.9%

Other (please specify):

- Non-recyclate or general household waste.
- Plastic film and packaging.
- Cleaning waste such as vacuum cleaner contents and floor sweepings.
- Food packaging.
- Food waste.
- Paper.
- Green waste.

24. Any further comments?

- Not supportive of the proposal.
- Supportive of the proposal.
- Concerns raised regarding an expected increase in flytipping and its impacts.

Budget Proposals 2018/19: Garden Waste Collection Service

Consultation Summary Report

- Concern regarding the negative impact on recycling and waste performance.
- The level of savings proposed were questioned as to whether they are achievable.
- Concerns raised regarding the potential impact on or reduction in quality of the general environment and gardens.
- Concerns raised regarding greater amounts of waste being placed in black bins as a result of the proposal.
- Reduce the number of Council staff, pensions or council pay, and improve efficiencies.
- Concerns raised regarding the ability of those with restricted mobility to use waste management alternatives. For example, those who could not make use of recycling centres.
- Negative impact on poorer to medium wealth households.

Officer conclusion and recommendation can be found in the associated Overview of Responses and Recommendations document.

Jackie Ward
Waste Manager
Transport and Countryside
17 January 2018

Please note: *In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.

All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.

ⁱ Central Index Page – <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals>

ⁱⁱ Consultation Portal - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/consultations>

ⁱⁱⁱ Padworth Waste Facility - <https://www.veolia.co.uk/westberkshire/veolia-west-berkshire/veolia-west-berkshire/padworth-integrated-waste-management-facility>

^{iv} Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/811/contents/made>.