

## CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD TEMPLATE

This form should be used to record Executive decisions taken by Cabinet Members

<b>Decision Ref. No:</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Rachel Surbutts, Marketing and Business Support Analyst
<b>Subject:</b>  Christmas Tree Collections
<b>Decision taken:</b>  <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><b>Remove the Christmas tree collection service as of 2017.</b></p> <p>The Council will no longer collect Christmas trees at the kerb side but residents will still have a choice of responsible ways to dispose of their trees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Residents can take trees to Wilverley Road or Millhams HWRC for recycling which is comparable with Poole who promote Christmas tree recycling at Upton Country Park and Nuffield.</li> <li>b. Garden waste subscribers can chop the tree up and store it in their garden waste bin until collections commence in February. As very little garden waste is generated in winter months this is a viable option for existing subscribers.</li> <li>c. Pay a charitable donation to an organisation such as Diverse Abilities to collect the tree from their home.</li> </ol> <p>As part of the communications around the removal of the service “responsible tree ownership” will be promoted, encouraging residents to think carefully about their choice of Christmas tree before they purchase it this year. Social media is an ideal platform to promote ideas around how to prevent filling your car with needles when you take it to recycle - for example using an old duvet cover.</p>
<b>Reasons for the decision:</b>  <p>The Environment Service Unit is facing a challenging efficiency agenda to deliver substantial financial savings whilst retaining frontline services that are efficient, reliable and valued by residents.</p> <p>In the Cabinet report “Refuse and Food Waste Collection Service” dated 14th December 2016 it was pledged “to undertake a comprehensive review of relevant waste policies such as Additional Bin Policy, Excess Waste Policy, Bank Holiday working and Christmas Tree Collections”.</p>
<b>Call-in and Urgency:</b>  The decision is subject to the Council’s call in procedure.
<b>Background:</b>

Historically Christmas tree collections from residents have been carried out across the Borough for the two weeks following the twelfth night each year. However due to the difficult nature of collections (dark conditions, trees placed in hedges, trees placed on private property etc.), collections have often run for an additional two to three weeks with the associated cost implications.

While residents have enjoyed this service for some years, the current financial pressures mean it is not realistic for it to continue in its current form. The scheme costs the Environment Service Unit £23k per annum and this sum has been removed from the budget for next year so all options must be cost neutral or revenue generating.

Christchurch Recycling Centre at Wilverley Road and Millhams Community Recycling Centre will accept Christmas trees from residents at no cost.

Additionally, charities such as Diverse Abilities <https://diverseabilities.org.uk/trees/> will collect trees for a small donation. These options will be actively promoted regardless of the service provision, with a message that encourages people to think about what happens beyond Christmas when choosing their trees.

The recommendation to remove the Christmas tree collection service was agreed at the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

#### **Options - and reasons for rejection:**

**Start garden waste collections in January 2018.** This option would only benefit those who subscribe to the garden waste collection service and starting the service earlier than the current start date of mid-February would increase the overall service cost, or require an uplift in cost to subscribers.

**Introduce a paid collection service.** Using the Digital By Default platform a charge could be levied from customers who want their tree collected from their house. Depending on demand this could be scheduled during a number of consecutive days, area based. The estimated cost of setting up the payment platform is £8.5k. If 1350 people subscribed for the service (approx. half the people whose trees were collected last year) then the cost per collection would have to be set at least £15 to break even. This is not an option that has been adopted by other local authorities, based on initial research, so would present a risk in implementation as take-up cannot be estimated based on other council's experience. There is also a risk that this option does not compare favourably to a charitable donation for tree collection, which residents may prefer.

#### **Consultations undertaken:**

Consultation has been undertaken with a variety of stakeholders including:

- Environment & Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Executive Director - Environment & Economy,
- Director - Environment,
- Portfolio Holder for Cleansing & Waste,
- Street Services, Cleansing & Waste Manager,
- Principal Environment, Productivity & Business Manager,
- Senior Accountant -Environment,
- Principal Fleet Engineering & Depot Services Manager,

- Refuse Operations Manager,
- Senior Waste & Resource Officer,
- Communications & Marketing Business Partner,
- Business Change Partner - Corporate and Commercial

#### Finance/Resource Implications:

The scheme costs the Environment Service Unit £23k per annum and this sum has been removed from the budget for next year and the decision does not impose any additional foreseen cost on the Environment Service Unit, therefore the finance and resourcing implications of the recommended approach are negligible.

Name: *SHAUN Darcy*

Signature: *Assistant*  
(of Chief Finance Officer)

Date: *26/04/17*

#### Legal implications:

The Council has no legal duty to collect Christmas trees at the kerbside. Residents can still dispose of garden waste for free at Millhams Community Recycling Centre or Christchurch Recycling Centre at Wilverley Road.

Name: *TANIA COURTNEY*

(of Monitoring Officer)

Date: *29/04/17*

#### Risk assessment:

The primary risk in the removal of the service is that of flytipping of trees. This already happens even with the current scheme in place. Flytipping jobs are not classified by content to distinguish Christmas trees from other flytipping but 118 jobs were raised last season to pick up missed trees.

This risk can be mitigated through promotion of "responsible tree ownership" – a well-publicised comms campaign on social media promoting the options people have for their trees.

Flytipping collection can be absorbed within the street cleansing crews' normal day to day activity so collection cost is minimal but there would be a cost for disposal of flytipped trees. However, this is significantly less than costs incurred for running a collection scheme in the format previously adopted.

Name: *S. BEST*

Signature: (of Officer completing assessment)

Date: *29/4/17*

#### Impact Assessments:

Environmental Impact has been assessed as part of the Cabinet report "Refuse and Food Waste Collection Service" dated 14<sup>th</sup> December

Equality and Diversity impact has been assessed as part of the Cabinet report "Refuse and Food Waste Collection Service" dated 14<sup>th</sup> December

**Information for/not for publication:**

For publication

**Background papers:**

Cabinet report - Refuse and Food Waste Collection Service, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Any conflict of interest declared by a Cabinet Member who is consulted by the Member taking the decision	Name of Cabinet Member	Nature of interest	Details of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer
Yes/No* (*Delete as appropriate)			

**Decision taken by:**

Councillor Michael Filer

Cabinet Portfolio: Cleansing & Waste

Signed: 

Date of decision:

13/4/17

**Date of publication of record of decision:** (to be inserted by Democratic Services)

5 May 2017

**Date decision effective** - that is 5 working days after the date of publication of the record of decision unless the decision is called-in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

12 May 2017

-insert  
date-

**Note - See separate guidance on recording decisions at Appendix 1.**