

**Teignbridge District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (1)
13th September 2021**

Purpose of Report

To consider the options available for reducing the amount of residual waste collected from households in the district and encourage an increase in recycling.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee considers the options detailed in this report in relation to the additional residual waste bin and side waste policies and makes the following Recommendations to Executive.

1. That the charge for an additional residual waste bin is increased to £300 per year from April 1st 2022 and is reviewed annually.
2. That a charge of £42 per 10 sacks is introduced for side waste collections using prepaid bags delivered to service users from April 2022 and is reviewed annually.
3. That the use of the charged side waste service is restricted to 3 times per year for each property.

Financial Implications

Please see paragraph 4.1 of the report.

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Legal Implications

As Waste Collection Authority, the Council is duty bound to collect household waste, for which generally it cannot charge other than in specified situations (e.g. where the waste cannot fit into the bin provided to each residence by the authority for household waste). In considering what charges to impose for the limited types of household waste as part of its objective to encourage household recycling, it should also be noted that the County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority cannot charge for disposing of any type of household waste at its disposal sites, the use of which may be more preferable by households than paying for additional household

collection bins or recycling.

Monitoring Officer

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Risk Assessment

Please see paragraph 4.2 of the report.

Environmental/Climate Change Implications

Please see paragraph 4.3 of the report.

Report Author

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Executive Member

Cllr Alistair Dewhurst

Background Papers

None

1. Background

- 1.1 Teignbridge District Council (TDC) has historically been, and continues to be, a high performer nationally in relation to recycling, reaching the top ten of English authorities with our highest recorded rate of 57.4% in 2009.
- 1.2 Since then, and despite significant positive service changes, the recycling rate has plateaued at a level around 56%.
- 1.3 On 2nd March 2021 a report was taken to the Executive Committee that set out the challenges faced in increasing the district's recycling rate. It provided a 10 point action plan to increase the levels of recycling and reduce the amount of residual waste collected.
- 1.4 This report provides further details for the Committee's consideration as part of its policy development role specifically regarding Actions 8 and 9 in the Executive approved Action Plan.
 - *Action 8 - Review the additional bin policy to remove option or increase the charge levied.*
 - *Action 9 - Review the side waste policy to reduce the allowance from 3 times to once per year and consider introducing charges for this service.*

2. Additional Residual Waste Bins

- 2.1 Households that meet a set criteria in relation to number of occupants are currently entitled to an additional residual waste bin free of charge, usually 180 litres. Residual waste being that which cannot be recycled from home. At present households that don't meet the criteria for a free additional bin can apply for a second residual waste bin at a charge of £132.00 per year but must agree to fully participate in the recycling services provided. This is difficult to police and enforce.
- 2.2 At present we have 834 households with additional residual waste bins, 69 of which pay the charge. Work is ongoing to identify unauthorised additional bins (official ones are supplied with yellow lids) and remove those from properties no longer requiring them, for example when children leave home.

2.3 The options for consideration regarding additional residual waste bins are as follows:

- a) *Increase charge for rented additional bins for those not eligible for a free bin due to household size*

The current charge of £132.00 does not appear to be a sufficient deterrent for some to ensure they are recycling as much as possible rather than just renting an additional bin to dispose of their waste.

The Council currently charges £11.00 per collection of commercial waste for a standard sized bin. Using this standard figure for the rental of a bin (for additional household waste) the cost of the collections for a year would be £286.00 (based on 26 collections per year). A reasonable administration fee should be added to this to cover invoicing and administration of the rental, to give an annual fee of £300.00.

It is difficult to estimate how many households would continue to rent a bin, but the significant increase in cost is likely to deter some and help to reduce waste and increase recycling. Alternative changes in fees could also be considered.

- b) *Remove the option to rent an additional bin*

The average TDC household generates around 337kg of residual waste per year. If the option to pay for a second residual waste bin was removed this could potentially reduce waste by 23 tonnes per year. It is recommended however that if this option is considered, the option for charging for side waste should also be considered (see section 3 below).

3. Side Waste Policy

- 3.1 Residents are currently able to request a collection of up to five bags of “side waste” (i.e. additional household waste left by the side of the bin because the bin is full) in addition to their black residual waste bin on three occasions in a rolling 12 month period. Any other side waste, or side waste not pre-booked, will not be collected by crews.
- 3.2 Restrictions are relaxed during the post-Christmas catch up to allow for delayed collections due to bank holidays.
- 3.3 Additional recyclable waste properly presented is collected without restriction or booking and residents can request additional recycling containers free of charge.
- 3.4 Last year we received 1378 requests for additional side waste collections, amounting to an estimated 28 tonnes of residual waste. Of these approximately a third were repeat requests from the same household.
- 3.5 The options for consideration for the Council’s policy on side waste are:

a) *Reduce the number of occasions side waste can be requested*

The current allowance of 3 occasions per 12 month period can be reduced to a single occasion per rolling 12 months.

b) *Introduce a charge for side waste*

Rather than imposing a restriction on the occasions that side waste can be booked, a charge could be implemented for the service. This would encourage householders to consider recycling all that they can in order to reduce the residual waste that they are producing, rather than paying for too many side waste collections. Examples of two authorities that use this option are,

- West Lindsey District Council charge £8.85 for 5 sacks plus p&p.
- East Devon District Council charge £42 for 10 sacks including p&p

Both authorities use brightly coloured sacks that are posted to the householder following payment and identify the collection to the collection crews.

In order to provide an element of standardisation of service across authorities, it is suggested that if this option is recommended for adoption a charge of £42 for 10 sacks, should be considered to mirror the policy of East Devon District Council. The sacks used in East Devon are purple, which makes them identifiable to the crews.

Consideration should also be given to restricting the availability of this service to prevent residents from buying their way out of correct recycling behaviour.

c) *Remove the option to request side waste collections*

Many of the top performing authorities, including South Hams District Council who have a closed lid policy for the wheeled bins and Exeter City Council, do not allow the collection of side waste at all, most advise that any additional waste is taken to the local Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) or in the case of Exeter City Council, they expect the residents to dispose of any additional waste themselves. Devon County Council, who are responsible for the HWRC in the district, have confirmed that they already allow households to take up to 8 sacks of general waste (black bag waste) a year to Brunel Road, Newton Abbot. This covers things like missed collections, holidays and excess waste and needs to be pre booked through the Devon County Council call centre. They would not be looking to change this policy or allow unlimited amounts of black bag waste to be taken to the site.

4. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact

4.1 Financial

There would be an additional cost for the initial purchase of the sacks for the side waste collections, but this would be offset by the charge made to the householder for the service. The charge should also cover any delivery costs.

There would be no additional costs with regards to the additional bin charges. The increased cost of an additional bin would cover the fortnightly collection of the bin as well as any administration involved.

Increases in the collection and resale of dry recyclables generates additional income for the Council from Recycling Credits (paid to TDC by DCC) and through the sale of material to reprocessors. Material income levels vary with global and national markets and have to be balanced against the additional costs of collection, processing and onwards transportation.

4.2 Risks

There are no material significant risks considered within the proposals. There is however a potential risk of customer dissatisfaction from those impacted by any changes to the services included within the proposals.

4.3 Environmental/Climate Change Impact

Reducing the amount of residual waste and as a result increasing recycling levels has a positive overall impact in relation to environmental and climate change impacts in most scenarios. The actions proposed aim to reduce the levels of additional residual waste collected and increase the level of participation in recycling. This potential increase in the recycling rate would therefore support the Council's related aspirations.

5 Alternative Options

There are no additional alternative options identified that could be pursued at this time other than those presented in this report. Consideration could be given to maintaining the status quo.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 While there are fairly low cost or free options available for householders to dispose of any additional residual waste, it provides little or no incentive for increasing participation in recycling or reviewing the waste produced with a view to reducing it altogether. They are able to dispose of it all as residual waste without any additional thought or consideration.
- 6.2 Removing the options altogether or introducing a charge of a level that will provoke some thought before paying for the service should encourage householders to review the waste that they are throwing away or at a minimum, ensure that they are recycling as much material as they are able to from the kerbside.
- 6.3 Introducing or increasing the charges householders to pay for the additional service if they feel that they need it, but should channel some users into improved recycling behaviour.