

SUBJECT:	Garden Waste Renewals
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team - Director of Services
	Prepared by - Head of Environment

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To agree the internal policy of how garden waste renewals will be handled for 2015/16 and beyond for the subscription based garden waste collection scheme which started on 31st March 2014.

Background

- 2.1 It was initially estimated in September 2013 that up to 7,000 residents would subscribe in 2014/15. This financial year 5,631 properties have been included on the scheme and are receiving a collection. Residents are advised when they sign up that they will receive 25 collections between 31 March 2014 and 3rd April 2015 and that collections will not take place between 22nd December 2014 and 2 January 2015.

The initial charge was £35 if residents signed up by 1st January and then the charge reverted to £45 included VAT. The income for this financial year was based upon 5,900 customers signing up. The 5,631 residents who have signed up to the service did so over a period of 4 months.

- 2.2 Payment for the service is required each year in advance and that they will be notified of the charge and payment date in January/February each year. Should no payment be received by the specified payment date, the service will be withdrawn and the wheeled bin removed.
- 2.3 Residents can pay for the new garden waste collection service online, over the phone or in person by cash / cheque.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 Options for renewal are: -

- Option 1; a resident's renewal date will be 12 months after their first payment is received.
- Option 2; the renewal date for all residents will be the first day of the new financial year.

- 3.2 Key Considerations for Option1:

- ✓ No price adjustments will be required for residents joining the service part way through a year.
- ✓ No adjustment to terms and conditions on the website throughout the year.
- ✓ Multiple renewal dates across the whole year, will be more complicated to manage although this will begin to happen over time but the bulk of renewals will be around March each year.
- ✓ Regular mailshots to a percentage of residents advising when payment is due for the following year and then advising removal of the bin if no payment is received.
- ✓ Removal of bins will be spread over a period of months with possible economies of scale being reduced in terms of the bin removal resource.

- ✓ Management and control of data for the in-cab devices will be more complicated and may result in increased missed collections or customers receiving a collection they are not entitled to.

Key Considerations for Option 2:

- ✓ The bulk of payments for existing customers were taken prior to 31 March 2014.
- ✓ Subscriptions for the largest percentage of customers will be received by the end of May which allows prudent financial and resource planning.
- ✓ Only a single mailshot for each communication will be required.
- ✓ A clear plan for the removal of containers can be delivered in an efficient and effective manner.
- ✓ Data held by the in-cabs can be updated and controlled.
- ✓ Website will need to be updated each month.
- ✓ Customer's subscribing after 1st April each year will pay a charge based on a sliding scale.
- ✓ Sliding scale of charges to be agreed based on £45.00 per year, potential early renewal discount reduction to £35.00, half year collections £30.00, quarter year collections £20.00.

3.3 Officers views are that as we should have one renewal date at the beginning of each financial year.

Members' views are therefore sought regarding the renewal date.

4. Risks and financial implications

4.1 There will be the usual risks or financial implications outside the agreed budgets associated to this decision.

5. Summary

5.1 The advice of the PAG is sought on which is their preferred option when dealing with renewals.

Portfolio Holder:	Councillor N Naylor
Officer Contact:	Chris Marchant 01895 837360 Chris.marchant@southbucks.gov.uk
Background Papers:	None