

# REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

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| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>             | 19 February 2015  |
| <b>Subject:</b>                     | Environment and Enterprise Medium Term Financial Strategy Implementation Plan   |
| <b>Key Decision:</b>                | Yes   |
| <b>Responsible Officer:</b>         | Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director<br>Environment and Enterprise  |
| <b>Portfolio Holder:</b>            | Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder<br>for Environment, Crime & Community Safety   |
| <b>Exempt:</b>                      | No  |
| <b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b> | Yes   |
| <b>Wards affected:</b>              | All   |
| <b>Enclosures:</b>                  | Appendices 1-5 Equality Impact Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental Health Out of Hours Noise nuisance response service</li><li>• Shopping areas street cleaning</li><li>• Reduce Parks service to statutory minimum</li><li>• Highways Verge Grass Cutting</li><li>• Organic Garden Waste</li></ul> Appendix 6: Proposed Parks Maintenance Schedule<br>Appendix 7: Existing parks locking schedule |

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out the results of public consultation as well as high level implementation plans for the key Environment and Enterprise Medium Term Financial Strategy proposals.

### **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to read this report in conjunction with the main budget report and:

1. note the outcome of public consultation on the Environment and Enterprise proposals; and,
2. subject to approval of the related budgetary proposals by full Council, to approve the Environment & Enterprise proposals summarised at paragraph 7 and further detailed in the report, and authorise the Corporate Director for Environment & Enterprise to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals.

### **Reason: (For recommendations)**

To provide additional information regarding the key proposals within the Environment and Enterprise Medium Term Financial Strategy which are required in order to help meet the budgetary pressures facing the Council.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introductory paragraph**

1. The Environment and Enterprise (E&E) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) contains a series of savings proposals, a number of which have been consulted on due to the potential impact on residents following a Cabinet decision on 11 December 2014 to carry out a public consultation.
2. This report should be read in conjunction with main budget Cabinet report as it supplements it with further information on how the key E&E MTFS proposals will be delivered if approval is given by Cabinet for implementation and the results of the consultation.

### **Options considered**

3. As an alternative to agreeing the proposals, the Council also has the option to maintaining the current level of services; however this will impact on the proposed budget. If savings are not made from the Environment & Enterprise budget, the Council will have to consider what alternatives are available to meet its anticipated budgetary shortfall. Alternatives could

include cutting services elsewhere, use of reserves and increasing Council tax. Information on these options are included in the budget report, which is being considered at the same Cabinet meeting as this report for recommendation up to full Council.

4. Should the proposals be agreed, E&E have considered two methods of implementation – to deliver with Council staff or to contract a third party organisation. The latter option was discounted as it did not meet requirements because it would not make full use of the skills and experience of officers within the directorate.

## **Background**

5. The Environment and Enterprise (E&E) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes a range of proposals that continue the directorate programme of internal efficiencies through further process and structure efficiencies, and through generating additional income. The main focus of the E&E MTFS was on reducing the cost of doing business as much as possible without affecting services.
6. However given the scale of savings required, proposals that will reduce service standards or cease services that will impact residents have been unavoidable.
7. This report presents implementation plans for the five key proposals that have been subject to public consultation as part of the Take Part campaign. The proposals are:
  - 7.1. Deleting the Environmental Health out of hours noise nuisance response service;
  - 7.2. Removing dedicated 'beat sweeper' street cleaners from secondary shopping areas and removing weekend and late afternoon street cleansing from those areas;
  - 7.3. Changing the grass cutting, management and locking regimes in Council parks;
  - 7.4. Reducing the frequency of grass cutting of highway verges; and,
  - 7.5. Introducing changes to household waste collection to provide residents with a dedicated food waste collection and a separate, optional chargeable garden waste collection.
8. For each proposal, the following information is presented below:
  - 8.1. A summary of each proposal;
  - 8.2. A delivery plan setting out key actions and timeframes;
  - 8.3. Analysis from public consultation; and,
  - 8.4. An equality impact update.

## **Consultation and implementation overview**

9. High level plans, with indicative dates, are presented below that identify the actions that will be taken to implement the proposals if they are agreed by Cabinet.

10. Detailed plans are being drafted and will be included in the Project Initiation Documents for the proposals together with the organisational arrangements for delivery.
11. All proposals implemented will have a stabilisation review period designed to monitor implementation, ensure any technical issues are identified and rectified, and customer and staff impacts are monitored.
12. Members of staff were advised of the proposals that had staff impacts prior to the commencement of the Take Part campaign and Cabinet reports proposing savings, and also took part in the Take Part Employee consultation. In addition, Trade Union colleagues have been given briefings prior to each Cabinet meeting agenda publication.
13. The Council consulted on its overall budget proposals, including E&E services, as part of the Take Part consultation. The results of this consultation was fed back to Cabinet in December 2014 and can be viewed at <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/documents/s118033/Appendix%206%20-%20Take%20Part%20feedback%20presentation.pdf>
14. Following the initial Take Part consultation, further consultation on the specific E&E proposals was conducted by way of online surveys undertaken between 16 December 2014 and 29 January 2015. The survey was publicised through the Community Champion network, as well as posting it on the Harrow website, and through community groups, community events and libraries.
15. Printed copies of the survey were available at libraries and also posted to the Harrow Federation of Tenants, Residents and Leaseholders (HFTRL). This was also supplemented by formal and informal presentations with Park User Groups. All surveys completed via printed copy were then collated together with all online feedback.
16. The survey was designed to be easy to complete and had a mixture of questions for a choice of answers to select and open questions for customers to provide more detailed feedback, where appropriate. There were a total of 801 surveys completed and returned.
17. Alongside the surveys, further comments and correspondence have been received and have been incorporated into the overall assessment of consultation feedback and Equality Impact Assessments. Correspondence has been acknowledged and residents with general enquiries were encouraged to complete the survey.
18. As a result of the consultation, E&E have reassessed the proposals based on the impact for residents. In general, the consultation reflects that customers are understanding of the proposals. There are changes, detailed below, that have been made to the proposals as a result of the feedback and the results underline the need for a comprehensive communications campaign.

19. The consultation also demonstrates the drive from E&E to increase community involvement in the planning and delivery of services. E&E will continue to work with community groups to create conditions that allow local people to make a difference to improve their area through increased involvement and decision making. The Community Champion scheme is also being developed to increase champions influencing and involvement in services.

## **E&E\_23 Environmental Health Out of Hours Noise nuisance response service**

20. The Environmental Health Out of Hours noise nuisance responsive service is the means in which residents can refer a wide range of noise complaints witnessed out of working hours to the Council. Typical enquiries include noise from anti-social behaviour, barking dogs, domestic and car security alarms, noise from pubs, clubs and other entertainment venues. Typically, 600 complaints are received a year.

21. The current service operates on Friday and Saturday. Officers investigate complaints raised and also carry out proactive visits to licensed premises.

22. This proposal is to stop delivering the out of hours noise service. The team will, however, continue to investigate complaints and carry out planned proactive visits during working hours. If the proposal is adopted, the remaining services provision will continue to meet the statutory obligations that the Council is required to meet.

### ***Delivery plan***

23. Key activities for the implementation of this proposal are updating service standards and informing customers thereof, and a service review after six months.

TABLE 1: Out of Hours Implementation Plan

| <b>Action title</b>                   | <b>Action detail</b>   | <b>Timeframe</b>                       |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Design and presentation               | Creation of proposal<br>Presentation Cabinet   | June 2014 to<br>December 2014          |
| Public Consultation                   | Carry out public consultation via online surveys, Harrow Federation of Tenants, Residents and Leaseholds and community groups<br>Assess customer feedback and update proposals | 16 December 2014 to<br>29 January 2015 |
| Staff consultation                    | Inform staff of changes to service<br>Inform Trade Unions of changes and impacts to service  | March 2015                             |
| Inform customers and partner agencies | Publish service change through means such as Harrow Council website, Community Champions and community groups<br>Advise police and other agencies of service changes           | March 2015                             |
| Go live                               | Cease the service provision to customers   | April 2015                             |
| Post implementation review            | Review the impact of the deletion of service through analysis of customer service request, complaints and feedback through engagement exercises                                | October 2015                           |

### ***Public consultation analysis***

24. 79% of respondents had not used the out of hours noise service while 23% thought that the deletion of the service would have a detrimental affect on their quality of life. Over 60% of respondents confirmed that they were aware of how to raise a noise complaint to the Council.
25. As a result of the feedback, communications to residents will also now include messages about how to raise noise complaints to the Council after the deletion of the service. This will reinforce the message to those that are already aware how to and inform those who are not. This will ensure that customers can still raise issues for the Council to address during working hours.
26. The communications will also provide the contact details for the Civic Centre out of hours security service to allow residents to still log issues out of hours if they wish.

### ***Equality impact update***

27. The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced for the proposal indicated that while the out of hours service has been in place, there has been no evidence that indicates that a particular section of the community uses the services more than another and that no particular type event is complained about compared to another.
28. The EqIA has been reviewed and updated following the results of public consultation and no further customer impacts have been identified.

### **E&E\_25 Shopping areas street cleaning (beat sweepers)**

29. The street cleansing service covers both residential roads and shopping areas. The Council deploys staff to the Harrow Town Centre and the secondary shopping areas to have a permanent presence and carry out cleaning activities throughout the day.
30. This proposal removes dedicated “beat sweeper” street cleaners who are located in the borough’s secondary shopping areas and also removes weekend and late afternoon street cleansing of the areas with effect from 01 April 2015. Harrow Town Centre will, however, remain unaffected by the proposal.
31. There are nine secondary shopping areas outside of the Town Centre that will be affected – Burnt Oak, Harrow Weald, Hatch End, North Harrow, Pinner, Rayners Lane, Stanmore, South Harrow and Wealdstone. There will, however, be mobile cleansing teams that visit the areas each day to empty litter bins and carry out street cleaning activities but to a lower frequency than is currently in place.
32. The national street cleaning standards as set out the in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse will continue to be followed in the new schedules. The new street cleansing frequency will continue to keep

secondary shopping areas clear of litter and refuse as far as is considered reasonable.

### ***Delivery plan***

33. Key activities for the implementation of this proposal are amendments to work schedules used by operational teams, updating staff structures, updating services standards and informing customers thereof, and a stabilisation review period.

TABLE 2: Beat Sweepers Implementation Plan

| <b>Action title</b>                   | <b>Action detail</b>   | <b>Timeframe</b>                    |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Design, consultation and presentation | Creation of proposal<br>Presentation to Cabinet<br>Consultation and engagement with Trade Unions and staff   | June 2014 to December 2014          |
| Public Consultation                   | Carry out public consultation via online surveys, Harrow Federation of Tenants, Residents and Leaseholds and community groups<br>Assess customer feedback and update proposals | 16 December 2014 to 29 January 2015 |
| Staff consultation                    | Inform staff of changes and impacts to service<br>Inform Trade Unions of changes and impacts to service<br>Update SAP organisational structures with changes                   | March 2015                          |
| Work schedules                        | Update Collective system to reflect new work schedules   | March 2015                          |
| Service standards                     | Inform public of the change in service standards<br>Update website with service standard changes   | March 2015 to April 2015            |
| Go live and stabilisation             | Commence new maintenance regime and carry out weekly checks and identify and resolve any issues arising  | April 2015                          |
| Trader engagement                     | Work with traders associations and business improvement districts to prompt businesses self service  | May 2015 to October 2015            |
| Service review                        | Six month review to assess service changes   | October 2015                        |

### ***Public consultation analysis***

34. Just under half (49%) of respondents rated current cleaning standards as excellent or good, with 15% rating it poor. Of those who rated it poor, the majority cited the presence of general littering and flytipping as the main reasons for their views.

35. When asked whether high frequency cleaning in our shopping areas is key to the economic vitality of Harrow, while three quarters of respondents answered yes, nine out of ten believed that shopkeepers should take more responsibility for cleaning areas outside their shops.

36. In light of the customer feedback in relation to shopkeepers taking more responsibility for cleaning outside their shops, greater emphasis will be placed on working with traders associations and the Business Improvement Districts to raise awareness and engage with businesses to carry out cleaning outside their shop fronts. This has been added to the implementation plan for action.

### ***Equality impact update***

37. The initial EqIA produced to accompany the proposal indicated that the reduced cleansing frequency in shopping areas may affect wheelchairs users and/or people with mobility and visual impairments due to increased litter. This impact is mitigated by mobile teams carrying out daily cleaning and responding to service requests regarding excessive littering within 24 hours.
38. The EqIA has been reviewed and updated following the results of public consultation and there has been no further adverse impact identified for customers. Customer satisfaction and service issues will be monitored through the use of the Collective management system used by the department.
39. There will be a reduction in posts currently filled by agency workers so there will be no redundancy of directly employed staff. The amount of work being done will be reduced proportionately so there should be no impact on remaining staff. Socio-economic and health impacts will be monitored using the Action Plans in the EqIAs.
40. There is also a wider impact on staff across the Council as the deletion of full time equivalent posts reduces the redeployment opportunities to displaced staff as the organisation progress its change programme. E&E will work with the corporate Organisational Development team in mitigating this impact.

### **E&E\_26 Reduce Parks services that the Council are responsible for to statutory minimum**

41. The parks maintenance service carried out to the parks that the Council is responsible for provides grass cutting for parks and open spaces and a range of horticultural services, including sports pitch maintenance, planting and bedding maintenance, weed control and a locking and unlocking service for key parks.
42. This proposal seeks to convert some of the parks into wildlife open spaces. This involves reducing grass cutting to only that which is needed for health and safety reasons, reducing pruning and removing some shrub, rose and flower beds. The proposal also removes the parks locking service for the 30% of parks that are currently locked, and also a reduction in management.
43. As set out in the Parks and Opens Spaces Act, while Local Authorities do not have a statutory obligation to provide public parks and open spaces, where they do provide them they are required under statute to hold and administer the open space in trust with a view to public enjoyment and maintain and keep the open space in a good and decent state. The changes contained within this proposal bring the service in line with what is considered to be the minimum standard to meet our statutory obligation.

## ***Delivery plan***

44. Key activities for the implementation of this proposal are amendments to work schedules used by operational teams, updating staff structures, updating services standards and informing customers thereof, and a stabilisation review period. The stabilisation review period will include an assessment of levels of litter in bins to ensure that they are not overflowing following a reduction in emptying frequencies.

TABLE 3: Parks Maintenance Implementation Plan

| <b>Action title</b>                   | <b>Action detail</b>   | <b>Timeframe</b>                    |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Design, consultation and presentation | Creation of proposal<br>Presentation to Cabinet<br>Consultation and engagement with Trade Unions and staff   | June 2014 to December 2014          |
| Public Consultation                   | Carry out public consultation via online surveys, Harrow Federation of Tenants, Residents and Leaseholds and community groups<br>Assess customer feedback and update proposals                                 | 16 December 2014 to 29 January 2015 |
| Staff consultation                    | Inform staff of changes and impacts to service<br>Inform Trade Unions of changes and impacts to service<br>Notify staff of cessation of secondment places<br>Update SAP organisational structures with changes | March 2015                          |
| Work schedules                        | Update Collective system to reflect new work schedules   | March 2015                          |
| Service standards                     | Inform public of the change in service standards<br>Update website with service standard changes   | March 2015 to April 2015            |
| Go live and stabilisation             | Commence new maintenance regime and carry out weekly checks and identify and resolve any issues arising  | April 2015 to May 2015              |
| Service review                        | Six month review to assess service changes   | October 2015                        |

## ***Public consultation analysis***

45. Almost three quarters (71%) of respondents indicated that they visited parks at least once a month, which reflects the popularity of parks and open spaces across the borough. The most popular reasons for using parks were for the green area, walking and relaxing. Pinner Memorial Park had the most mentions in the survey.
46. Encouragingly, almost half of respondents (41%) said they would volunteer to help support their local park and around 1 in 6 said they would join a Friends /Park user group. This bodes well for the pledge to create a User Group for each park.
47. This will be approached by E&E in a phased approach by identifying those parks where there is already significant interest in creating user groups and working with them to find the best model that meets their needs.
48. E&E have developed a series of template documents that acknowledge the sliding scale of responsibilities that user groups can have. This ranges from working with officers, carrying out some amenity services or full management of parks.

49. When asked to rate current standards within our parks, 65% of respondents said they were good or very good. Just fewer than 80% of respondents thought it was important that Harrow has parks with Green Flag status. The results indicate that standards, in particular Green Flag status, are important to residents. Applications for Green Flag status need to be made every year and the Council has already submitted applications to be assessed for the 2015 award in the existing five parks with the accreditation (Kenton Recreation Ground, Canons Park, Roxeth Recreation Ground, Harrow Recreation Ground and Pinner Memorial Park). The assessments are anticipated to take place May 2015.
50. In terms of park locking, 69% said that they would not be directly affected if the nominated parks were not locked, with the remaining population stating that they would be affected. Illegal activity, fear of crime and disturbance were the main issues raised by those who replied that they would be affected by stopping the service. These issues will continue to be discussed with the Police and other key partners in order to mitigate concerns raised.
51. As a result of the public consultation, the proposal for parks maintenance has been amended to incorporate aspirations to achieve Green Flag status in key parks. While the existing parks will no longer have a dedicated member of staff based permanently on site (which helps to achieve some of the criteria required for the award), the mobile operational teams will undertake maintenance of parks that aspire to Green Flag status. Although we are looking to increase volunteer involvement within our portfolio of parks and open spaces, the revised maintenance regimes, however, may mean that the assessment criteria are not met even with the assistance of volunteer groups.
52. The list of proposed standards for parks can be found as an Appendix to this report. Canons Park will continue to receive Lottery funding to achieve standards.

### ***Equality impact update***

53. The EqIA produced for the proposal indicated that the reduced cleansing frequency and changes in the grass cutting regime may affect older people and those with mobility or visibility impairments. Long grass can hide litter and obstructions that could contribute to slip/trip hazards and make walking away from the main paths more hazardous for the elderly.
54. The EqIA has been reviewed and updated following the results of public consultation and the impacts identified can be further mitigated by the potential attainment of Green Flag status in some parks.
55. There will be a reduction in posts currently filled by agency workers so there will be no redundancy of directly employed staff. The amount of work being done will be reduced proportionately so there should be no impact on remaining staff. Socio-economic and health impacts will be monitored using the Action Plans in the EqIAs.

56. There is also a wider impact on staff across the Council as the deletion of full time equivalent posts reduces the redeployment opportunities to displaced staff as the organisation progress its change programme. E&E will work with the corporate Organisational Development team in mitigating this impact.

## **E&E\_27 Highways Verge Grass Cutting**

57. The Council currently cuts highway grass verges on a three week cycle from March to November, with grass clippings being left distributed evenly over the verge to compost down back into the soil.

58. This proposal will reduce the cutting frequency from three weeks to a six week cycle to all verges across the borough, with all grass clippings remaining to be left upon the verge to compost.

### ***Delivery plan***

59. Key activities for the implementation of this proposal are amendments to work schedules used by operational teams, updating staff structures, updating services standards and informing customers thereof, and a stabilisation review period.

TABLE 4: Highway Verge Implementation Plan

| <b>Action title</b>                   | <b>Action detail</b>   | <b>Timeframe</b>                    |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Design, consultation and presentation | Creation of proposal<br>Presentation to Cabinet<br>Consultation and engagement with Trade Unions and staff   | June 2014 to December 2014          |
| Public Consultation                   | Carry out public consultation via online surveys, Harrow Federation of Tenants, Residents and Leaseholds and community groups<br>Assess customer feedback and update proposals | 16 December 2014 to 29 January 2015 |
| Staff consultation                    | Inform staff of changes and impacts to service<br>Inform Trade Unions of changes and impacts to service<br>Update SAP organisational structures with changes                   | March 2015                          |
| Work schedules                        | Update Collective system to reflect new work schedules   | March 2015                          |
| Service standards                     | Inform public of the change in service standards<br>Update website with service standard changes   | March 2015 – April 2015             |
| Go live and stabilisation             | Commence new maintenance regime and carry out weekly checks and identify and resolve any issues arising  | April 2015                          |
| Communications                        | Communications campaign to promote residents maintaining grass verges outside their properties   | May to October 2015                 |
| Service review                        | Six month review to assess service changes   | October 2015                        |

### ***Public consultation analysis***

60. Of the customers that responded to the consultation, 43% had a grass verge outside their house and just under half indicated that they would be prepared to cut the verge. When asked about impact on quality of life from this proposal, 42% said it would not impact their quality of life, compared to 39% saying it would.

61. Respondents were asked their views on the introduction of different cutting cycles for different locations across the borough. Half of respondents believed that the Council should introduce differential cutting regimes with respondents believing highway safety and areas of high footfall should be given priority. It is not, however, considered appropriate to implement this suggestion as it would lead to differential treatment across the borough. As such, the proposal to maintain a standard cutting regime will be retained as proposed. The reduction in frequency will be mitigated by supporting of residents in maintaining the verges at the front of their properties.

### ***Equality impact update***

62. The EqIA produced for the proposal indicated that this proposal should not disproportionately affect one or more group.

63. The EqIA has been reviewed and updated following the public consultation and no additional equalities impact has been identified. If different cutting regimes were introduced across the borough, then a consequential impact will be introduced that may have a disproportionate affect on customers.

64. There will be a reduction in posts currently filled by agency workers so there will be no redundancy of directly employed staff. The amount of work being done will be reduced proportionately so there should be no impact on remaining staff. Socio-economic and health impacts will be monitored using the Action Plans in the EqIAs.

65. There is also a wider impact on staff across the Council as the deletion of full time equivalent posts reduces the redeployment opportunities to displaced staff as the organisation progress its change programme. E&E will work with the Council Organisational Development team in mitigating this impact.

### **E&E\_34 Garden Waste**

66. The Council currently provides three wheeled bin household waste collections to Harrow Residents that covers landfill, recycling, mixed organic and clinical waste types. The mixed organic waste service is in place for residents to dispose of garden and food waste in a single bin and collected on a weekly basis.

67. This proposal replaces the mixed waste collection scheme with separate collections for food waste and garden waste.

68. Under the proposal, residents will be provided with a small food waste bin along with a smaller caddy to use to transfer waste to the outside bin. This service will be collected on a weekly basis and part of the statutory service and will not result in charges for residents.

69. Alongside the new food waste service, a new opt in, chargeable garden waste scheme will be introduced for residents who wish to continue to dispose of garden waste through household collections from the Council.

Residents who sign up for the scheme will retain their current brown bin and have it collected once every two weeks. Residents who do not wish to sign up for the scheme will be able to take their garden waste to the Waste, Reuse and Recycle Centre at Forward Drive, Wealdstone or via home composting.

70. Whilst the Council Tax bill includes a charge for the collection and disposal of domestic waste, Council's are not obliged to cover the cost of collecting garden waste. Some Councils may not have the necessary resources to cover this cost, which is why charges are made for the service.

71. When setting the proposed charges, a benchmarking assessment of other Council charges, in particular across London, was undertaken. The table below sets out the standard charges for schemes offered across London:

TABLE 5: London Borough annual garden waste charges

| London Borough       | Annual chargeable fee: |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Brent                | £40                    |
| Bromley              | £60                    |
| Ealing               | £40                    |
| Havering             | £35                    |
| Kingston Council     | £75                    |
| Lambeth              | £35                    |
| Merton               | £65                    |
| Richmond Upon Thames | £60                    |

72. The proposed charge is a fee of £75 per year, with a means tested concessionary scheme under consideration. The Council proposes to give an introductory fee of £75 to cover 18 months between October 2015 and 31 March 2017.

### ***Delivery plan***

73. If the proposal is approved by Cabinet, it will be delivered via a project with five workstreams:

73.1. **Work scheduling.** New work schedules will be created for the weekly food waste collection and the fortnightly garden waste collections;

73.2. **Technology.** This includes activities around invoice generation, systems integrations between customer contact, financial and waste management systems. This will also include customer account management and methods for customers to raise services requests about the food and garden waste services;

73.3. **Equipment.** This will focus on the vehicle and bin requirements for both food and garden waste services, and the disposal arrangements for both waste types;

73.4. **Business Process Reengineering.** This will include terms and conditions and payment mechanisms for the garden waste service, enforcement and compliance processes and performance management arrangements; and,

73.5. **Communications.** This will include communications on project objectives and progress to all concerned stakeholders, together with a Behaviour Change Campaign that is aimed at delivering longer term changes in support of the organic waste changes. Examples of communication methods that will be considered are:

TABLE 6: Communication methods

| Internal communications (Staff and Councillors)   | External Communications (Residents, Community Groups and Suppliers)   |
|---|---|
| Intranet<br>Team brief<br>Members' briefings<br>Newsletters<br>Training programmes & information drops<br>Vehicles – Agripa panels<br>Committee papers and reports<br>Noticeboards<br>Reception areas | Website<br>Electronic media, texts, emails, Twitter, FaceBook<br>Local media, including press, radio and advertising<br>Letter and leaflet drops<br>Roadshows<br>Community events<br>Presentations and attendance at meetings<br>Residents' associations & Community Groups<br>Vehicles – Agripa panels<br>Permanent or temporary displays, e.g. in public buildings<br>Waste, Reuse and Recycle Centre<br>West London Waste Authority sites<br>Community Champions<br>Public Noticeboards<br>Council Tax mailing<br>Focus groups |

74. The governance of the project will follow a Prince2 project management framework. A Project Board will be created with responsibility for the overall direction and management of the project and will meet at least once a month to monitor progress prior and provide authorisation to proceed throughout the stages of the project.

75. The Project Board is responsible for ensuring that the project remains on course to deliver the desired outcomes to the required quality. The roles and responsibilities of members of the Project Board will be defined in the Project Initiation Document (PID) and the roles will be carried out by officers from across the departments affected by the changes.

76. A detailed project plan will also be included in the PID but the initial high level plan is as follows:

TABLE 7: Garden Waste Implementation Plan

| Action title                          | Timeframe                           |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Design, consultation and presentation | June 2014 to December 2014          |
| Public Consultation                   | 16 December 2014 to 29 January 2015 |

| Action title                   | Timeframe                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Staff consultation             | March 2015 to October 2015   |
| Work scheduling                | March 2015 – August 2015     |
| Technology                     | March 2015 – May 2015        |
| Equipment                      | March 2015 – April 2015      |
| Business process reengineering | March 2015 – August 2015     |
| Communications                 | January 2015 – December 2015 |

77. The table below shows the charges set by the West London Waste Authority for 2015 – 2016. These are the charges made to the constituent boroughs per tonne of waste they deposit. These are known as Pay as you throw charges and act to incentivise boroughs to minimise the amount of waste collected. Food waste and garden waste processed separately, rather than mixed or included in the residual waste, attract a lower processing cost as illustrated in the table.

TABLE 8: 2015 – 2016 waste charges

| Item                       | 2015/16 charge per tonne |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Residual Waste (delivered) | £120.18                  |
| Food                       | £25.95                   |
| Green                      | £32.41                   |
| Mixed food and green       | £56.34                   |

### **Public consultation analysis**

78. Just over 80% of respondents use the organic bin to dispose of their food and garden waste. When asked for the most common items that they put in the bin, food waste, weeds and grass were the most popular answers.

79. When asked if difficulties would be experienced if the mixed food and garden waste collection was stopped, 67% responded yes and 20% said no with the remaining 11% saying that they did not know.

80. Residents were also asked if they would take up the new chargeable service, over half (53%) said no, 31% were undecided and 14% replied yes. When asked why they would not subscribe to the garden waste service, the cost and not generating enough garden waste for a separate bin were the most frequent responses. Concerns were also raised about waste being left uncollected in the street and fly tipping if the scheme was adopted.

81. When asked which groups should be eligible for concessionary rates, residents on pension credit and income support were identified as those groups respondents felt should be eligible. This feedback supports consideration of a concessionary scheme.

82. The results of the consultation underline the need for a comprehensive communications campaign relating to the service, careful consideration of a concessionary charging scheme and scalability of service provision to

meet an uncertain level of demand. All of these factors will be considered during the development and implementation of the scheme.

### ***Equality impact update***

83. The EqIA produced for the proposal indicated that there was a potential disproportionate impact on elderly residents and residents with disabilities as those groups may have difficulty in accessing the Council Waste, Reuse and Recycle Centre to dispose garden waste as an alternative to the scheme.
84. The EqIA has been reviewed following the results of public consultation with the original impacts restated and a potential impact on residents within the pregnancy and maternity group. The introduction of a concessionary scheme is the predominant mitigation for the affected groups.
85. There will be a reduction in posts currently filled by agency workers so there will be no redundancy of directly employed staff. The amount of work being done will be reduced proportionately so there should be no impact on remaining staff. Socio-economic and health impacts will be monitored using the Action Plans in the EqIAs.
86. There is also a wider impact on staff across the Council as the deletion of full time equivalent posts reduces the redeployment opportunities to displaced staff as the organisation progress its change programme. E&E will work with the corporate Organisational Development team in mitigating this impact.

### **Performance and Risk Management**

87. The monitoring of implementation of the MTFs will form part of the directorate performance management process, which will measure the progress in delivering the proposals and the impact of the changes.
88. The proposals detailed in this report will impact negatively on the environmental appearance of the borough as we minimise standards. Whilst mitigations will be in place as far as is possible (such as fixed penalty notices and engagement with traders to reduce waste from retail centres), it is inevitable that a reduction in standards will be seen.
89. The proposals contained within the MTFs and the methods of implementation have both been designed to minimise the environmental impact of Council operations upon the local environment
90. Risk registers have been created for each proposal, which will be expanded in the Project Initiation Documents if Cabinet gives approval to proceed.
91. The risk registers document the risks for each proposal, assign owners and the current and future actions in place to control the risks. The Council corporate risk management procedure will be used to rate risks.

## **Legal Implications**

92. Where not otherwise prescribed in legislation, local authorities have discretion as to how they perform their statutory duties and the proposals are consistent with performance of the council's legal obligations in respect of the affected services. In particular, The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 provide that local authorities can levy a reasonable charge for the collection of green waste.
93. When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of all relevant considerations. These include the duty to give due regard to the public sector equality duties, as set out in the Equalities section below, and in particular any potential differential and/or adverse impact. When consulting on proposed service cuts or closure of services, it will not be unusual for the majority of respondents to be against the proposals. These views must be taken into account, however, this is not a matter of a simple headcount of those in favour and those against proposals. Even in situations where the majority of respondents are opposed to the proposals, the Council may decide to implement this if there are good reasons for doing so. The Council must have regard to and weigh up all relevant factors, including financial resources, alternative options, equality impact and consultation responses, which in the context of the function being exercised, it is proper and reasonable for the Council to consider.

## **Financial Implications**

94. The five saving proposals detailed in this report, if approved, would realise a total saving of £3.29M which could be used to contribute towards the Council's 15/16 MTFS. The financial details of these proposals have been included in the main 15/16 Budget Report which is being presented to cabinet with this report.
95. Any additional financial requirements to implement proposals beyond existing E&E budgets have been included in the cost models for each proposal. If no additional implementation costs are stated, then E&E will use existing budgets to deliver the proposals.

## **Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

96. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, in exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other unlawful conduct under the Act, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

97. Equalities Impact Assessments have been carried out and have identified impacts as referenced above. The EqIAs are attached with this report.

### Council Priorities

98. The Council's vision:

98.1. **Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow**

99. The Council Priorities are as follows:

- Making a difference for the vulnerable;
- Making a difference for communities;
- Making a difference for local businesses; and,
- Making a difference for families.

100. The setting of the E&E MTFs was priority lead so that resources within the directorate are aligned with Council priorities and statutory responsibilities.

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

|                        |                                     |   |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Name: Jessie Man       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | on behalf of the<br>Chief Financial Officer |
| Date: 09 February 2015 |                                     |   |
| Name: Matthew Adams    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | on behalf of the<br>Monitoring Officer      |
| Date: 23 January 2015  |                                     |   |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Ward Councillors notified:</b> | <b>NO.</b>   |
| <b>EqIA carried out:</b>          | <b>YES</b>   |
| <b>EqIA cleared by:</b>           | Equality Impact<br>Assessment Quality<br>Assurance Group |

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Andrew Smith, Strategic Commissioner, 02084247698,  
[andrew.smith@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.smith@harrow.gov.uk)

### **Background Papers:**

Appendices 1-5 Equality Impact Assessments:

- Environmental Health Out of Hours Noise nuisance response service
- Shopping areas street cleaning
- Reduce Parks service to statutory minimum
- Highways Verge Grass Cutting
- Organic Garden Waste

Appendix 6: Proposed Parks Maintenance Schedule

Appendix 7: Existing parks locking schedule

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Call-In Waived by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> | <b>NOT APPLICABLE</b><br><br><i>[Call-in applies]</i> |
|--|---|