

CHILTERN & WYCOMBE JOINT WASTE COLLECTION COMMITTEE (JWCC)

27 August 2015

Review of criteria, and levels of fees and charges for waste and recycling containers for the Chiltern and Wycombe Joint Waste Service.

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RECOMMENDATION:

To review the current policy/criteria on container charges and to seek approval for a revision of the charging criteria applied.

Background

1. Prior to the introduction of the Joint Waste Service (JWS) Chiltern and Wycombe District Councils harmonised their waste collection policies in order to provide a consistent approach. A joint waste policy harmonisation report was approved by JWCC in December 2012, following a joint overview and security session. It was in turn approved by the Cabinets of Chiltern and Wycombe.
2. One of the policy areas reviewed related to the criteria and levels of fees and charges by which residents would be charged for the provision and delivery of new waste and recycling containers.
3. A review has now taken place of this particular policy area, including the expenditure against budget, and a review of best practice in other authorities.
4. It is not proposed that container charges are increased but that the criteria by which residents are charged for containers is tightened due to a continued increase in the number of containers and exchanges being requested. These additional costs are borne by the Councils and have not been budgeted for. Therefore, it is a timely opportunity to review the scenarios whereby residents may be charged for replacement containers and/or the delivery of them.

Current charging criteria and impact

5. Full details of the current charging criteria with proposed changes are set out in Appendix 1. In summary, the current position is:

Full Charge : For container provision and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When containers are lost/stolen and it is not the fault of the council.• When new residents move into new developments
Delivery charges only:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When residents wish to exchange for smaller or larger containers
Free of charge: Containers are provided free of charge (with no delivery charge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When containers are damaged by the crews or fall into the back of the collection vehicles• When new residents move into existing properties and no containers are present

6. The number of container requests being received by the Joint Waste Team has increased dramatically since the introduction of the new waste and recycling schemes in 2013, and this has placed a pressure on the budget. Appendix 2 sets out the budget position to bin requests.

7. In 2015/16 the current predicted expenditure on containers and their delivery is £202,000 based on current data. Continuing with the current regime assuming no other changes, could result in a budget deficit of £32,041 across Chiltern and Wycombe in 2015/16. Full details are provided in Appendix 2.

Other local authorities

8. Increasingly, more local authorities are altering their charging criteria for waste and recycling containers and are only providing them free when they are damaged by the collection crews or fall into the back of the collection vehicle. Adopting such an approach provides an opportunity to mitigate these increasing financial pressures. In line with best practice, there are a number of scenarios where charges could be introduced to reduce the pressure on the budget and to encourage residents to take greater responsibility for their containers, reducing demand for replacement containers.

Proposed changes

9. Full details are provided in Appendix 1, but in summary, the proposals are:

Full Charge : For container provision and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If containers are damaged with no evidence provided that the crews were responsible• If resident moves into an existing property and containers are not present• If new developments are built and containers are required• Lost or stolen containers• Damaged containers and not the fault of the Council i.e. burnt out, driven over
Delivery charges only:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide a different size bin i.e. 140L smaller bin
Free of charge: Containers are provided free of charge (with no delivery charge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If containers are damaged by crews, a replacement is still free of charge, but residents must present damaged containers for collection when replacements are delivered.

10. It is believed that these changes would either reduce demand for containers or increase income to cover the costs. It will also encourage resident to properly look for their “missing” containers, as well as increase the likelihood of people looking after their containers.
11. Comprehensive FAQs will be published on the Council websites, advising residents how to take greater care of their containers and explaining the responsible approach being advocated.