

Cheshire East Council

Supply of Household Recycling and Waste Bins

Part One: Summary of results

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Report produced by:

Research and Consultation Team
Business Intelligence
Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Email: RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Introduction

Background and Methodology

Between 13 March and 21 May 2018 Cheshire East Council conducted a survey to gather views on the proposal to implement a bin supply charge for new and replacement bins.

This proposal formed part of the budget consultation which was agreed in principle by Council in February 2018; with a clear understanding that responses from this individual survey, which provided greater detail on the proposal, will be analysed and considered before a final decision is made in July 2018.

The survey was advertised on the Cheshire East Website and was also sent directly to Cheshire East Borough Councillors and to all Town and Parish Councils as well as members of Cheshire East's digital panel.

In total 1,895 responses were returned either via paper or through the online survey link.

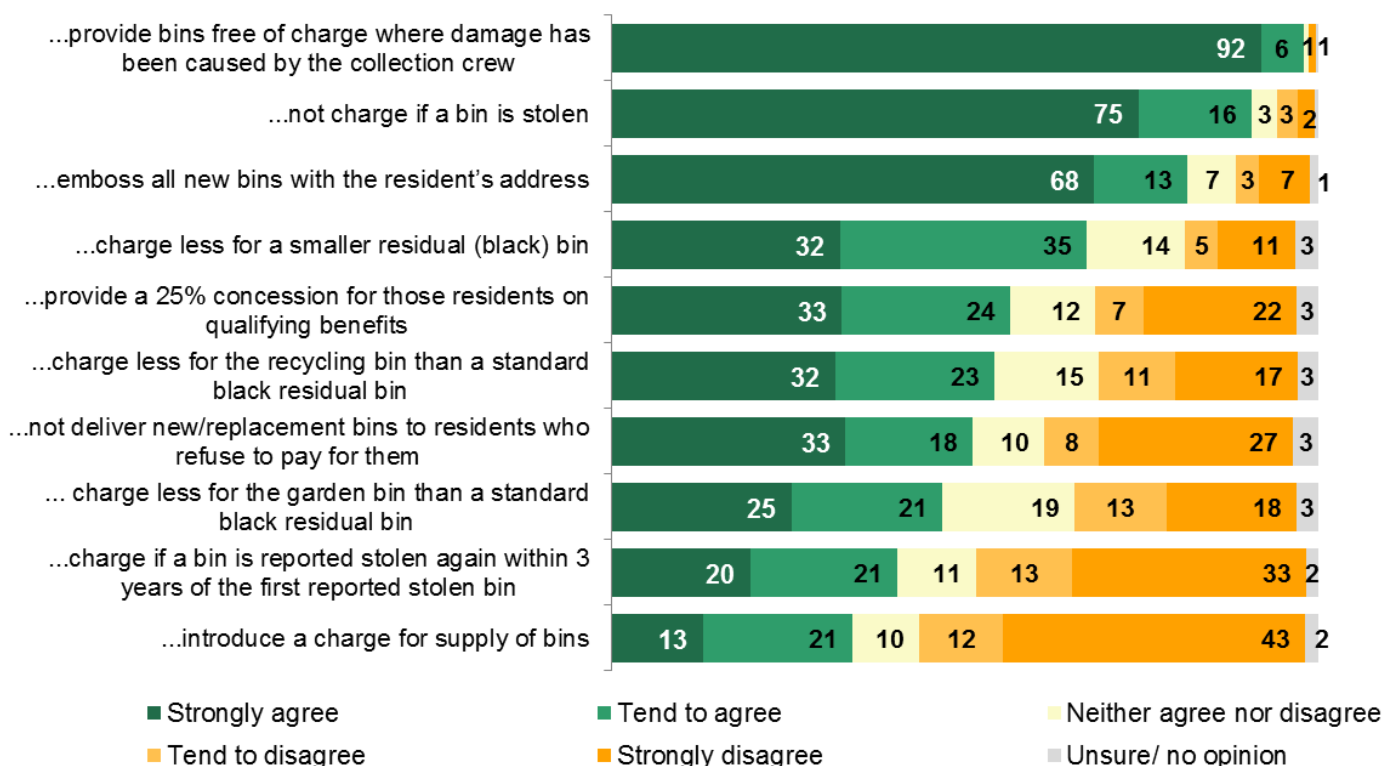
Please note that for the purpose of this report open comments received have been coded and grouped into themes. A more detailed open comments report: part two, will be sent to the relevant department to ensure that they feed directly into the decision making process.

Analysis of Results

Before responding to the questionnaire, respondents were provided with detailed background information as to why the Council is considering charging for the supply of new and replacement household waste bins.

Respondents were asked a series of questions on how strongly they agreed or disagreed with various aspects of the proposal. The full breakdown of results can be seen in figure 1. Over 90% of respondents agreed that Cheshire East Council should provide bins free of charge where damage has been caused by the collection crew (98% agreed) and that Cheshire East should not charge if a bin is stolen (91%). Respondents were less likely to agree that Cheshire East should charge if a bin is reported stolen again within 3 years of the first reported bin (42% agreed) and that Cheshire East Council should introduce a charge for supply of bins (34% agreed) with 10% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Figure 1: How strongly do you agree or disagree that Cheshire East Council should... (%)



Base for % = 1,879

Table 1 shows how the responses to the question - 'how strongly do you agree or disagree that Cheshire East Council should introduce a charge for supply of bins' - vary by settlement area. Respondents from Crewe were significantly more likely to disagree (64% disagreed) with a charge than respondents overall (55% disagreed) compared with respondents from Goostrey & Holmes Chapel (49% agreed), Handforth, Alderley Edge & Wilmslow (45% agreed), Macclesfield & Bollington (46% agreed), Prestbury & Poynton (50% agreed) who were significantly more likely to agree with a charge than respondents overall (34% agreed). Ten percent of respondents stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to charge.

Table 1: How strongly do you agree or disagree that Cheshire east Council should introduce a charge for supply of bins? By Settlement area

Settlement Area	Agree (strongly or tend to)		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree (strongly or tend to)		Unsure/ no opinion		Total Count
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Alsager	14	26	5	9	34	64	0	0	53
Congleton	57	38	10	7	79	53	4	3	150
Crewe	82	26	29	9	200	64	2	1	313
Disley	11	44	3	12	9	36	2	8	25
Goostrey & Holmes Chapel	33	49	9	13	26	38	0	0	68
Handforth, Alderley Edge & Wilmslow	46	45	14	14	40	39	2	2	102
Haslington	10	29	4	12	19	56	1	3	34
Knutsford	17	47	3	8	14	39	2	6	36
Macclesfield & Bollington	84	46	16	9	78	43	4	2	182
Middlewich	27	33	11	13	41	50	3	4	82
Nantwich	23	36	7	11	34	53	0	0	64
Prestbury & Poynton	33	50	7	11	25	38	1	2	66
Sandbach	32	30	10	10	60	57	3	3	105
Shavington	8	26	2	6	20	65	1	3	31
Smaller Villages*	11	38	5	17	13	45	0	0	29
Rural Areas	73	39	16	9	93	50	3	2	185

**Includes Chelford, Mobberley, Wrenbury, Audlem & Bunbury*

If respondents disagreed with any of the proposals they were asked to give their reason(s) as to why. A total of 1,245 valid comments were received. The top 10 grouped comments can be seen in table 2. The theme with the most comments was that the cost should already be covered by Council Tax/already increased Council Tax this year (referenced 433 times). Concerns that instances of fly tipping may increase if residents refuse to pay for a replacement bin was the next most common theme.

Table 2: If you disagreed with any of the proposals then please give your reasons why. Top 10 grouped references

Theme	Reference Count
This cost should already be covered by council tax / already increased council tax this year	433
Concern over potential increase in the amount of fly tipping	306
All bins should cost the same/ only charge less for smaller bins	164
Will cost more than it saves (e.g. admin costs / cost of embossing bins/ cleaning up fly tipping)	156
There should be no charge for theft / stolen bins	145
Unfair system / tax (e.g. in areas where theft is higher / for repeated victims of theft / for the poor & vulnerable / cost should be equal for all)	133
Initial bin for any household should be free (Inc. new builds/ house move if bins aren't left by previous occupier)	124
Concern that there will be a potential increase in stolen bins	108
There should be no reduction in cost for those on benefits	85
New homes generate additional Council Tax anyway	72

Respondents were asked if they had any alternative solutions as to how the Council could address budgetary pressures. A total of 1,033 valid comments were received. The **top 10** grouped comments can be seen in table 3. The top 2 grouped comments were: general finance complaint (referenced 193 times) and review councillor pay/ staffing costs (referenced 142 times).

Table 3: We are seeking to address a budget pressure by introducing this new charging policy, is there an alternative solution? Top 10 grouped references

Theme	Reference Count
General finance complaint (e.g. spending, budget management, staff suspensions)	193
Review councillor pay/ staffing costs	142
Charge housing developers	91
This cost should already be covered by council tax / already increased council tax this year	73
Small Council Tax increase for all households to cover the cost	63
Find savings elsewhere	56
In support of some charges under certain circumstances	52
New homes generate additional Council Tax anyway	33
Concern over potential increase in the amount of fly tipping	28
Should implement communal bins especially in terraced areas where storage is an issue	27

Respondents were asked whether there was anything further that they would like to add. A total of 762 valid comments were received. The **top 10** grouped comments can be seen in table 4. Respondents mentioned that the consultation outcome was pre-determined or that they required more information (data/statistics) (referenced 117 times). Potential for an increase in fly tipping was again raised as a concern (referenced 103 times).

Table 4: Is there anything else you would like to add about this consultation? Top 10 grouped references

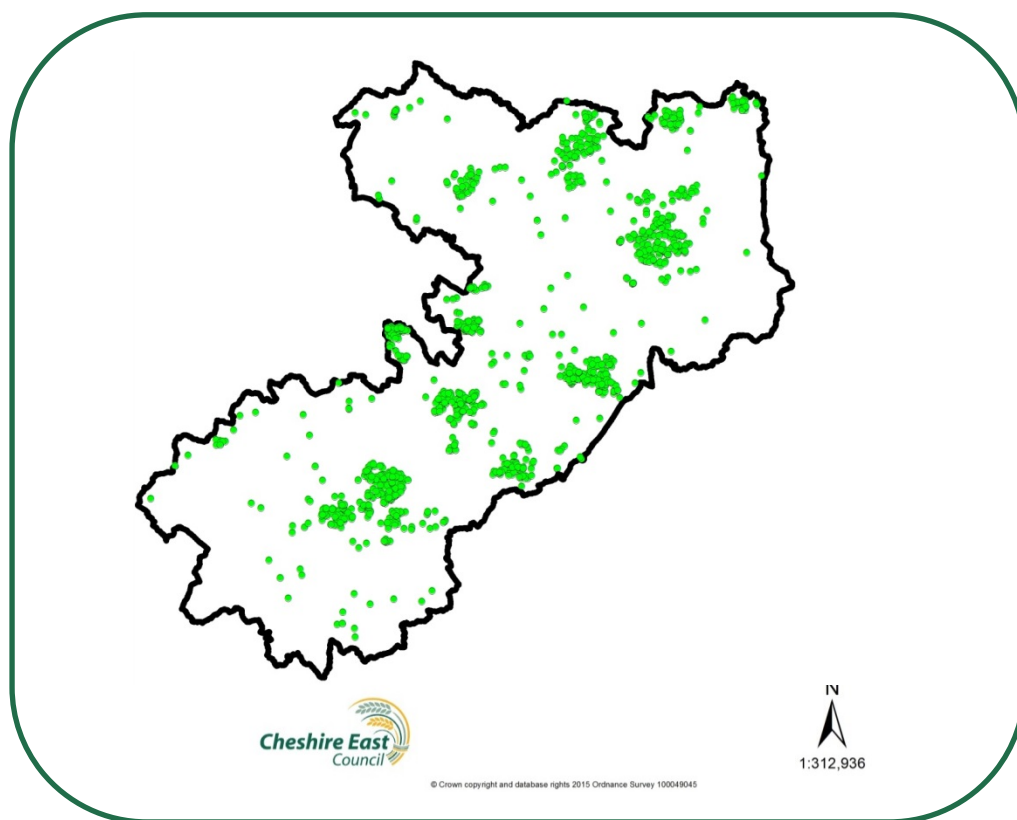
Theme	Reference Count
Concerns that consultation is pre-determined / general consultation query / need more data/statistics	117
Concern over potential increase in the amount of fly tipping	103
This cost should already be covered by council tax / already increased council tax this year	86
Find savings elsewhere	81
General finance complaint (e.g. spending, budget management, staff suspensions)	46
Concern that there will be a decrease in recycling	45
In support of some charges under certain circumstances	36
Concern's that Council will side with the bin crew rather than residents when damage occurs	27
Concerns about un-embossed bins	25
No replacement scheme / no fair wear and tear policy	25

Key Demographics

The majority of respondents who completed the survey described themselves as a local resident (95%). There was a good representation of both male (45%) and female (46%) respondents. Respondents were more likely to be aged between 55 to 74 (45%). Full demographic tables can be seen in appendix one.

There was a very good spread of responses received across the Borough as can be seen in figure 2.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents to bin supply consultation



Summary and conclusions

Respondents indicated a general agreement with the majority of questions asked, the questions where more disagreed than agreed were with the proposal to charge residents for bins, if it were stolen again, within three years and whether a charge should be applied at all. Respondents from the Crewe settlement area were significantly less likely to agree with the charge (26% agreed, 64% disagreed) compared with respondents from Goostrey & Holmes Chapel (49% agreed, 38% disagreed), Handforth, Alderley Edge & Wilmslow (45% agreed, 39% disagreed), Macclesfield & Bollington (46% agreed, 43% disagreed), Prestbury & Poynton (50% agreed, 38% disagreed)

Those disagreeing had two main reasons: belief that this cost should already be covered by Council Tax / already increased Council tax this year and concern over the potential increase in the amount of fly tipping.

Respondents wondered why some bins, although the same size, should cost more/less than others and wondered if the proposal would actually cost more than it saves. Respondents in particular felt it was unfair for those who had their bins for a long time, which had now degraded, or for repeat victims of crime - more clarity on the details of the scheme would therefore be beneficial.

The Research and Consultation Team recommend that the Waste Team review all the information that has been provided to them in order to make an informed decision on whether to implement the proposal and if they do, on how best to implement it considering and addressing the issues and concerns that have been brought up within this consultation exercise.

Appendix One: Demographic Tables

Gender	Count	%
Male	811	45%
Female	831	46%
Prefer not to say	130	7%
Other	16	1%
Grand Total	1772	100

Age Group	Count	%
16-24	18	1%
25-34	139	8%
35-44	261	15%
45-54	360	20%
55-64	376	21%
65-74	426	24%
75-84	79	4%
85 and over	8	>1%
Prefer not to say	126	7%
Grand Total	1793	100

Ethnicity	Count	%
White British / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / Irish	1553	87%
Any other White background	21	1%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean / African / Asian	5	>1%
Asian / Asian British	6	>1%
Black African / Caribbean / Black British	4	>1%
Prefer not to say	166	9%
Any other ethnic group, please specify:	27	2%
Grand Total	1782	100

Disability/ long term limiting illness	Count	%
Yes	233	13%
No	1383	78%
Prefer not to say	166	9%
Grand Total	1782	100