

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

**FOR PRE-DECISION SCUTINY BY THE ENVIRONMENT
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: 24th November 2015

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites- Further Revisions to
Service**

Contact Officer: John Woodruff, Head of Waste Services
Tel: 020 8313 4910 E-mail: john.woodruff@bromley.gov.uk

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

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

This report outlines options for revising the operation of the Green Garden Waste Satellite Site service.

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 in the body of the report, with the changes to be effective from April 2016**
- 2.2 **Should Option 2 be agreed, to confirm that Shire Lane remains in operation from May to October.**

Corporate Policy

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

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Zero to £29k
 2. Ongoing costs: As above
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Waste Services – Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites
 4. Total current budget for this head: £145k
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2015/16
-

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.
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: 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
-

Customer Impact

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

Ward Councillor Views

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

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Report ES14096 reduced the operational frequency of the 5 Green Garden Waste (GGW) Satellite Sites from April 2015, with each site operating on either Saturday or Sunday (the sites had previously operated both days each weekend).
- 3.2 Report FSD15001 to the Executive included the complete withdrawal of the GGW Satellite Service from April 2016 to achieve further annual savings from the Waste budget of £125k per annum. The current budget for the service for 2015/16 stands at £145k
- 3.3 This report puts forward options for continuing the service in a more strategic manner, focussing on providing the service in the Spring when garden waste arisings are at their highest, with the option of maintaining a wider geographical coverage for residents by operating one GGW Satellite Site on Saturdays only from May to October, in addition to the Household waste Recycling Centres at Waldo Road and Churchfields Road.
- 3.4 At present the council offers four options which enable residents to dispose of their 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 (April – November)
- 3.5 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. This charge covers the operational costs of the collection service only, as the Controlled Waste Regulations (2012) specifically prohibit charging for the cost of disposal.
- 3.6 Veolia provides the collection service utilising dedicated vehicles. The vehicles also collect GGW sacks from those customers who prefer to continue utilising the **sticker scheme**. Stickers cost £1.60 each, and are collected at the same frequency as the wheelie bin scheme.
- 3.7 **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. The introduction of the Satellite Sites and latterly the Wheelie Bin scheme have been instrumental in reducing the levels of congestion.
- 3.8 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, and from April 2015 each site has reduced its opening times to either Saturday or Sunday

Saturdays 11am – 4pm:

Sundays 8am to 12 noon:

Shire Lane, Cotmandene Crescent, Norman's Park

Biggin Hill, Unicorn School

- 3.9 Veolia currently 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. However, in order to meet the agreed annual savings of £125k, the service would have to be reduced to operating for only 4 weeks during April.
- 3.10 The operating 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.
- 3.11 With 17,500 customers having now joined the new GGW Wheelie Bin collection service, and an average of 270 new customers signing up each month between April and September this year, 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 HWRC sites have also helped address the congestion pressures.
- 3.12 As can be seen from the table below, the introduction of the new Wheelie Bin collection service has led to a major shift in the routes residents use to dispose of their GGW, with both the Satellite Sites and the HWRCs seeing a substantial fall in tonnage collected.

Tonnages April – September	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
GW collected – sacks	232	212	0	0	0
GW collected - Wheelie Bins & Sacks	0	1,132	2,672	3,912	4,236
GW Satellite Sites	1,585	1,532	1,301	1,344	817
GW Waldo	4,059	3,522	3,078	2,952	2,517
GW Churchfields	1,688	1,674	1,286	1,644	1,449
Total	7,564	8,072	8,337	9,852	9,019

- 3.13 The introduction of the new Wheelie Bin service, combined with the reduced opening times of the Satellite Sites has substantially reduced both the tonnages delivered to the Satellite Sites and the number of customer visits.

Tonnage April – September	2013	2014	2015
Normans Park	224	257	105
Biggin Hill	245	249	177
Unicorn school	246	245	139
Shire Lane	295	313	193
Cotmadene Crescent	290	280	203
TOTAL	1,300	1,344	817

Customer visits April - September	2013	2014	2015
Normans Park	9,153	10,447	4,914
Biggin Hill	8,161	8,830	5,695
Unicorn school	10,296	9,888	5,348
Shire Lane	10,604	13,167	7,440
Cotmadene Crescent	10,750	12,641	8,595
TOTAL	48,964	54,973	31,992

- 3.14 Overall, tonnages of GGW have varied substantially over the last 5 years. This is largely due to the variance in weather and the resultant differences in growing patterns for garden waste. It is thus difficult to project future tonnages.
- 3.15 However, it is apparent that the introduction of the Wheelie Bin service, combined with the reduced opening times of the Satellite Sites, has diverted substantial tonnage away from Waldo Road and the Satellite Sites, with a lower diversion from Churchfields.
- 3.16 In light of this, negotiations have been held with Veolia to explore alternatives to the current service which would enable savings to be achieved, including the provision for the operation of the sites for one weekend in January, to enable residents to recycle their Christmas trees, at a cost of £4,140. Both of the options below include the cost of this January service:
1. Operate all five sites during April and then close them completely
 2. Operate all five sites during April and maintain one site (Shire Lane) operating from April – October

Option 1

- 3.17 In order to meet the agreed budget saving of £125k, the operation of all five sites would need to be restricted to 4 weekends in April only.
- 3.18 Operating the sites during April only would provide the current service level during the period when most residents clear out their gardens in preparation for the Spring and Summer months. This would help reduce congestion at the HWRCs, which tends to be at its worst during this period. The cost of this option would be £20,400.

Option 2

- 3.19 This option would involve operating all 5 sites during April, with the Shire Lane site thereafter remaining open every weekend on Saturdays through to the end of October. The sites originally operated from the beginning of April until the end of October. This was extended to the end of November in 2010, in recognition of continued gardening activity during this month along with the high volume of leaf-fall in residents' gardens. Ending the operating period for the remaining 1 site at the end of October instead, would result in a cost for this option of £48,800.
- 3.20 Based on customer numbers, tonnage and site capacity, Shire Lane would be the most effective site to maintain.
- 3.21 The option of opening the remaining site on a fortnightly basis has been considered. However, it is considered likely that this would attract fly-tipping on the non-operational weeks. Not only would this be expensive to clear, but it is probable that the uncontrolled tipping would mean that any garden waste would be too contaminated to be recycled, thus further increasing the costs of disposing of it.
- 3.22 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, signage at the sites themselves and updates on the Council website.

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 This report is proposing 2 options for the future operation of the Green Garden Waste Satellite sites as follows: -

Option 1 Operate all five sites during April & then close them completely

Option 2 Operate all five sites during April & maintain one site operating from May to October

5.2 After taking account of the agreed saving of £125k, the financial impact of each option is shown below :

	Option 1	Option 2
	£'000	£'000
2015/16 budget	145	145
Less budget option agreed for 2016/17	-125	-125
	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Cost of proposed options *	20	49
Net additional cost	<u>0</u>	<u>-29</u>

* Both of the options above include the operation of the five sites for 1 weekend in January (as at present). This is costed at £4k.

5.3 Should Option 2 be agreed, alternative savings would have to be identified in order to balance the Waste Services budget. These savings would be found from efficiencies in other areas of the Green Garden Waste service.

5.4 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. Currently running with four collection vehicles, the gradual introduction of a fifth vehicle would ensure 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