

Notice of KEY Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Review of free bulky waste collections for customers considered clinically extremely vulnerable.
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Osman Dervish
SLT Lead:	Barry Francis
Report Author and contact details:	Jacki Ager, Ext. 3363, jacki.ager@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	Ensure Havering is kept Clean and Safe
Financial summary:	<p>Although the Council has not experienced a reduction in nett income relating to the provision of free Bulky waste collection during June and July, this may be attributed to an increase in paying customers during the same period.</p> <p>There is no guarantee that continuing the scheme would result in the continued increase in paying customers.</p> <p>There are currently new requirements from central Government for clinically extremely vulnerable members of the public to self-isolate, therefore the continuation of the scheme will help to ensure protection of these residents.</p>
Reason decision is Key	Significant effect on two or more Wards
Date notice given of intended decision:	18 th November 2020

Key Executive Decision

Relevant OSC:	Environment
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

- Communities making Havering
- Places making Havering
- Opportunities making Havering
- Connections making Havering

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

To review the impact of providing a free bulky waste collection to shielding customers (now updated to “clinically extremely vulnerable” customers), and continue this free service in light of the newly imposed government lockdown. Review once lockdown has ceased.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

The Council Constitution states:

2.5 The following Functions may be delegated to individual Cabinet members by the Leader.

(j) To consider and recommend plans in respect of the portfolio allocated.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Customers are currently able to book a bulky waste collection with Havering Council, at a cost of £43 for up to 3 items, and £11 for each additional item. It subsequently costs the Council £28.12 per collection for Serco to carry this out. In total, 2329 bookings were received in 2019/20, totalling approximately £0.040m surplus for Havering.

A free collection for NHS shielding customers was introduced along with the reinstatement of bulky waste collections at the beginning of June. It was employed in order to allow customers that were shielding and unable to leave the house an option for free disposal of bulky waste items. The initiative was to be reviewed in September 2020.

NHS shielding officially ended nationally on 1st August 2020. Since then, the Council has continued to receive enquiries from customers that had previously been shielding, although there has been no requirement to shield for 3 months. It is recognised that there will be residents continuing to self-isolate due to concerns related to the spread of Covid-19, and the Government is now advising residents classified as clinically extremely vulnerable to self-isolate again.

The cost to the Council for running this free service is £28.12 per collection. Between June and August, 168 free collections were carried out at a cost of £4,724 to the Council. Due to an increase in paying customers during the same period, no reduction in the overall nett income was experienced. Going forward, external factors may influence the number of customers, for example the second lockdown and further shielding requirements, and whether the Reuse and Recycling Centre remains open during any such lockdown. This is likely to have a direct impact on the Council's nett income.

Recommendation:

Continue the free service for an extended period

Havering's Public Health service considers that provision of this service would assist with helping to protect the Borough's most vulnerable residents by helping them to avoid unnecessary travel. This is particularly pertinent now that a second government-imposed lockdown is upon us. The cost of this is largely dependent on whether Gerpins Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre (RRC) remains open or not. If closed, with more paying customers using the service this would help nett off any additional expenditure from providing a free service to clinically extremely vulnerable customers, as is the case for Table 1 (see Finance section). Without this, it would likely come at an additional cost to the council of approximately £0.001m per month (£1,000). Previously, the NHS shielding list was used to determine if a customer was eligible for a free collection and a further list is now available highlighting customers considered extremely vulnerable, with residents having received a letter to advise them to shield. The RRC currently remains open.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Discontinue this service and revert to all residents being required to pay

This would include removing all reference to this from the Council's website and stipulating that all customers will be required to pay for their bulky waste collection. It should be noted that Havering's Public Health service recognise that there will be residents that are self-isolating for medical purposes and as such the Council has a duty to protect these residents so far as is practicable.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

N/A

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Jacki Ager

Designation: Waste and External Contracts Manager

Signature:

Date: 10/11/2020

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This report seeks approval to continue the free collection of bulky waste for clinically extremely vulnerable residents in light of the new lockdown measures introduced by the Government from 5 November until 2 December 2020.

The Council has an existing contract with Serco for the provision of waste collection and recycling services which includes the collection of bulky waste in furtherance of its role as a waste collection authority with a duty to collect household waste under section 30(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. However, there is no duty to collect household waste to a prescribed frequency. Under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012, domestic bulk items are considered household waste, albeit a type for which a charge may be applied for collection.

During the first lockdown, the government made regulations compelling certain people who are particularly vulnerable to catching the virus to self-isolate/shield and a number of initiatives were put in place to make it easier for them to abide by this, one of which was the offer for free bulky waste disposal. Although compulsory shielding ended on 1 August, the Council is now seeking to extend the free disposal of such waste in light of the new lockdown imposed by the Government until 2 December, taking into account those residents now considered clinically extremely vulnerable.

In the current circumstances and as long as the Council continues to carry out its statutory duty, there should be no legal risk to the Council if it continues to deliver the free bulky waste disposal service to these residents.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Table 1 indicates the likely costs should the delivery of this free service be continued.

The cost of this is largely dependent on whether Gerpins Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre (RRC) is open. If closed, and more paying customers use the service the additional income would help mitigate any expenditure from providing a free collection service to clinically extremely vulnerable customers, as is the case for Table 1. Without an increase in paying customers, it is anticipated to give rise to additional cost to the council of c£0.001m per month, based on an average monthly customer count of 80-90. The RRC currently remains open.

Table 1:
Bulky waste income / expenditure June and July 2019 and 2020

	Jun & Jul 2019	Jun & Jul 2020	Difference
No. of Paying customers	433	686	253
No. of NHS customers	0	168	168
Income	£19,628	£30,668	£11,040

Expenditure	£12,200	£22,716	£10,516	
Nett	£7,428	£7,952	£524	

**HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS
(AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

Havering outsources its waste collection services to Serco, and regardless of the number of customers, Havering expects all collections to be carried out safely and to schedule.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 1.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:
- 1.2. (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- 1.3. (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- 1.4. (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.
- 1.5. Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.
- 1.6. The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

The Government-instigated lockdown to combat the spread of Covid-19 may have previously had a disproportionate impact on those residents self-isolating or shielding at home. This means that they would not have been able to visit Gerpins Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre, where items can be disposed of for free, whilst the TCL reuse charity that customers can utilise to collect reusable goods had suspended operations. Therefore, these customers would have had no choice but to pay for a collection, particularly if they have no family or friends able to assist in removing the items.

The recommendation from Government is for clinically extremely vulnerable people to continue shielding / self-isolating during the second national lockdown. Therefore, the opportunity does not exist for these residents to take their items free of charge to Gerpins Lane RRC without risk to their health. As such may have no other outlet for disposing of this waste. Whilst TCL Reuse Centre offer free collections of bulky goods, these are only for goods that are in a reusable condition.

Key Executive Decision

Havering's public health team considers that provision of this service would assist with helping to protect the Borough's most vulnerable residents.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The recommendation from Government is for clinically extremely vulnerable people to continue shielding / self-isolating during the second national lockdown. Therefore, the opportunity does not exist for these residents to take their items free of charge to Gerpins Lane RRC without risk to their health. As such may have no other outlet for disposing of this waste. Whilst TCL Reuse Centre offer free collections of bulky goods, these are only for goods that are in a reusable condition.

Havering's public health team considers that provision of this service would assist with helping to protect the Borough's most vulnerable residents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed

Name: Cllr Osman Dervish

Cabinet Portfolio held: Environment

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date: 18th November 2020

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to the proper officer, Debra Marlow, Principal Committee Officer in Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____