Appendix 2: Introducing a charge for garden waste collection

1. Proposal

It is proposed that:

1. The Council adopts a charging scheme for the provision of a green waste collection.

2. The Council sets the charges for a green waste collection at the rate given in the body of this report.

3. The Head of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to waive the charge in exceptional circumstances via an appeals procedure.

2. Financial Implications:

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3. Key Assumptions:

The following assumptions have been made in calculating the above efficiency:

- 11,000 residents will continue to take-up the service (currently 50,000 residents receive a free green waste collection service).
- The annual charge for the service is £25 (less than 50 pence per week) with no concessions.
- While the amount of green waste collected is expected to reduce significantly, it is anticipated that 40% of the green waste that would otherwise be collection will move into the residual waste collection.
- The Council will refuse to collect garden waste in the residual (green) bin. Householders will be asked to remove the waste and present the bin again for collection on the next scheduled collection day.
- A strict “no side waste” policy will be applied. Householders will be advised of this within proposed correspondence in accordance with current powers within the Environmental Protection Act.

The assumptions above have been determined on the basis of research available where other authorities have introduced a charge for green waste collection.
4. **Overview of the process**

To receive a garden waste collection service, residents will be required to pay in advance a sum of £25.

The preferred method of payment will be via the council’s website, however, payment can be taken in person at the customer access point, or over the phone via the council’s main contact number.

On receipt of payment, the householder will receive a ‘tag’ that they are required to affix to their brown bins. This tag indicates that the householder has subscribed to the service. This tag will be “address specific” and will have no value for other households.

Residents will be required to renew their subscription on an annual basis. Different coloured tag will be used each year to differentiate between properties that have subscribed to the service each year.

The bins of residents who have not paid for the service will be retrieved and removed from circulation.

The Council will continue to encourage home composting as a preferable option where possible. The council provides subsidised composting bins and these can be obtained by visiting the website or by telephoning the waste hotline.

5. **Draft Frequently Asked Questions**

**How do I join the scheme?**

The subscription year runs from 1st April 2012 until 31st March 2013. You pay a yearly subscription in advance for a brown wheelie bin(s). To apply for the subscription service so that you receive collections of garden waste after 1st April 2012, you will need to either visit the Municipal Offices, Town Square, Grimsby or Civic Offices, The Knoll, Cleethorpes or The Office Kennedy Way, Immingham and pay at the payments counter. Alternatively you can register and pay online at www. or telephone 01472 325841 and pay by card.

If you took part in the existing free service and still have a brown bin then you will continue to use the same bin.

Alternatively, if you do not have an existing garden bin then once we have received your payment for the new service we will aim to deliver your brown bin(s) within 5 working days.

**How much will the service cost and are there any concessions?**

The new garden waste collection service replaces the existing free service, and is available to all residences in North East Lincolnshire at a cost of just £25 per bin per year with no concessions. If you sign up for the service after the 1 April 2012 then there will be a pro rata payment for the remaining period to the end of March 2013. (See table below)
The Council reserves the right to vary the charge for the service. Charges are set annually from the 1 April each year and you will be notified of any price increase at least 14 days prior to payment being due.

Anyone who subscribes will have the option of continuing with their subscription or withdrawing from the service at the start of each financial year.

**How long does my subscription last?**

The service runs from the 1st of the month in which you receive your first chargeable collection until the next 31st April. For payments received after the 15th day of the month, collections will not commence until the first scheduled collection of the following month. All subsequent collections will be undertaken in accordance with the published calendar for your area.

**What happens when I wish to renew my subscription?**

The scheme is an annual subscription scheme. The subscription year runs from 1st April until 31st March. So currently your subscription fee will expire at the end of March 2013. You will keep the same bin(s) and will receive an annual invoice to renew which must be paid within 28 days. Once the invoice has been paid you will also receive a new bin tag(s) for use from 1 April 2013 until end of March 2014.

**What is the service?**

Your 240 litre Garden waste bin(s) will be collected fortnightly April 2012 to November 2012 with reduced monthly collections during the December 2012 and January 2013 period.

**Do I have to sign for the bins?**

No, the bin(s) will be left somewhere in your front garden/yard. The Council request that you store the bin(s) somewhere secure during the week and return the bin(s) back to your property as soon as possible after each collection.

**How will the collectors know to empty my bin(s)?**

The council will supply you with a tag(s) for you to fix on the lid of your garden waste bin(s) at all times so the collectors know to empty your bin when it is presented for collection. This tag is address specific so cannot be used for any other property.

**What if my tag is stolen?**

The circumstances of the theft will be investigated by an officer and a statement will be taken from the homeowner. If the Council believes that the tag has been genuinely stolen, a new tag will be allocated.

Broken tags have no transferable value.

**Can I use my own bin(s) or receptacles?**

No, only garden waste bins issued by North East Lincolnshire Council, with payment up to date will be emptied. The garden waste bin(s) remains the property of the council.
How do I share a subscription with my neighbour?

Residents will be able to share a garden waste subscription with an immediate neighbour. One household would have the subscription registered to them and then arrange payment with their neighbour. The address we need is the one where the garden waste will be collected from - this is where all correspondence will be sent.

What happens if I no longer want the service?

If you do not wish to renew your subscription at 1 April 2013 then your garden waste collections will cease without any further notice and the Council will reclaim the bin(s). If this agreement is cancelled by you at any stage period no refund will be issued.

What happens if my bin(s) is/are stolen or damaged?

You will be responsible for the cost of replacement for any loss or damage to the bin(s) other than that caused by the emptying process. The cost of a replacement bin will be as per the charge for replacement bins.

What kind of waste can be put into the bin(s)?

Only garden waste and cardboard must be placed in the bin(s). Garden waste does not include soil, turf or stone, kitchen waste or vegetable peelings, or waste that should go into the recycling triple boxes. No plastic bags of any kind may be put into the bin(s). Any such items will be treated as contamination.

What happens if my bin(s) are contaminated?

If the garden waste bin(s) is/are contaminated, the garden waste bin(s) will not be emptied. You will be notified of the issue and you will need to remove the contamination before your next scheduled collection day. No refund will be issued in these circumstances.

If I am not sure where to put an item of waste, what should I do?

If you are unsure what you should put in the bin(s), please contact the Council on the Waste Hotline on 01472 325841 who will be able to answer your question.

How much garden waste can I put in my bin(s)?

You can completely fill your bin(s) if required however the lid must be closed for it to be emptied. Please be aware that if you compact materials down too heavily it may result in the bin(s) being either too heavy for the equipment to lift or it may cause the bin(s) to break and fall into the back of the vehicle (weight is limited to 95kgs).

Sometimes material compacted at the bottom of the bin may not come out when the bin is tipped into the vehicle. Using a few small twigs/branches as the first deposits at the bottom of the bin each time reduces the chance of excessive compaction.
What happens if my bin(s) is/are too heavy?
Bins that are considered to be too heavy for safe handling and emptying will not be emptied. You will be notified of the issue and the bin(s) will not be collected until the next collection is due and the weight of the bin(s) is reduced. It is your responsibility to sort the contents of the bin(s) and reduce weight. No refunds will be issued in these circumstances.

Can I put out extra garden waste?
Only agreed garden waste may be disposed of, not contained in bags of any kind. All garden waste must be contained within the bin(s) provided. Any garden waste not contained in a garden waste bin(s) will not be collected.

Can I have more than one garden waste bin?
Additional garden waste bins can be supplied at additional cost. The cost of an additional bin will be £25.

How many bins can I subscribe for?
You can have as many bins as you like but each bin subscription is £25 each.

When should I present my bin(s) for collection?
Properties currently not in receipt of the service will be advised of delivery time period for your garden waste bin(s), once payment has been received.
The garden waste bin(s) must be presented by 7am on the day of collection only, as collection times may vary.
Please visit www.nelincs.gov.uk/refusecollections where you can enter your address details and confirm your garden waste collection details.
If the garden waste bin(s) is/are not presented by 7am the collection crew will not return until the next scheduled collection day. No refunds will be issued in these circumstances.
The council reserves the right to change your collection day subject to providing you with written notification.
The council will make every effort to maintain collections during adverse weather conditions. However, the council reserves the right to suspend or delay collections without refund in exceptional circumstances.

Where should I present my bin(s) for collection?
The garden waste bin(s) must be presented at the boundary of your property, adjacent to the public highway, or at a collection point agreed by the council.

My garden bin(s) has not been collected, what shall I do?
If your bin(s) was placed at the edge of your property in the correct position, on time, had the correct contents in, was not too heavy or had too much in and was not collected on the advertised day, please call us on 01472 325841 within 24 hours of your collection day. In this case missed gardens will normally be collected within 24 hours (working days only Mon – Fri). Any missed bins reported after 24 hours will be collected on the next advertised collection day. See the council’s missed bin policy for clarification.
Please do not take your bin(s) in but leave it / them out until it is emptied.
Can I store my brown bin(s) on the highway all week?

No, only place your bin(s) at the boundary of your property on your collection day. Leaving your bin(s) on the highway all the time is an offence for which you can be fined. It also causes a hazard to pedestrians.

Will there be an assisted collection service?

Yes, there is an assisted collection service available to residents who are physically incapable of moving the bin(s) to the edge of the property. Please contact us on the Waste Hotline 01472 325841 if you wish to apply for this service.

I currently receive assisted collections with my bin(s); will I receive an assisted collection with the brown wheelie bin(s)?

Yes. If you currently receive an assisted collection you will receive one for your brown wheelie bin(s).

What should I do if I move home?

The security of the garden waste bin(s) remains your responsibility and if you move within North East Lincolnshire it is your responsibility to move the garden waste bin(s) to your new property and notify the council of the change of address. If you move outside of North East Lincolnshire you must notify the council who will arrange to collect the garden waste bin(s).

Will the Council operate a bin cleaning service?

No, the Council do not offer bin cleaning as part of the service. You are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the garden waste bin(s).

There are private companies that do offer a bin cleaning service. Please see the Yellow Pages for details.

Can I line my bin to keep it clean or put bags of garden waste in it?

Sorry. You can’t line the bin as it contaminates the waste and can damage shredding equipment. For the same reason you cannot put bags in the bin. Garden waste must be loose.

What happens to the garden waste collected?

The garden waste is litter-picked then sent to 4 different re-processors to be treated for soil conditioner and compost.

Can I buy the soil conditioner and compost back?

The soil conditioner and compost produced from this service is not available to buy as it is used to supply local agricultural land.

Why can't I put pet bedding in my garden waste bin(s)?

The Council is not able to take animal bedding or wastes in the garden waste bins. Even where the animals are vegetarian, and the bedding is hay or straw, the waste is still the by-product of an animal. The facility the Council use is not licensed to take these materials.
The Council acknowledges that pet bedding will compost beautifully but cannot accept them due to regulations. The Council garden waste collection is just that, a garden waste collection. The Council suggest you compost these materials in a home compost bin which can be obtained at subsided prices by visiting the website www.nel.getcomposting.com or by telephoning 0845 130 60 90.

**Why can’t I recycle my kitchen waste in the brown bin(s)?**

New regulations brought in after the 2001 Foot and Mouth epidemic prevent the Council from recycling any kitchen waste on a commercial scale in the open air. This includes fruit and vegetables, (including peelings and those grown at home and in allotments such as fallen apples), tea bags and egg shells. The Council suggest you compost these in a home compost bin.

**Can I put garden waste in my green refuse wheelie bin?**

No. The Council crews will not collect your green refuse wheelie bin if you have put garden waste in it.

**If I do not join the subscription service what do you suggest I do with my garden waste?**

The Council encourages home composting as a preferable option where possible, as it means there is no pollution from collection vehicles, and a greater amount of organic waste can be included. Items such as shredded paper, vegetable peelings and tea bags can be home composted, whereas they cannot be included in the Council’s garden waste collection.

Cardboard can also be included in home composting piles, if you choose to do so instead of continuing with a kerbside collection service.

Home composting produces a nutrient rich soil conditioner for use in your garden. The council provides subsidised bins and these can be obtained by visiting the website www.nel.getcomposting.com or by telephoning 0845 130 60 90.

Also, as a resident in North East Lincolnshire the Community Recycling Centres located at Gilbey Road, Grimsby and Queens Road, Immingham can also be used to dispose of your garden waste free of charge.

**I still have a question. Who can I contact?**

Please contact the Council on the Waste Hotline 01472 325841 if you have any further questions about the garden waste collection service.