

Stage 1: Equality Impact Assessment

1. What are the main aims purpose and outcomes of the Policy and how do these fit with the wider aims of the organization?

The proposed changes have been identified to ensure the Bulky, Garden Waste and Clinical Services can continue to provide value for money whilst help cover the additional contractual costs due to property growth and indexation. This will enable the services to cover their costs as well as contribute to the additional costs for the household waste and recycling services.

It is essential that the Council has a balanced budget and the 2017/18 contract growth and indexation has created a budget shortfall of £94,000. These changes will help cover this shortfall and ensure that the savings already identified with the Environmental Services will continue to contribute to the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

2. How do these aims affect our duty to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act.**
- **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

The policies / charges will have no affect on the Council's duties as described above as.

Bulky collection charges – this is already a chargeable service which is discretional. Residents have the option to dispose of their waste free of charge at the local household waste recycling centre (HWRC) or using a private contractor. The charges will reflect the hazardous nature of white goods and the contractual arrangements for disposing of these items. Many local authorities already operate this policy / charge successfully. It is also proposed that the subsidy for those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction Benefit is retained.

Withdrawal of black sack provision – the provision of black sacks is based purely on the nature of residents' properties and whether they are able to store a wheeled bin. Most residents with a refuse bin still purchase black or white sacks to put their waste in before putting it in their bin, so therefore it is not considered to be an excessive cost for households who cannot have

wheeled bins to purchase black sacks.

Clinical Waste – whilst this service offers a service to some more vulnerable residents with medical conditions, the proposal is to retain a free collection which meets the standard needs for those with a Sharps Collection and offers those who wish to have an additional collection a small fee to cover the collection cost and administration. Those with more acute needs will continue to receive their weekly collections free of charge.

Seasonal Weekly Garden Waste Collections – this proposal will consider offering residents with an optional additional chargeable service to enhance the existing fortnightly service.

3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?

The four proposals do not contribute to inequality, but enable the existing services to be maintained and offered to all residents. The limitation on the clinical service will ensure the service can cope with continuing demand and therefore is able to offer all those who need the service with free collections.

All services are available online and via the contact centre to ensure they are available to all and maximise accessibility.

4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including particular communities and groups who have protected characteristics? What evidence do you have for this?

The proposals will have the following impacts upon people's lives:

Bulky Collections – the new charging mechanism will reduce the cost to residents wishing to dispose of a single white good. The majority of users of the service (84%) will not be impacted by the changes. A small number of users who have multiple white goods or a white good and a number of other items will experience an additional charge, however this reflects the actual costs of the service.

Black Sacks – withdrawal of the black sacks will mean that the 2,000 households currently receiving them will be required to purchase their own bags in future. However this will cost approximately £5 per year which is not considered excessive. The majority of residents with wheeled bins still contain their waste in sacks and therefore already have this cost.

Clinical Collections – the limit on the number of Sharps collections will not affect many residents as most already store their boxes and request a collection a couple of times per year. This will ensure there is not a waiting list for collections as there is a limit of 100 “on request” clinical collections per week and with growing demand at times residents may have to wait a week or two.

Seasonal Weekly Garden Waste Collection – this will enable residents with larger amounts of garden waste in the growing period to dispose of it in their existing garden bin and reduce the need to supplementary visits to the HWRC.

Overall the policy changes / charges will have minimal impact on residents or service users’ lives. With the exception of the black sacks the additional costs will be optional, and the black sack costs are minimal and in line with the costs already incurred by most residents.

If the answer to the second question has identified potential impacts and you have answered yes to any of the remaining questions then you should carry out a full EQIA set out as stage 2 below.