

Decision Maker: Environment Portfolio Holder

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment PDS Committee on:

Date: 4th November 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: GREEN GARDEN WASTE SATELLITE SITES- REVISED SERVICE

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Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment & Community Services

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

This report outlines two options for achieving savings through a revision to the current Green Garden Waste Satellite Site service. This involves changing the days on which they are open, but maintains the current number of sites.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Environment Portfolio Holder:

- 2.1 **Agrees an option for the future operation of the Green Garden Waste Satellite Site service as outlined at paragraph 3.14 , with the changes to be effective from April 2015.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Option 1: saving of £131k p.a. Option 2: saving of £146k p.a.
 2. Ongoing costs: Option 1: saving of £131k p.a. Option 2: saving of £146k p.a.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Waste Services (Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites)
 4. Total current budget for this head: £17.6 m, of which £271k is associated with the Green Garden Waste Satellite Site service
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2014/15
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Less than 1 fte associated with this service
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Less than 1 fte.
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory: Any proposed service revisions will be compliant with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, Household Waste Recycling Act 2003, and the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendments) Regulations 2012
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All residents with gardens .
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 At present, the council offers four options which enable residents to dispose of their Green Garden Waste (GGW) for recycling:
- The wheelie bin collection scheme
 - A chargeable collection for sacks of GGW (controlled through a sticker system)
 - The Household Waste Recycling Centres at Waldo Road (Central Depot) and Churchfields Road (Churchfields Depot)
 - The five Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites
- 3.2 Customers joining the **wheelie bin collection scheme** (for which there is an annual charge of £60) are provided with a 240 litre wheeled bin for their GGW. This is emptied every other week for nine months of the year, and once every four weeks during December, January and February. This service was introduced in February 2012.
- 3.3 Veolia provides the collection service utilising dedicated vehicles. The vehicles also collect GGW sacks from those customers continuing to opt for the **sticker scheme**. Stickers cost £1.60 each, and are collected at the same frequency as the wheelie bin scheme.
- 3.4 **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)**: The Environmental Protection Act 1990 requires authorities to provide a facility where residents can deliver their household waste (including GGW) free of charge. Both Waldo Road and Churchfields Road HWRCs accept GGW. However at certain times, particularly Easter and other Bank Holidays, the number of residents wishing to use the sites can cause traffic congestion in nearby roads, leading to complaints both from site users and local residents. The Waldo Road and Churchfields webcams have assisted in mitigating this issue, by allowing residents to check whether there is a queue before setting off to the site. However, the most important factor in reducing the levels of congestion has been the introduction of the Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites.
- 3.5 The **GGW Satellite Sites** were introduced in 2005, with the aim of reducing traffic congestion near the HWRCs, and also reducing the number of complaints regarding the sack-based collection service (which was equally overwhelmed at times of high demand). The five sites have subsequently undergone several changes of location for practical and operational reasons, but continue to be popular with the public. Veolia provide appropriate vehicles and staffing for the sites, with all material delivered to Waldo Road. The service is currently available every weekend from April to November. The budget for this service currently stands at £271k p.a
- 3.6 The sites operate on Saturdays from 11am to 4pm, and on Sundays from 8am to 12 noon. The hours are prescribed by the need to be able to empty the vehicles at Waldo Road at the end of each day. Licensing of the Waldo Road facility prohibits any waste activity after 4pm on Saturday and 1pm on Sundays. The sites are also open one weekend in January for recycling Christmas trees.
- 3.7 As can be seen from the table below, the tonnage collected from each of the sites tends to fluctuate annually, with the weather being a major factor in the volume of GGW. However, it is apparent that the introduction of the new collection service has particularly impacted on the Shire Lane site, which has seen a substantial fall in tonnage collected.

Site	Tonnage			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cotmandene	377	417	402	369
Shire Lane, Green Street Green	611	530	462	356
Unicorn School	350	306	331	309
Charles Darwin, Biggin Hill	276	344	309	303
Normans Park, Hook Farm	345	425	327	267
TOTAL	1,959	2,022	1,831	1,604

3.8 In 2010, 2,022 tonnes of GGW were collected. In 2013, this had fallen to 1,831 tonnes. However, provisional tonnages for 2014 suggest tonnages have risen slightly, although they are still projected to be lower than in 2012.

3.9 The tonnages of GGW delivered by residents to the Waldo Road and Churchfields HWRCs has declined since 2010 (although the excellent weather this year has seen tonnages rise slightly). The table below shows tonnages from April-September for recent years.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
WALDO & CHURCHFIELDS	6,563	5,746	5,146	4,365	4,596

3.10 With 15,500 customers having joined the new GGW collection service, and an average of 493 new customers signing up each month over the last 6 months, the original objective of the Satellite Sites – to address the congestion issues near the HWRC sites – has become less crucial. Improvements to the customer areas at both sites have also helped address the congestion pressures.

3.11 In light of this, negotiations have been held with Veolia to explore alternative options for reducing the cost of operating the Satellite Sites. Four options are being considered:

1. Close all five sites
2. Reduce the number of weeks the sites operate for
3. Reduce the number of sites
4. Operate 3 sites each Saturday and 2 sites each Sunday

3.12 Ceasing to operate the sites, including the Christmas tree recycling weekend, would result in a budget saving of £271k. It would be expected that a proportion of residents would become customers of the new GGW collection service, whilst others would revert to using one of the HWRCs. The risk that congestion at the HWRCs would worsen is therefore high. The risk of illegal depositing of waste (fly tipping) would also increase, particularly in parks, rural areas and at the locations where the sites previously operated from. An allowance of £5k has been made for additional fly tipping costs should either option be approved.

3.13 Whilst the GGW collection service has proved to be popular and subscriptions continue to increase, at this time a full or partial closure of the GGW Satellite Sites is not recommended. However, officers will continue to monitor the impact of the increasing number of subscribers to the GGW Collections Service, on the usage of satellite sites, the HWRC and present options on further savings in the future.

3.14 Instead, at this time it is recommended that two options be considered:

Option 1: Open 3 sites on Saturdays and 2 different sites on Sundays between April and November – Annual saving = £131k

Option 2: Open 3 sites on Saturdays and 2 different sites on Sundays between April and October – Annual saving = £146k

- 3.15 Operating three of the sites each Saturday only, with the other two sites open on Sundays only, would ensure that residents were still able to visit their most local site. This would result in a saving of £131k per annum. If the sites were operated only to the end of October, a further saving of £15k would result. As highlighted above, there is likely to be additional fly tipping costs of £5k per annum.
- 3.16 At present, the sites open on both Saturday and Sunday. Approximately 48% of the tonnage is delivered on Saturdays, and 52% delivered on Sundays, although this proportion varies each year. The cost of operating the sites is highest on Sundays, due to the additional wage costs of Sunday working. The opening hours on Sundays are also more limited due to the restrictions on the HWRCs' opening hours on Sundays, and the need to empty the vehicles ready for their normal work on Mondays. This is why the proposed option has more sites open on Saturdays, to maximise the availability of the sites to residents and avoid congestion.
- 3.17 Based on the pattern of tonnages and allowing for customer numbers, the proposed opening days would be:

Saturdays	11am to 4pm:	Shire Lane, Cotmadene Crescent, Biggin Hill
Sundays	8am to 12 noon:	Norman Park, Unicorn School

Site	Day	2013 tonnage
Normans Park, Hook Farm	Saturday	119
	Sunday	148
Charles Darwin, Biggin Hill	Saturday	151
	Sunday	152
Unicorn School	Saturday	102
	Sunday	207
Shire Lane, Green-St-Green	Saturday	176
	Sunday	180
Cotmadene	Saturday	181
	Sunday	188

- 3.18 Any change in service would need to be communicated to residents. This would include using Environment Matters (the costs of which are covered by Veolia), adaptations to the publicity informing residents about the sites, signage at the HWRCs, and signage at the sites themselves.
- 3.19 The GGW Satellite Site budget also includes provision for the operation of the sites for one weekend in January, to enable residents to recycle their Christmas trees. It has been assumed this provision will continue, with three sites open on the Saturday and two open on the Sunday.
- 3.20 It should be noted that the Council continues to promote Home Composting to residents. This represents the most cost-effective way for residents to deal with their GGW, since it not only keeps green waste out of the waste stream altogether but also creates a useful soil improver for residents' use. The Council offers for sale a 220 or 330 litre home composting bin at £10/£13 plus delivery fee. delivery fee of £5.99.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Environment Portfolio Plan 2014/17 includes the key aims “Increasing the proportion of waste recycled and composted” and “Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill”.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The potential savings represented by the two options proposed are shown below:

Proposals	Option 1 £'000	Option 2 £'000
Existing budget	271	271
Operate 3 sites Saturdays only & 2 sites Sundays only	135	120
Additional fly tipping costs	5	5
Saving	131	146

- 5.2 In Option 1 the sites continue to operate through to the end of November. In Option 2, they would only operate through to the end of October.
- 5.3 It is expected that any reduction in the level of service at the GGW Satellite Sites would lead to an increase in demand for the wheelie bin collection service. As a fourth collection vehicle has recently been added to this service, there is more than adequate capacity for any resultant increase in customer numbers.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 All proposals will be compliant with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 and the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendments) Regulations 2012, which specify the Council's statutory and non-statutory duties with regard to household waste.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Invest to Save Green Garden Waste Collection ; report to Environment PDS Committee, 23 September 2014