

Report to Leader of the Council

Subject: Council Service Changes Due to COVID-19 – Suspension of Bulky Waste and Glass Collection

Date: 30 March 2020

Author: Acting Chief Executive

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

For the Leader of the Council to authorise, during the Covid-19 pandemic:

The temporary suspension of bulky waste and glass collections services from 31 March 2020 to ensure sufficient resource is available to maintain other waste collection services.

Key Decision

This is a key decision as it is likely to have significant impact on residents living in two or more wards.

Recommendations

That the Leader of the Council, during the Covid-19 pandemic:

- 1) Authorises the suspension of all bulky waste and glass collections from Monday 31 March 2020.
- 2) Delegates authority to the Director responsible for Waste Services to make any operational decisions in relation to the suspension of these services, including authority to refund payment for pre-booked bulky waste collection appointments if required.

2 Background

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic and associated isolation measures have had an impact on Council resources as staffing levels have reduced. Whilst the Council has tried to maintain services as far as possible, depleting

resource has meant that some difficult decisions have had to be made. Now consideration needs to be given to the ability of the Council to continue normal waste collection services.

- 1.2 As residents continue in lockdown, and household waste levels increase, it is recognised that the Council needs to continue, as far as it is able, to fulfil its statutory functions around the collection of household waste.
- 1.3 Having considered the Council's various waste collections services, those relating to households include fortnightly general waste collection, fortnightly recycling waste collection and glass collection every four weeks. In addition to these services the Council also offers garden waste collection and bulky waste collection. Both these services are paid for by the customer, with bulky waste appointments being made online or through Customer Services.
- 1.4 There are currently 79 bulky waste collection appointments booked between 1st and 16th April. These collections take place weekly.
- 1.5 With current staffing levels, and an anticipated further decrease, it will not be possible to continue to provide all the household collections at the current rate. As such proposals for a suspension of some services is sought, to enable priority collections to continue.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that from Tuesday 31st March 2020, bulky waste collection is suspended through the period of the covid-19 pandemic. Customers will be given the opportunity to move their existing appointments or refunds may be considered. It is proposed that no new bulky waste collection bookings be taken. This will enable crews assigned to bulky waste to assist with other collections of household waste.
- 2.3 It is also proposed that from Tuesday 31st March 2020, glass collections are suspended. This has been assessed as having the lowest impact on residents and will enable crews to continue to deliver other household waste collections.
- 2.4 It is proposed that authority is given to the Director responsible for Waste Services to deal with any operational issues arising from this decision, including consideration of refunds for bulky waste appointments already paid for.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option is for operations to continue as at present, however, as the pandemic continues, the current service will not be sustainable. Taking these measures now will enable crews to continue to provide a

household waste collection service, which as a waste collection authority we must ensure, as far as possible we continue to provide.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Glass collection is not a chargeable service. The monthly income from bulky waste collection is £4,000 per month. There will be a reduction in this income during the suspension of the service.

5 Equality Impact

- 5.1 The equality impacts of these measures are neutral. No further actions are recommended as a result of this equality impact review.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

6 Background Papers

- 6.1 No specific background papers have been identified but government guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response> has been relied on.

7 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 To ensure resource can be focused on maintaining priority waste collections during the Covid-19 pandemic.