



Report to Cabinet

Date:	29 March 2022
Title:	Aligning charges and harmonising operational arrangements for garden waste collections in Buckinghamshire
Cabinet Member(s):	CLlr Peter Strachan
Contact officer:	Martin Dickman
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards
Recommendations:	<p>That the Council harmonise Garden Waste charges across all of Buckinghamshire by introducing 'Opt In' charging from July 2022 for the Wycombe area. This provides equity across all areas of Buckinghamshire.</p> <p>That the Council harmonise operational arrangements for all Garden Waste collection services as detailed within this report.</p>
Reason for decision:	<p>Aligning charges for the garden waste service ensures parity across all areas and ensures that Buckinghamshire residents are treated equally.</p> <p>With regards to harmonising the operational arrangements, this change is necessary to ensure Buckinghamshire residents receive a consistent standard of service.</p>

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Buckinghamshire Council became a unitary authority on 1 April 2020 and at that point inherited different arrangements for the charging for garden waste services from the four district councils.
- 1.2 The current arrangements are that residents residing in the former Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and South Bucks areas have an 'Opt In' service where participating residents are charged for the collection of their garden waste, whereas residents residing in the former Wycombe area receive a free garden waste collection service for their first bin or bags.
- 1.3 Chargeable garden waste services are an important way to reduce costs and prioritise essential Council services. Chargeable garden waste services deliver significant savings for the Council and currently generate a gross annual income of circa £2,600,000. Aligning charges is estimated to generate an additional gross income of between £900,000 and £1,100,000 per annum.
- 1.4 There are four options presented in the report, with option 1 the recommended option:
 - I. Introduce a chargeable Opt in kerbside garden waste collection service in the former Wycombe District Council area from July 2022.
 - II. Introduce a chargeable Opt in kerbside garden waste collection service in the former Wycombe District Council area from September 2022.
 - III. Do nothing and keep the current Opt in and Free services until outcome of the Government's Environment Act is clear.
 - IV. Cessation of the existing Opt in chargeable services in Buckinghamshire and make all areas free and manage the associated increase in net cost through the Medium Term Financial Plan process.
- 1.5 In addition to harmonisation of charges across Buckinghamshire this paper recommends harmonisation the operational arrangements for garden waste services to provide the same standard of service to participating residents. This report recommends harmonising the following operational arrangements:
 - I. Introduction of stickers in the former South Bucks District area to determine which residents are eligible for their garden container(s) to be emptied.
 - II. Additional subscriptions to be charged at the same rate and expire at the same time as first subscriptions regardless of when payment is made for any additional subscription(s).

- III. The Garden Waste suspension period is aligned to 6 weeks for the winter period.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 The Controlled Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2012 provide powers that local authorities have the discretion to charge for collection and disposal of certain wastes. Paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 of these regulations sets out that a council may charge for the collection (but not the disposal) of household garden waste.
- 2.2 Research published by the Press Association in 2019, showed that, of 326 English councils that collect waste and recycling from homes, 212 of them (65%) charge for a garden waste collection service.
- 2.3 Buckinghamshire Council currently operates a chargeable Opt in kerbside garden waste collection service (referred to onwards as 'garden service') in the areas formerly administered by Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils. The annual charge in 2021/22 for the garden service was set at £50 per annum for resident's first subscription.
- 2.4 Buckinghamshire Council does not currently charge for the collection of a resident's first garden waste bin or bag(s) in the area formerly administered by Wycombe District Council. 63,382 properties receive this free garden service. Additional bins or bags are charged for but uptake is minimal and this generates a very small amount of income.
- 2.5 Participation rates for the garden waste service in 2020/21 were 44% in the Aylesbury area, 39% in the Chiltern area and 27% in the South Bucks area (compared to all eligible households). All householders in the Wycombe area have access to the Garden Waste service.
- 2.6 The below table breaks down the income generated in 2020/21 by area from garden subscriptions charged at £50 per annum. The income generated in the Wycombe area relates to second subscriptions, which are chargeable.

Area	Annual Income 20/21
Aylesbury	£1,551,050
Chiltern	£732,500
Wycombe	£5,000
South Bucks	£354,000
Total	£2,642,550

2.7 Arrangements for additional subscriptions to the garden service are also not currently aligned. The current annual charge (2021/22) for an additional subscription to the garden service was set at £50 in the Aylesbury area, £50 in South Bucks area, £50 in Chiltern area and £72.10 in Wycombe area. The table below shows subscription charges across all areas:

	1 st Subscription Costs	Each Additional Subscription Cost
Aylesbury	£50	£50
Chiltern	£50	£50
South Bucks	£50	£50
Wycombe	Free	£72.10

2.8 With regards to harmonisation of Garden Waste administration processes; current processes for administrating and running the garden waste collections services in Buckinghamshire reflect legacy arrangements of the former district councils and incumbent IT systems. Changes to these processes are necessary to ensure residents receive the same standard of service. Changes to these processes will also make the administration of the garden waste service more efficient and aligned across Buckinghamshire.

2.9 The gross income for introducing a chargeable garden waste service in the Wycombe area is forecast to be between £900,000 and £1,100,000 per annum.

2.10 This income was calculated using the annual subscription fee of £50 (the same charge applied in Aylesbury, South Bucks and Chiltern areas); which is set before the start of each financial year and could be subject to change as part of the Council's fees and charges process.

2.11 The forecast income was calculated using a participation rate of 32.5%

2.12 Recent analysis by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) indicates that on average, a chargeable garden waste service in England has a participation rate of 34%. This is further supported by analysis of similar authority's garden waste service participation rates, and those of the neighbouring areas in Buckinghamshire.

2.13 The anticipated participation rate is lower than the majority of comparisons due to this being a 'new service' and therefore ensures a prudent approach. Experience in the Chiltern and South Bucks areas suggests that participation rate is lowest in the first year of introducing a charge.

	Number subscribers	% hh
Broxbourne	15535	38*
North Herts	21250	37*
Welwyn Hatfield	22765	50*
Chiltern area	14650	44
Aylesbury area	31021	39
South Bucks area	7080	25

*this figure includes ineligible households

Recommended Delivery Model

Option 1 – Charge Begins in July 2022

- 2.14 A charge would be introduced at the rate agreed for those residents that ‘Opt-in’ to the service; prices for additional subscriptions set at the same price.
- 2.15 The chargeable garden service would begin on 4 July 2022. Residents could pre-pay 2 months prior to the charge for service starting on 4 July 2022. Subscriptions are on a rolling monthly basis, each subscription lasting for 12 months.
- 2.16 The chargeable service would be introduced during peak demand for garden waste collections and will likely encourage greater take-up of the Opt in service.
- 2.17 Residents would be left with their garden waste bin(s) by default to avoid removing bins that are later required by residents if they decide to subscribe to the service.
- 2.18 A decision will be made within the first 6 months as to whether special arrangements to remove bins for residents who choose not to participate in the Opt In service. Within this time, residents who are unable to store their bin for 6 months can request an ad-hoc removal request. It is expected that 3,000 ad-hoc requests for bin removals will be made in the first 6 months.
- 2.19 Additional staff support is required to ensure the success of the project. A temporary (6 month) project manager and project officer will be required to deliver the project to a high standard and reduce customer dissatisfaction. This is estimated to cost £20,000 (utilisation of internal and temporary new staff).
- 2.20 In addition, it is expected that there will be a significant increase in customer contact through payments (online and on the phone), complaints and general queries. It is anticipated the service will see a further 10,000 customer contacts on top of business as usual between May 2022 and July 2022. To ensure this does not disrupt business as usual, 3 temporary ‘Waste Support Officers’ will be required in this period to handle customer contact. This is estimated to cost £40,000.

2.21 This option enables the Council, and the Council’s waste collection contractor, to reduce the number of vehicles needed to deliver the garden waste service from July 2022.

Finance

2.22 Option 1 (Charge Begins in July 2022) represents the greatest financial benefit, with a forecast net saving of £260,000 greater than the next nearest option

2.23 The net income for the first year is dependent upon the preferred delivery model, demonstrated in the table below.

2.24 A participation rate of 32.5% is assumed for Option 1, owing to charging beginning at the start of the growing season; a participation rate of 34% in 2023/24.

Option 1 July 2022	22/23	23/24
Income	-£825,000	-£1,100,000
Additional Staff Costs	£60,000	
Communication Costs	£70,000	
Bin removal costs	£20,000	
Additional disposal costs for HRC/residual waste	£30,000	£30,000
Total	-£645,000	-£1,070,000
Capital Costs (avoided)	-£359,750	

Customer focus

2.25 The Council would have 3 months to communicate the change to residents, giving enough time to ensure messages reach their audiences, and reducing the risk of complaints.

Reputational risk

2.26 Option 1 and 2 carry reputational risk: introducing a charge for the service is unlikely to be a popular decision amongst residents living in the Wycombe area, conversely creating a consistent Opt In service for all residents may be seen positively by residents in other areas of Buckinghamshire. Residents are also able to dispose of their garden waste at Household Recycling centres (HRCs) for free should they choose not to participate.

2.27 Additionally, if a decision is made by the Government to introduce free garden waste collections from 2023/24, then the Council’s decision to introduce a charge in the years preceding may be criticised. However, it remains unclear whether



the Government will be introducing any such change nationally and any associated timescales are unknown.

Public engagement for decision making

- 2.28 The strategy for public engagement is the same across all options, excluding option 3.
- 2.29 The current charging arrangements favour Wycombe residents, but discriminate against Chiltern, South Bucks and Aylesbury residents. The introduction of a charge would treat residents across the whole of the Council's area as equal. The Council must consider the potential impacts this policy change could have upon Wycombe area residents.
- 2.30 Public consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) were considered to help determine such impacts.
- 2.31 Public consultation is a formal process governed by clear principles (See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>). Consultation should take place where it is a statutory requirement, it has been promised or it is fair to do so. It is not therefore necessary to have a public consultation for every decision or policy.
- 2.32 A public consultation is not considered appropriate in respect of this proposition. There is no statutory requirement, promise or expectation to consult. Whilst the recommended option would apply to a significant number of residents within the Wycombe area it would not have a direct and significant impact on access to key services but any impact or issues which could arise can be explored via an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 2.33 As a consultation is not recommended, a robust communications campaign will undertaken after the decision has been taken to ensure that there is sufficient notice of the changes, procedures for opting into the service are advertised and alternatives to treating garden waste either at home or at HRCs are set out for residents to act on in good time.
- 2.34 The Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. EIA's assess the effects of policies on people in respect of protected characteristics including disability, gender and racial equality, and, where authorities choose, wider equality areas. This includes looking for opportunities to promote equality, as well as adverse impacts that can be removed or mitigated, where possible. A completed EIA is appended to this report which highlights the ways any impacts

of imposing a charge can be reduced in relation to those with protected and other characteristics and which form part of the proposals for implementation.

Communications

- 2.35 As noted, a detailed communication plan will be developed and implemented as soon as the decision has been made.
- 2.36 Communication actions, as a minimum, will ensure each garden waste service user in Wycombe is written to a number of times prior to harmonisation. The letters will clearly set out up-coming changes and options service users have around continued use of the subscription based service and alternatives options to dealing with their garden waste. Social media updates will be fully utilised to raise awareness of the changes.
- 2.37 The Council's Website, social media and phone messages for incoming calls will carry details of the changes. To avoid confusion and provide clear messages communications messaging will commence at least two months prior to harmonisation changes coming in.

Risks

- 2.38 There is a risk that the decision to not consult leads to a legal challenge. Giving good notice to the changes and having a good equality impact assessment will be important in any defence.
- 2.39 There is a risk that the Council will not achieve the minimum participation in the service, which will reduce income. To mitigate, a clear and comprehensive communications programme is planned.
- 2.40 There is a risk there is not enough resource in the Waste Team to deliver this service change in addition to mobilising the Veolia contract. To mitigate, additional resources are being planned for implementation and will be available quickly after the decision is made.
- 2.41 There is a risk that complaints will increase. To mitigate, clear and concise communications about why the Council has had to make this service change will be created.
- 2.42 There is a risk that customer services will be overwhelmed by an increase in call volumes from residents paying for the service. To mitigate additional resource has been costed for to handle an additional 10,000 contacts to the council in relation to the garden service.
- 2.43 There is a risk that the authority's recycling rate will fall as fewer residents use the service, causing tonnages to drop. It is estimated that there will be a 36% drop in garden waste tonnage from the Wycombe area following the introduction of a

charge. This is based upon evidence from WRAP and comparisons between the current free and paid services in Buckinghamshire. To mitigate, the Council should encourage participation as much as possible and continue to drive recycling performance in other areas e.g. dry mixed recycling.

- 2.44 There is a reputational risk around Options 1,2 & 3. Should the UK Government introduce free garden waste services Options 1 & 2 would mean residents in Wycombe receive a confusing message with a limited period of chargeable garden waste service before it reverts back to free. Reputational issues would be raised under Option 3 as the service remains unequal and perceptions will be that Wycombe residents have a preferential service.

Harmonisation of Garden Waste Operational Arrangements

2.45 **Introduction of stickers in the former South Bucks District area to signify that residents are eligible for their garden container(s) to be emptied.**

- I. Recommended option:
 - i. Stickers to be posted to residents no later than 10 working days' following successful payment.
 - ii. Stickers will display the date that the relevant subscription expires.
 - iii. Residents will be encouraged to place the sticker on their garden waste bin to ensure collection.
- II. Reason for decision
 - i. Legacy arrangements mean that residents in the former South Bucks district area currently do not receive stickers to signify that they are eligible for their garden container(s) to be emptied. Residents in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and Aylesbury areas receive stickers for paid for garden waste services.
 - ii. Stickers are considered advantageous for both residents and crews collecting the container(s).
 - iii. Residents are provided with a visual reminder of when their subscription is due to expire, so are less reliant upon receiving a reminder from the Council to renew their subscription.
 - iv. Crews are also provided with a visual aid to know what container(s) should be collected, so are less reliant upon current in-cab systems and/or printed lists to signify that container(s) are eligible to be emptied.

- v. Notably, subscription rates are significantly higher in the areas with stickers, suggesting that stickers encourage subscriptions, and thereby introducing stickers could increase income for the service. If the South Bucks area had the same subscription rate as the Chiltern area, there would be a circa additional £155,000 of income per annum from subscriptions.

2.46 Additional subscriptions to be charged at the same rate and expire at the same time as first subscriptions regardless of when payment is made for any additional subscription(s).

I. Recommended Options

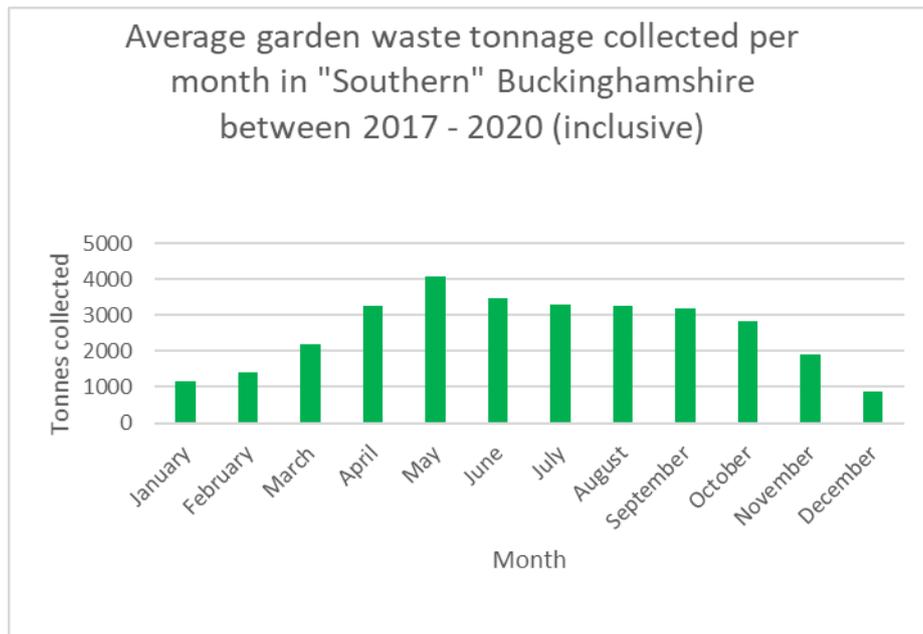
- i. Additional subscriptions can start at any time of the year. Any additional subscriptions will be charged at the same rate as for first subscriptions and will expire the same time as first subscriptions regardless of when payment is. For example, if a resident's first subscription expires in July 2022 and they pay for an additional subscription in February 2022, both subscriptions will expire in July 2022 and cost the same.

II. Reason for decision

- i. The information management system used by Veolia to manage garden waste collections in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas requires properties with multiple subscriptions to have the same expiry date across all subscriptions. Immediately before the commencement of the Veolia contract across the Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas, properties with multiple subscriptions with different expiry dates were automatically given extensions to align their subscriptions on whichever of their subscriptions had the latest expiry date. This was to ensure a seamless transition onto the Veolia contract for residents.
- ii. The process of extending first subscriptions to align with additional subscriptions is not sustainable. Residents could theoretically pay for an additional subscription 1 month before their first subscription expires, and then receive nearly a years' worth of free collections for their first subscription.
- iii. This change aligns processes across Buckinghamshire. Additional subscriptions in the former Aylesbury district area cost the same and expire at the same time as first subscriptions regardless of when payment is made for any additional subscriptions.

2.47 The period in which garden waste collection services are suspended across Buckinghamshire is aligned

- I. Recommended option
 - i. Garden waste collection services to be suspended for 6 weeks across all areas of Buckinghamshire from mid-December and January.
- II. Reason for decision
 - i. Garden waste collection are suspended each year across Buckinghamshire over a set period during the winter months. Less garden waste is produced during this period and it enables resource to be diverted to assist and improve other areas of the service, e.g. crew training and supporting recycling rounds over Christmas.
 - ii. Current suspension periods reflect legacy arrangements.
 - iii. In the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas, garden collections are suspended for a 2-week period in the December and January months. The exact period varies year-on-year depending upon operational requirements.
 - iv. In the former Aylesbury district area, garden collections are suspended for a 2-month (8 weeks) period over the winter months. The exact period varies year-on-year depending upon operational requirements.
 - v. The below graph shows the average garden waste tonnage collected per month in the former Chiltern Wycombe and South Bucks district areas between 2017 and 2020 (inclusive). The service is evidently in less demand in December and January. On average, 75% less garden waste is collected in December and January than in the peak month of May.



- vi. Despite less demand, operational costs remain the same, as collection crews must visit every property who is eligible for the service. There is a nominal estimated saving of £30,000 per annum by suspending the service for the entirety of January and half of December in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas. This saving represents reduced fuel and vehicle maintenance costs during the 6 week shut-down period. It is not possible to reduce staffing costs during the shut-down; operational staff will be re-deployed to support other rounds and achieve a more robust service in other areas.
- vii. There is no saving for the former Aylesbury vale area. However, residents in the area will benefit from the change as their service is extended by a collection.
- viii. Legal advice on changing the current terms and conditions of the service in the former Aylesbury, Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas has been sought. It is advised that all residents subscribed to the service will need to be contacted and given reasonable notice of the change. All affected residents will also be given a partial refund/reduced invoice to accommodate the change to terms and conditions during their subscription period.
- ix. This change aligns arrangements across Buckinghamshire with all residents receiving the same number of collections per year, subject to any events beyond the Councils control.

3. Other options considered

Option 2 Charge Begins in September 2022

- 3.1 A charge would be introduced at the rate agreed for those residents that ‘Opt-in’ to the service; prices for additional subscriptions set at the same price.
- 3.2 The chargeable garden service would begin on 5 September 2022. Residents could pre-pay up to 2 months prior to the charged for service.
- 3.3 Residents would be left with their garden waste bin(s) by default to avoid removing bins that are later required by residents if they decide to subscribe to the service.
- 3.4 Residents will be able to request their garden waste bin(s) are removed after 6 months.
- 3.5 The chargeable service would be introduced during late-peak demand for garden waste collections. This will encourage take-up
- 3.6 Additional staff support is required to ensure the success of the project. A temporary (6 month) Project Manager and Project Officer will be required to deliver the project to a high standard and reduce customer dissatisfaction. This is estimated to cost £20,000.
- 3.7 In addition, it is expected that there will be a significant increase in customer contact through payments (online and on the phone), complaints and general queries. It is anticipated the service will see a further 10,000 customer contacts on top of business as usual between August 2022 and October 2022. To ensure this does not disrupt business as usual, 3 temporary ‘Waste Support Officers’ will be required in this period to handle customer contact. This is estimated to cost £40,000.
- 3.8 Introducing a charge in September 2022 will save the capital cost of the purchase of 2 new collection vehicles (£359,750).

Option 2 September 2022	22/23	23/24
Income	-£550,000	-£1,100,000
Additional Staff Costs	£60,000	
Communication Costs	£70,000	
Bin removal costs	£20,000	
Additional disposal costs for HRC/residual waste	£15,000	£30,000
Total	-£385,000	-£1,070,000
	22/23	23/24
Capital Costs (avoided)	£359,750	

Option 3 - Do nothing and keep the current Opt In and Free services until the government proposals harmonise across the county.

- 3.9 The current unequal service would continue with residents in Wycombe having a free garden waste collection service, all other residents in Buckinghamshire being offered the charged for service.
- 3.10 The two Garden Waste Vehicles which have not been procured, but which were in Veolia’s original fleet list, will be procured and staffed accordingly.
- 3.11 Potential reputational issues from having and unequal service and a perception of preferential service for Wycombe residents could persist.
- 3.12 Any income from increasing the scope of the chargeable service to Wycombe residents will not be realised. Savings in terms of capital, from avoided vehicle purchase, and revenue in terms of reduce staff numbers will also not be achieved. Project set up costs will be avoided.

Option 3 Do Nothing	22/23		23/24	
Income	-£	0	-£	0
Additional Staff Costs	£	0	£	0
Communication Costs	£	0	£	0
Hire Costs	£	0	£	0
Bin Removal Costs (project based)			£	0
Ad-hoc bin remove costs	£	0	£	0
Additional disposal costs for residual waste	£	0	£	0
Total	-£	0	-£	0

Option 4 - Cessation of existing chargeable garden waste services in Buckinghamshire

- 3.13 To ensure residents are treated equally in Buckinghamshire, the alternative to introducing a charge for the service in Wycombe is to provide a free garden waste service for all Buckinghamshire residents.
- 3.14 There are significant costs, and avoided savings, associated with this option.
- 3.15 There will be an expected net cost to the Council of £8,530,000 per year which includes the associated loss of income and the increased cost of collections. This would need to be addressed through a Medium Term Financial Planning process and commensurate savings would need to be secured.
- 3.16 It is estimated that introducing a free garden service in Buckinghamshire would generate an additional 10,000 tonnes of garden waste requiring collection. Whilst there may be savings associated with avoided refuse disposal costs, this is likely to be insignificant in comparison to the costs for delivering this service.

- 3.17 Additional collection vehicles and staff required to collect this waste, as crews will have to visit every eligible property rather than just each subscriber. It is estimated that 15 additional vehicles and associated crew would be required to deliver a free service across Buckinghamshire at a cost of approximately £3,750,000 in year 1 which includes capital costs for additional vehicles. This drops to £650,000 for each subsequent year for staffing and other overhead costs.
- 3.18 New bins would have to be delivered to all eligible householders who are not currently subscribed to the service. It is estimated that an additional 39,000 bins would need to be delivered at a cost of approximately £200,000.
- 3.19 This would also represent a significant service change and would require additional communication activities, as well as additional staffing resource to handle increased contact.

The Environment Act will potentially mandate free garden waste collections in England (see 1.4). Part of this Act includes the potential for ‘new burdens’ funding for those councils to cover costs and potentially who lose income through the introduction of mandated free garden waste collections. Buckinghamshire Council would potentially not be eligible for new burdens funding relating to lost income with Option 4.

Option 4 - Cessation of chargeable service from April 2022	
	22/23
Loss of income	£2,730,000
Operational Costs (drivers and loaders)	£1,600,000
Capital Costs	£3,650,000
Treatment Costs	£400,000
Bin delivery costs	£150,000
Total	£8,530,000

4. Legal and financial implications

- 4.1 The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012, made under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 designate garden waste as household waste for which a charge for collection may be levied (Schedule 1, paragraph 4(8)).
- 4.2 In proposing revised arrangements for the collection of garden waste the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010 and s.17 of

the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. The Council will ensure nothing within the proposals to charge for the collection of waste contravenes the provisions of these Acts.

- 4.3 The proposal to introduce a charge is in line with the Council's fees and charges in the Chiltern, South Bucks and Aylesbury areas.
- 4.4 The financial implications for each delivery model are outlined the forecast table.
- 4.5 As part of approving the 2022/23 budget Council agreed increased fees & charges of £750k (rising to £1.1m by 2024/25). Option 1 will broadly achieve this but if not supported then other opportunities to increase fees & charges will need to be considered in order to balance the budget.
- 4.6 Following Consultation with Legal colleagues it was advised that an EIA is required. An EIA is complete and appended to this report.
- 4.7 The legal implications around the need to consult are set out earlier in the report.
- 4.8 With regards to harmonisation of administration processes; Legal advice on changing the current terms and conditions of the service in the former Aylesbury, Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas has been sought. It is advised that all residents subscribed to the service will need to be contacted and given reasonable notice of the change. All affected residents will also be given a partial refund/reduced invoice to accommodate the change to terms and conditions during their subscription period.
- 4.9 There are minimal financial implications for harmonisation of administration processes. Introducing stickers in the former South Bucks area will cost of £1.08 per sticker delivered to a resident. This represents an additional cost for administering the service in the former South Bucks district area. There is an approximate one off £8,500 cost to deliver stickers to all current subscribers in the former South Bucks district area.
- 4.10 There is a nominal estimated saving of £30,000 per annum by suspending the service for the entirety of January and half of December in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas. This saving represents reduced fuel and vehicle maintenance costs during the 6 week shut-down period. It is not possible to reduce staffing costs during the shut-down; operational staff will be re-deployed to support other rounds and achieve a more robust service in other areas.

5. Corporate implications

- 5.1 This report reflects Climate Change & Environment Portfolio Priorities relating to Waste Strategy and Management. In the latest draft of the unpublished Portfolio Priorities document a key risk around whether Garden waste can be charged for in the coming years is identified, this report addresses and reduces the potential impact of this risk.
- 5.2 This report will have zero implications for the following corporate areas: Property, HR and Data – this report will not require a data protection impact assessment.
- 5.3 As a result of increased income there are potential investment opportunities into other areas of waste services to increase recycling. This opportunity for investment will reduce the minor negative impact on Climate change and Sustainability owing to slight increases in garden waste in refuse. Equality impacts are addressed via the completed EIA.
- 5.4 This report aligns all areas of Buckinghamshire under the same charge for Garden waste collection Services. Value for money regarding garden waste charges are addressed through annual fees and charges discussions.

6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 6.1 There has been no wider consultation with Members on this issue, but local Members will be informed and engaged with as part of the Cabinet decision process.

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment is completed and appended to this report. A formal public consultation is not legally required, and is not recommended, due to the risk it could be legally challenged if a decision already has a final view.
- 7.2 A comprehensive communication programme will be delivered for the recommended option, including mail-outs, digital media, and attendance at public events (Covid-19 guidance permitting).

8. Next steps and review

- 8.1 Following the decision Garden Waste Collection charges will begin from July 2022. Customers will have at least 2 months prior to July 2022 to subscribe to the service and will be informed of the changes at least 3 months in advance. The Harmonisation of Garden Waste Administration processes will be implemented from 1st April 2022

9. Background papers

9.1 None

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report (simon.anthony@buckinghamshire.gov.uk). If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

