

REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26 - WASTE, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Item CE 25/41 referred from Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee of 5 November 2025

The report set out the proposed fees and charges for the provision of services in respect of garden waste subscriptions, household bulky refuse and fridge/freezer collections, “missed” refuse collections, stray dog redemption fees, Tonbridge Allotments, Tonbridge Cemetery, pest control, food certificates, contaminated land monitoring and private water supplies from 1 April 2026. There was also a proposal for introducing charges for recycling and refuse containers at new developments.

In bringing forward the charging proposals for 2026/27, consideration had been given to a range of factors, including the Borough Council’s overall financial position, market position, trading patterns, the current rate of inflation and customer feedback.

A set of guiding principles for the setting of fees and charges had also been taken into account and were summarised in 4.2 of the report.

Concern was raised over the potential impact of increased fees on residents, particularly for garden waste and bulky refuse collections, however, it was recognised that the possibility of exploring concessions for vulnerable groups would be limited by the Council’s budget constraints. Furthermore, it was noted that garden waste subscription rates had increased by over 1,000 compared to the previous year, indicating no negative impact from prior fee increases.

Members’ attention was drawn to the proposal for introducing a charge to new property developers to include capital costs, delivery costs and a reasonable administration element for the provision of all bins and waste containers. It was noted that this approach was already adopted by the majority of councils. This was supported by Members in principle, with suggestion proposed by Councillor Tatton, seconded by Councillor Hood and supported by the Committee, that in addition to recovering the cost for providing bins and containers at new residential properties, the feasibility of seeking the cost for the provision of public litter bins related to new developments from developers also be explored.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the proposed schedule of charges for garden waste subscriptions, as set out in 5.1.4 of the report, be approved;
- (2) the proposed schedule of charges for household bulky refuse and fridge/freezer collection service, as set out in 5.2.4 of the report, be approved;
- (3) the proposed charge for “missed” refuse collection, as set out in 5.3.2 of the report, be approved;

- (4) the proposed schedule of charges in respect of Stray Dog redemption service, as set out in 5.5.4 of the report, be approved;
- (5) the proposed charge for Tonbridge Allotment, as set out in 5.6.2 of the report, be approved;
- (6) the proposed schedule of charges at Tonbridge Cemetery, as set out in Annex 1 and 5.7.2 of the report, be approved;
- (7) the proposed continuation of the pest control subsidy for residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction Scheme alongside the existing charge, as set out in 5.8.1 of the report, be approved;
- (8) the proposed schedule of charges for Condemned Food Certificates, as set out in 5.9.2 of the report, be approved;
- (9) the proposed charge for Exported Food Certificates, as set out in 5.10.4 of the report, be approved;
- (10) the proposed charge for food hygiene requests for re-visits, as set out in 5.11.2 of the report, be approved;
- (11) the proposed charge for provision of services in respect of contaminated land, as set out in 5.12.5 of the report, be approved;
- (12) the proposed charge for provision of services in respect of private water supplies, as set out in 5.13.5 of the report, be approved;
- (13) the above proposed scale of charges (1) to (12) be implemented from 1 April 2026; and
- (14) the principle of charging property developers for the provision of all bins and waste containers at new developments, be approved, and the feasibility of seeking the cost for the provision of public litter bins related to new developments from developers, be explored.

***Recommended to Cabinet**