

Report

Report to: **Executive Committee**
Date of Meeting: **26 June 2024**
Report by: **Chief Executive**

Subject: **Recommendations Referred by Community and Enterprise Resources Committee**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ request approval of the following referred to this Committee by the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 in respect of:-
 - ◆ South Lanarkshire Council Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033
 - ◆ Introduction of Charge for Uplift of Household Garden Waste (Burgundy) Bin

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that, in relation to the South Lanarkshire Council Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033, as detailed in the report to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024:-
 - (a) the Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033 be approved;
 - (b) the new crematorium service time pilot be approved; and
 - (c) the new and harmonised charges be approved.
- (2) that, in relation to the introduction of a charge for the uplift of household garden waste (burgundy) bins, as detailed in the report to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024:-
 - (a) the proposal to introduce a charge for the uplift of burgundy bins containing garden waste be approved;
 - (b) the increase of the Waste Services' establishment by 4 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) on a temporary basis and 9 FTE on a permanent basis be approved; and
 - (c) that the increase of the vehicle establishment for Waste Services be approved.

3. Recommendation Referred by Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 – South Lanarkshire Council Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033 – Extract of Minute

- 3.1. A report dated 29 May 2024 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted seeking endorsement of the South Lanarkshire Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033.

The Council operated a Bereavement Service that provided a dignified and sensitive burial and cremation service. The key piece of legislation governing the Service was the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 which was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 22 March 2016 and received Royal Assent on 28 April 2016. The 2016 Act fulfilled the commitment of the Scottish Government to implement the recommendations made by:-

- ◆ The Burial and Cremation Review Group (2007)
- ◆ The Infant Cremation Commission (2014)
- ◆ The National Cremation Investigation (2016)

A Working Group had been formed in July 2016 to commence regulations of the Act. Priority had been given to implementing Part 2 of the Act on Cremation and this resulted in the Cremation (Scotland) Regulation 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted and delayed progress, however, a working group was still actively working on the regulations for Part 1 (Burial) of the Act. The most recent activity had been a consultation on the regulations which was completed in November 2023.

The South Lanarkshire Council Cemetery Strategy 2023 to 2024 was approved by the Committee on 30 May 2023 and had allowed the Council to implement the strategic approach to the provision of burial ground within the local authority area, as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of the report. The Bereavement Strategy incorporated the previous work undertaken in the Cemetery Strategy to include the Crematorium to deliver a long-term vision for the Council's Bereavement Service.

The Bereavement Strategy 2024 to 2033, attached as an appendix to the report, was a strategic document that would assist the Council in providing, maintaining, and managing its crematorium and cemeteries over the long term. The Strategy included all aspects of the management and operation of the Council's Bereavement Services. The Strategy detailed:-

- ◆ the purpose and vision
- ◆ the legal context
- ◆ the demographic context, demand and capacity
- ◆ crematorium rules and areas for development
- ◆ cemeteries rules and areas for development
- ◆ infrastructure and maintenance
- ◆ pricing structure

The key points of the Strategy were detailed in section 4 of the report and included:-

- ◆ crematorium services:-
 - ◆ the demand for cremations had increased since the South Lanarkshire Crematorium opened in 2006 and that trend would continue, as detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the report

- ◆ the crematorium operated with 3 different options of service times. An analysis of usage was provided at paragraph 4.3 of the report
- ◆ a proposal to offer a new type of morning service at 8.00am and 8.15am to utilise unused capacity was detailed at paragraph 4.4 of the report. An increase of uptake of early services was anticipated and this would be monitored for 6 months
- ◆ the crematorium infrastructure:-
 - ◆ the cremators were now over 17 years old and required regular repair as well as annual servicing. Recurring costs over the last 3 years were detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report. The Service operated a financial sink fund whereby any additional income generated was set aside to re-invest in the ongoing maintenance requirements
 - ◆ the cremators would become less efficient over time and would likely need to be fully replaced over the next 5 years. Future replacement would provide the opportunity to consider larger capacity to meet the increasing requirement for oversized coffins
- ◆ IT modernisation:-
 - ◆ the current IT system had been in place since 2005, however, the Service aimed to invest in a new, cloud-based system to drive modernisation, as set out in paragraph 4.7 of the report
- ◆ the charging framework:-
 - ◆ operating costs for the Service were continuing to increase, particularly for the crematorium
 - ◆ a review of existing charges had been conducted and benchmarked against comparators. 4 activities had been identified, as detailed in paragraph 4.9 of the report, where the Council did not currently charge but proposed to introduce a charge
 - ◆ the review had also allowed the opportunity to harmonise charging across the crematorium and cemeteries and those proposals were detailed in the table at paragraph 4.10 of the report
- ◆ stakeholder engagement:-
 - ◆ the first broad consultation on the Service would be undertaken and would include members of the public, funeral directors, clergy, humanists, other celebrants, and any other interested parties

The Bereavement Strategy for South Lanarkshire 2024 to 2033, including a crematorium service time pilot and introduction of new and harmonised charges, if endorsed, would be referred to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for approval.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Bereavement Services Strategy for South Lanarkshire 2024 to 2033, as detailed at Appendix 1, be endorsed;
- (2) that the new crematorium service time pilot, as detailed in section 4.4 of the report, be endorsed; and
- (3) that the new and harmonised charges, as detailed in sections 4.9 and 4.10 of the report, be endorsed.

The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee:

that the Bereavement Strategy for South Lanarkshire 2024 to 2033, including a crematorium service time pilot and introduction of new and harmonised charges, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 30 May 2023 (Paragraph 10)]

3.2 A link to the report submitted to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 is provided for information.
[South Lanarkshire Council Bereavement Services Strategy 2024 to 2033](#)

4. Recommendation Referred by Community and Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 – Introduction of Charge for Uplift of Household Garden Waste (Burgundy) Bin – Extract of Minute

4.1. A joint report dated 28 May 2024 by the Executive Directors (Community and Enterprise Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted seeking endorsement for a proposal to introduce a charge for the uplift of burgundy bins containing garden waste.

In 2015, the Council introduced a burgundy bin to collect food waste to comply with the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Those Regulations placed a statutory obligation on local authorities in Scotland to provide householders with a separate food waste collection service. Although there was no statutory requirement to provide residents with a garden waste collection service, the Council allowed residents who had been provided with a burgundy bin to deposit unbagged, compostable garden waste free of charge.

Approximately 110,000 households had been provided with a burgundy bin to present commingled food and garden waste. Residents in flatted properties with no gardens had communal 'food only' burgundy bins. Around 5,000 rural properties, mainly in Clydesdale, were not provided with a burgundy bin and were currently unable to present food or garden waste separately at the kerbside. All South Lanarkshire Council residents, including those in rural areas, could request a garden waste uplift for unbagged compostable waste. The cost of that service was £40 for up to 10 items.

As councils across the country looked for ways to reduce budgetary pressures, charges for garden waste collections had become increasingly common. Currently in Scotland:-

- ◆ 6 councils did not provide a kerbside garden waste collection service for residents
- ◆ 21 councils operated a chargeable garden waste permit scheme
- ◆ 5 councils currently provided a free of charge garden waste collection service

The councils that operated a permit system charged residents an average of £42.16 per year. Further information of the cost of garden waste permits in Scotland was provided at Appendix 1 to the report.

A proposal, which would make use of garden waste permits in South Lanarkshire to recover some of the costs associated with providing the Service, was fully detailed at section 4 of the report. Key aspects of that proposal included:-

- ◆ residents who used the burgundy bin solely for food waste would not require a permit
- ◆ the permit would cost £45 per annum and, except for a 2-week period over Christmas and New Year, the burgundy bin would be collected every 2 weeks in the financial year
- ◆ unlike the current food and garden waste collection service, the permit scheme would be available to residents in rural Clydesdale. The cost of the permit would include the cost of providing the burgundy bin as well as a food waste caddy. The establishment of this service would allow those residents in rural Clydesdale not currently on the service to opt in to receive a burgundy bin and caddy for food waste only
- ◆ the new Service would commence from 1 April 2025, however, given the scale of the project, it was anticipated that implementation work would commence on 1 July 2024
- ◆ significant community engagement would be undertaken by Waste Services to ensure residents were aware of the new charges as well as alternative options. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document was provided at Appendix 2 to the report
- ◆ the costs associated with the proposal, outlined at paragraphs 4.6 to 4.13 of the report, included:-
 - ◆ the establishment of a Project Team to manage the design, implementation and roll out of the Service. This would include a specialist IT system to manage the permit process. Costs associated with establishing the Project Team, purchasing the IT system and burgundy bins were estimated at £0.170 million
 - ◆ the vehicle fleet establishment would need to be increased by 3 refuse collection vehicles in 2025/2026. Leasing and maintenance costs were detailed at paragraph 4.8 of the report. Employee costs associated with the additional Waste Operatives required to crew those vehicles would be in the region £0.184 million in 2025/2026 and £0.330 million from 2026/2027 onwards
 - ◆ four 14-tonne refuse collection vehicles, that had been purchased using funding from Zero Waste Scotland in 2015, would have to be replaced to ensure the Service continued to operate across South Lanarkshire. Those 'owned' assets were not on the vehicle replacement list and were now nearing end of life. The cost of replacing those with leased vehicles was detailed at paragraph 4.10 of the report
- ◆ expected income from the uptake of the Service, as outlined at paragraph 4.12 of the report

The proposal to introduce a charge for the uplift of burgundy bins containing garden waste would require an overall increase in establishment, with the following posts being added to Waste Services, as detailed at paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the report:-

- ◆ 1 FTE Project Officer post, temporary for 21 months, on Grade 3, Level 2 to 4, SCP 63-74 (£37,866 to £43,615)
- ◆ 3 FTE Waste Education Assistant posts, temporary for 12 months, on Grade 2, Level 1, SCP 34-35 (£26,023 to £26,406)
- ◆ 4 FTE permanent Waste Operative (Loaders) posts on Grade 1, Level 3, SCP 25-27 (£25,140 to £25,729)
- ◆ 5 FTE permanent Waste Operative (Drivers) posts on Grade 1, Level 4, SCP 30-31 (£29,682 to £30,054)

The permanent posts would be implemented on a phased basis over 2 years, as detailed at paragraph 5.4 of the report.

The total costs associated with the proposal were detailed at section 6 of the report and included estimated net income after deducting the costs of the Service. The proposal, if endorsed, would be referred to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for approval.

The Scottish Government was currently considering proposals to make garden waste collections mandatory. If that was to be implemented, the Council would no longer be able to charge for the collection service. It was expected that appropriate compensatory funding would be made available to local authorities in respect of the new statutory obligation.

Following an extensive discussion and interchange of views, Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Devlin moved that the matter be referred, without endorsement, to the Executive Committee for decision.

Councillor McAllan, seconded by Councillor Johnston-Dempsey moved as an amendment that the recommendations in the report be not endorsed and not referred to the Executive Committee.

On a vote being taken using the electronic voting system, 12 members voted for the motion and 11 members voted for the amendment. The motion was declared carried.

The Committee decided: that the matter be referred, without endorsement, to the Executive Committee for decision.

- 4.2 A link to the report submitted to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 is provided for information.

[Introduction of Charge for Uplift of Household Garden Waste \(Burgundy\) Bin](#)

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. All employee implications were highlighted as part of the original reports to the Resource Committee.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. All financial implications were highlighted as part of the original reports to Resource Committee.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. All climate change, sustainability and environmental implications were highlighted as part of the original reports to Resource Committee.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. Any risks or other implications were highlighted as part of the original reports to the Resource Committee.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. Equality impact assessment and consultation arrangements were highlighted as part of the original reports to the Resource Committee.

Paul Manning
Chief Executive

18 June 2024

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent

Previous References

- ◆ Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 18 June 2024 (Paragraphs 8 and 9)

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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