

Committee(s): Port Health and Environmental Services	Date(s): 27 November 2018
Subject: Garden waste recycling trial on the Barbican estate	Public
Report of: Carolyn Dwyer, Director of Built Environment	For Decision
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Summary

In January 2018 all 2000 properties in the Barbican Estate received an invitation to participate in a survey to assess their interest in a separate garden waste collection trial. Approximately 10% of residents expressed an interest in participating and Officers decided to progress with a six month trial.

In March 2018 a seasonal garden waste trial commenced on the Barbican Estate to test the viability and cost effectiveness of operating a garden waste service in the City. The final collection day was 22 October 2018, the trial resulted in the collection of only 4.8 tonnes of garden waste which ran for seven months instead of the planned six, to account for the unusually long summer.

The collection frequency and number of collection locations were increased during the trial due to stakeholder feedback resulting in the trial costing £6,500 plus Officer time, equating to a £1,300 per tonne collection, transportation and disposal cost, (by comparison general waste collection, transportation and disposal costs are £245 per tonne). The overall contribution to the recycling rate was minimal at 0.17%.

There are a number of options to deal with garden waste going forward which include incorporating a seasonal garden waste service into the overall recycling services, doing nothing and disposing of garden waste in the general waste stream or ceasing the service and revisiting this issue when the new Waste Collection, Street Cleansing and Ancillary Services contract has been mobilised as the new contract may provide alternative options to capture this waste stream in a more cost effective manner.

Recommendation(s)

Officers recommend that the City does not continue with the separate collection of Garden Waste as the cost is extremely high (£1,300/tonne) and the quantities collected have had a minimal impact on the City's recycling rate. Officers propose to revisit this issue as soon as its reasonably practical after the new Waste Collection, Street Cleansing and Ancillary Services contract has been mobilised as the new contract may offer alternative options which may reduce the overall costs and make the provision of a garden waste service more attractive.

Main Report

Background

1. The City provides comprehensive household waste and recycling services to all residential properties within the Square Mile. This includes dry mixed recycling, food waste, textiles, low energy light bulb and battery recycling services. The City have previously not diverted garden waste away from the general waste stream as it cannot be included with food waste which is treated at an Anaerobic Digestion Plant and it is not feasible to provide communal compost heaps in the Square Mile.
2. At your committee in September 2017, the Assistant Director Cleansing Services agreed to undertake a garden waste recycling trial at the Barbican estate. The purpose of the trial was to identify the cost of the service and the benefits of providing a garden waste service in the City.
3. Cleansing worked in partnership with the Barbican Estate and Parks and Gardens to survey residents and then implement a trial to recycle garden waste. Free reusable garden waste bags were distributed to the 10% of residents who expressed an interest in the trial. The Estate team identified two locations where garden waste bins could be located. Parks and Gardens then collected weekly from the locations and transported the garden waste to the recycling facility at Cringle Dock, Battersea.

Current Position

4. The garden waste collection trial commenced on 16 March 2018 and ran for seven months until 22 October 2018. This was an extension on the original planned six months to cope with the unusually prolonged summer.
5. There were some initial issues with contamination in the waste stream including large volumes of soil, some plastic plant pots and fertilisers which cannot be composted. These were addressed through targeted communications, consisting of letters sent in March, June and August, emails distributed via the Barbican Estate office and posters in the bin stores. Contamination became much less of an issue from July 2018.
6. At the commencement of the trial, there were two collection sites being collected from once per week. However following instances of waste being deposited outside of the bins provided across the Estate and larger than expected volumes, the frequency of collections was increased to twice weekly. The number of

locations where garden waste could be deposited increased to six in June 2018. This was found to be the optimal arrangement for the remainder of the trial.

7. The results from the seasonal garden waste trial show that 4.8 tonnes of garden waste was diverted away from the general waste stream and recycled during the trial period. The last collection of garden waste from the Estate took place on 22 October 2018 on which day the garden waste bins were removed.
8. Increasing the collection frequency to twice weekly and increasing the number of collection points across the estate to six successfully coped with the demand on the service. However, these solutions came at a cost and the final cost to collect, transport and dispose of the garden waste was £6,500. This equates to £1,300 per tonne for collection, transportation and disposal.
9. By comparison, the collection, transportation and disposal cost for general waste is currently £245 per tonne. From April to September, the garden waste trial contributed an increase of 0.17% to the overall recycling rate

Options

10. The options to deal with garden waste are as follows;
 - a) Do not implement the service due to low volumes, high cost and minimal contribution to overall recycling rate
 - b) Implement seasonal service over a six month period (Apr – September) to cover key growing periods. This is estimated to be at least £7,500
 - c) Officers revisit this issue as soon as it's reasonably practical after the new waste collection contract has been mobilised as the new contract may offer different options for the collection and disposal which may reduce the overall costs and make the provision of a garden waste service more attractive.

Proposals

11. Officers recommend that the City do not continue with the separate collection of garden waste as the cost is extremely high (£1300/tonne) and the quantities collected have had a minimal impact on the City's recycling rate.
12. Officers propose to revisit this issue as soon as it's reasonably practical after the new waste collection contract has been mobilised as the new contract may offer different options for the collection and disposal which may reduce the overall costs.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. This project supports the Corporate Strategic Plan to shape outstanding environments. It also aligns with Outcome 2 of the Responsible Business

Strategy and Objectives 2 (Waste Reduction) and Objective 4 (Recycling and Composting) in the Waste Strategy.

Implications

14. The trial took place on the Barbican Estate, however other estates and private blocks also have balconies where a garden waste service may be introduced. This would further increase costs where no budget is available although these are not currently quantifiable as the demand for this service is unknown.

Conclusion

15. A trial to recycle garden waste on the Barbican estate took place between 16 March and 22 October 2018 during which time only 4.8 tonnes of garden waste was recycled. There was poor participation in the trial, minimal impact on the City's overall recycling rate and high costs (£1,300/tonne of garden waste plus Officer time) associated with running the trial.
16. The results from the trial indicate that it was not popular amongst residents with only a 10% participation rate. Officers propose that a garden waste service shouldn't be incorporated into the household recycling services at this time due to the high costs and little benefits. Officers will revisit this issue as soon as it is reasonably practical after the new waste collection contract has been mobilised. The new contract may offer different options for the collection and disposal which may reduce the overall costs.

Appendices

- None

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