

Report of	Group Manager of Neighbourhood Services	Author	Rosa Tanfield Group Manager ☎ 0330 0538 047
Title	Review of Saturday Household Drop-off Service		
Wards affected	All		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Due to the Council's current financial pressures, a review has been undertaken of the current free Saturday Household Drop-off Service. The current service is used by around 1% of the Borough's population and costs the Council approximately £23,500 per year. This report sets out a recommendation to alter the current free service and provide chargeable options to resident associations, managing agents, parish councils and other organisations, in order to reduce the cost of providing the service.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To agree to change the current free operating model for the Saturday Household Drop-off Service so that the Council only offers a selection of chargeable Saturday collection services to residents' associations, parish councils, managing agents or other organisations, with the fees as set out within the report.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The recommendation will enable the Council to reduce costs in delivering this service, whilst still maintaining options for residents to take up the service, but also ensuring that only those who need the service are contributing to the cost.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could pursue the following options, but these have been discounted as outlined below:

Option 1 – Continue the existing service

The existing Saturday Household Drop-Off Service costs £559.85 per session for residual waste, and £498.45 per session (allowing for Credit Claim of 2 tonnes) for garden waste. The session costs are based on providing vehicles to collect both residual and garden waste for up to 4 hours on site (08:00-12:00). This is a total of £1,058.29 per session. This operation runs for 24 weeks over spring and summer, leading to a total estimated cost of £25,398.96 per annum. The money to deliver this service is not built into the Council's budget and as such, providing this service places an immediate pressure on the budget.

Option 2 - Stop Saturday Household Drop-Off Service completely

Stopping the existing service will reduce the current revenue budget pressure by £25,398.96 per annum. However, it is likely that there will be dissatisfaction from residents and partners.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Council currently provides a free household drop-off service on specific Saturdays during the spring and summer months. This service allows residents to dispose of bulky items not normally collected with household waste and garden waste.
- 5.2 The current service visit 45 community locations (some are visited more than once) over a period of eight weeks. This service is repeated at the same 45 locations, three times per year over the course of 24 weeks.
- 5.3 From 08:00 until midday on prescribed Saturdays two teams, comprising of two collection vehicles (garden waste and refuse) and two drivers, each attend three community locations over the course of the morning.
- 5.4 It is estimated that 120 customers utilise the service across the six locations per Saturday. This equates to 720 customers over the eight-week period covering all the community locations. With a population of over 197,200 residents in Colchester, it is estimated that less than 1% of the population utilise this service.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the Council offers Parish Councils and/or Residents Associations and/or any other groups or organisations a bespoke service which could include residual waste collection only, green recycling only or both services.
- 5.6 The service hours would change to 08:00 - 11:00 on a Saturday (from 08:00-12:00) to ensure the vehicles can be tipped on the Saturday before midday to avoid Essex County Council surcharges for Saturday afternoon tipping or the extra cost associated with tipping on a Monday.
- 5.7 The new services would include charges for 3 hours on site and 1.5 hours for travel to site, travel to tip and return to depot which accurately reflects the time taken to deliver the service.
- 5.8 The time related costs include the hourly cost of an HGV driver, a large refuse collection vehicle and officer time to manage the request, resourcing and arrange invoicing/chase late payments.
- 5.9 The following service charges are proposed. No variation or negotiation would be applied to these charges. The charges would be reviewed at least annually to ensure that they reflect the true cost of delivering the service:

Residual waste (black bag) drop-off service

Cost: £481.26 per session

Garden waste drop-off service (two option):

Option 1: Standard cost (£492.86 per session) discounted by 2 tonnes Credit Claim income (£30.70 per tonne) (typical loadings in 22/23 have been approximately 1 tonne.);
Cost: £431.46 per session

Option 2: Standard cost (£527.66 per session) that is then discounted by whatever Credit Claim income is achieved at £30.70 per tonne. Note slightly higher initial cost because more officer time is required due to the need to discount the final invoice based on actual Credit Claim.

- 5.11 Potentially different customers at nearby locations could use the service and share costs.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) has been completed.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The proposal within this report aligns to the Strategic Objective of 'Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability', in particular the ambition to 'continue to support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste' in the [Strategic Plan 2020-23](#).
- 7.2 The Council reports on several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and more specifically K1W1 relating to the amount of residual waste produced by households across Colchester. The existing free Saturday Household Drop-Off Service draws in waste produced by households across Colchester and does not incentivise residents to consider reuse or recycling options, and as such, negatively impacts this KPI. Additionally, it could be perceived that the services involving the removal of residual waste undermines the Council policy that stipulates residents must only present one wheeled bin or three bags of waste every two weeks (unless residents have been granted an exemption).
- 7.3 The proposed recommendation will potentially improve the K1W2, percentage of material recycled through the opportunity for residents to present additional garden waste.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 No consultation has been or will be carried out.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Council's website and systems will be updated to deliver the agreed recommendation.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 Arguably the existing service undermines the Council's offering through the chargeable bulky waste collection service. The chargeable bulky collection service provided to residents is popular and reduces the costs of delivering the service through the charges that are set out.
- 10.2 The recommendation will reduce the ongoing budget pressure of £25,398.96 per annum.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Health, wellbeing and community safety are not being impacted, as the service will continue with other options available to residents, including those at no-cost.
- 11.2 The Council has evidence that there is no direct correlation between the availability of free drop off or bulky collections and prevalence of fly tipping. Analysis of fly tipping numbers suggests that it is mainly driven by season, peaking in the summer months.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 Health and safety will not be impacted by this decision.

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 There are no additional risks identified, other than those outlined in section 5.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

14.1 At both a national and local level policy is focused on the three 'R's; reduce, reuse and recycle. The existing free service draws in a significant amount of additional waste and as such, it could be viewed the existing service does not align with the current direction of the Council's waste policies and strategies.