

CABINET – 4TH JUNE 2020

Report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces Lead Member: Councillor Leigh Harper-Davies

Part A

ITEM 8 REVIEW OF INTRODUCTION OF CHARGES FOR BULKY WASTE COLLECTIONS

Purpose of Report

To review the introduction of Bulky Waste collection charges 6 months after their introduction; in line with the original Cabinet report recommendations (04/07/2019).

Recommendation

That the content of this report is noted by Cabinet.

Reason

To keep Cabinet informed on the progress of this service since the charges were introduced

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 allow authorities to charge for items that do not fit in the receptacle provided for collecting Household Waste.

The provision of bulky waste collections is discretionary for local authorities. Many councils provide a service for large waste items, and most choose to charge a fee to recover some/all of the associated costs.

The Cabinet meeting held on 4th July 2019 resolved:

- 1. that a charge for all household bulky waste collections covered within the Environmental Services Contract from October 2019 is approved, to be reviewed 6 months after implementation;*

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

No further reviews are scheduled unless advised otherwise.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

It was originally estimated that in the first 6 months the Council would generate £30,000 income from this service once the charges were introduced.

The actual income in the first 5 months (bulky collections were suspended in mid-March due to the pandemic) was £52,353.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with this review.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: No

Officer to contact: Matthew Bradford
Head of Cleansing and Green Spaces
01509 634 695
Matthew.Bradford@charnwood.gov.uk

Part B

1. Background

- 1.1. Upon Cabinet approval, charges to bulky waste collections were introduced on the 7th of October 2019. In the 5 months following the introduction the Council received more than 2,000 requests for collections. This number is considerably lower compared to the number of requests prior to the charges. It is estimated that for the same period the equivalent number of requests would be in the area of 5,000.
- 1.2. This means that residents may have become more resourceful on how to treat any unwanted bulky items through selling, donation or reuse. Hopefully, some of the unwanted items have been diverted from landfill.

2. Risk management and mitigation measures

In the original report there were three identified areas of risk. This section will provide information on how each of them was mitigated.

2.1. Potential increase in fly-tipping:

A comparison of the same 5 months (October-February) in the immediate years before and after the introduction of the charges showed an overall increase (10%) in the number of incidents (348 compared to 383). However, this increase was mainly identified in items not collected as part of the bulky waste service, such as garden waste.

In categories included in the bulky waste collections, like white goods and electrical items, a small decline was found in the number of reported incidents in 2019/20 (29 compared to 31).

2.2. Managing increased demand leading up to the introduction of charges:

This risk was adequately managed in cooperation with the Council's collections contractor. Additional resources were deployed where necessary. No issues or complaints were received as a result.

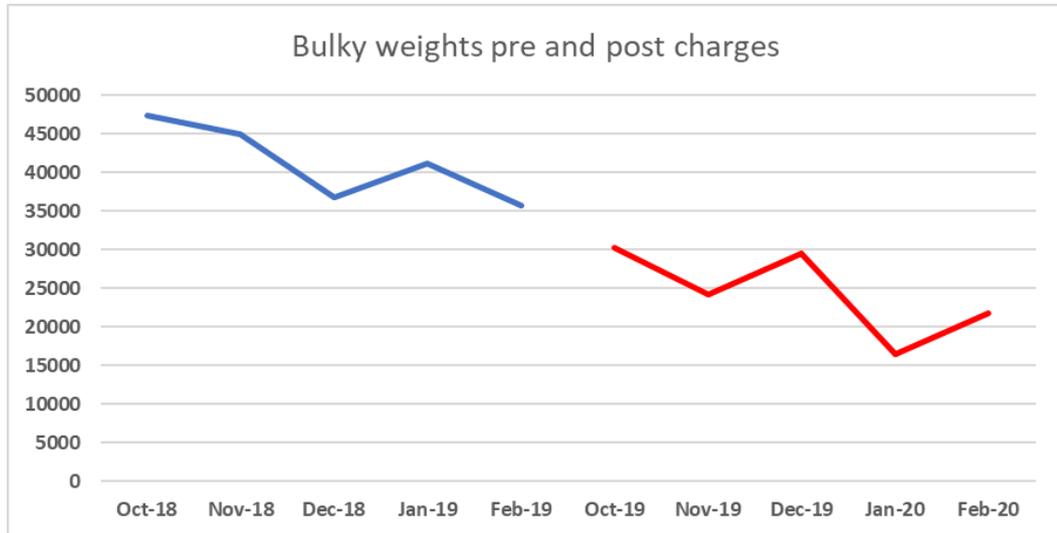
2.3. Customer satisfaction:

Customer satisfaction surveys are carried out by an independent body as part of the Environmental Services Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). One of the questions is focused to satisfaction from bulky waste collections. It was found that in the survey just after the introduction of the charges there was a slight increase in satisfaction (92.2%) compared to the one just before (89.6%). This could be a result of the more manageable number of requests that could be processed in a more efficient way by the collection crews.

3. Benefit realisation

3.1. Less waste sent to landfill

After analysing the collected tonnages for the same period (October – February) for the year before and after the introduction of the charges, it was found that the average decrease in total tonnages is 40%.



3.2. Contract compliance:

As stated in the original report, the existing Environmental Services contract is based on 12,000 collections per year. The reduction in the number of requests ensures that the Council complies with this figure and diminishes the risk of incurring any extra charges in the form of contract variation.

3.3. Income generation:

The income generated from the introduction of these charges will allow the Council to offset part of the costs for subsidising this service as part of the Environmental Services contract.

4. Lessons learnt

4.1. Interdepartmental collaboration:

The implementation of this project required contribution from many different stakeholders (internal and external) to ensure a seamless transition. Good communication, clear allocation of tasks and forward planning were key elements for its success.

4.2. Residents take more ownership of their waste when they are asked to pay for disposal:

The graph in section 3.1 clearly demonstrates that since the introduction of charges there has been a significant reduction (40%) in the tonnages collected.

This shows that residents have looked for alternative way to manage their unwanted items.

4.3. Option to waive charges when needed is ensuring there is no discrimination (some basic stats on cases)

As part of the equality impact assessment it was agreed to have an option to waive the charges via an application for “exceptional hardship criteria”. So far 36 applications have been received, 6 of which have been assessed as successful.