

Title of Report: Combination of Food and Garden Waste Collection	Officer Presenting: Head of Environment Author: Waste Services Manager
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

1.1 To seek Members with regard to the extension of combining food and garden waste collections for residents across the City and District where collection arrangements allow.

2 Background

2.1 Members will be aware of current arrangements within the City and District whereby within the Strabane area approximately 8,500 households in the area are receiving a combined fortnightly green and food waste collection using a 240 litre wheeled bin.

2.2 These arrangements were initially trialed in consideration of previous arrangements where the households previously had green waste collections only whilst the majority of properties within the City area had / have food waste collections only.

2.3 At present approximately 33,000 number of properties in the district have both separate food and green waste collections.

3 Key Issues

3.1 Whilst the Food Waste Regulations favour separate food waste collections, provision exists within the Regulations for combined food and green waste collections, if the volume of food waste would be at least equal to the volume collected separately.

3.2 Through the trial as outlined above the officer team have established the following;

- Green Waste only collections in Strabane was averaging at 12.8 kg, per household, per month.
- Food Waste only collections in Strabane (for same period) was averaging at 7.25 kg, per household, per month.

- Combined Green and Food collections in Strabane are producing 25.9 kg per month.
 - This figure shows that there was no worsening effect on waste amounts (when combined).
- 3.3 The contractor treating these waste streams – i.e. separately collected food waste, separately collected green waste and combined collections - has advised that the first action they take within their treatment process is to co-mingle all of the wastes.
- 3.4 Taking forward the comingling of food and green waste will allow Council to reduce the number of vehicles undertaking collections, reducing carbon emissions and fuel costs in keeping with Councils Climate Action Plan. These crews will be re-deployed within refuse collection with no job losses arising.
- 3.5 This initiative will also reduce the number of containers that householders use to deal with their waste, and will reduce some of the issues reported with regard to handling and storing of food waste caddies, making it easier and more practical for people to recycle organic waste.
- 3.6 This change would only be introduced where practical to do so and those properties without gardens – terraced housing, maisonettes etc – will continue to receive a weekly food waste collection using existing collection methods. Where Council is providing weekly food waste collections to businesses, these too will continue as at present.
- 3.7 The combination will enable clearer communication of recycling messages around food and garden waste, especially the circular journey of organic waste from peelings to plants, as essentially the food and garden are mixed by the contractor and turned into compost which is then used in local gardens and parks.
- 3.8 Officers receive regular queries from householders asking why they can't mix these materials, especially when they're going to the same processor and considering we offer this service in the Strabane area.
- 3.9 In terms of health and safety; Repetitive Strain problems associated with large numbers of caddy collections may also be reduced, improving conditions for operatives
- 3.10 Should Members approve this change, those residents impacted will be provided with detailed information relating to the change with officers available to meet and discuss the changes directly with customers.

3.11 It is intended – subject to Member approval – to begin this change process with immediate effect.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, Rural Needs and other Implications

4.1 Existing promotional budgets will be used in terms of promoting this change to users through door drops, social media etc.

4.2 There are no additional financial, equality, legal, HR, improvement, rural needs or other implications associated with this item.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to approve plans to combine food and garden waste collections, where possible.

Background Papers