

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 5th November, 2025

Present: Cllr S A Hudson (Chair), Cllr K S Tunstall (Vice-Chair),
Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr F A Hoskins,
Cllr A McDermott, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr S Pilgrim,
Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr C Brown (substitute) and Cllr M A J Hood
(substitute)

In attendance: Councillors R P Betts and D Keers were also present pursuant to
Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Crisp,
Mrs T Dean and M R Rhodes*.

(*apologies submitted for in-person attendance and participated
via MS Teams in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.
15.21)

CE 25/37 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Councillor M Hood substituted for Councillor S Crisp
- Councillor C Brown substituted for Councillor M Rhodes

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 these
councillors had the same rights as the ordinary member of the
committee for whom they were substituting.

CE 25/38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the
Code of Conduct.

CE 25/39 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Communities and
Environment Scrutiny Select Committee held on 18 September 2025 be
approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CE 25/40 OUTSIDE BODY UPDATE - SNODLAND PARTNERSHIP

An update provided by the Borough Council's representative on this
Outside Body (Councillor L Chapman) advised that the Snodland

Partnership, established in 2000, brought together the Town Council, local businesses, housing associations, and community groups to direct funding for local benefit, delivering projects that strengthened the town, tackled anti-social behaviour, improved green spaces, supported young people, and supported local groups and organisations in need of assistance, with particular reference made to a new BMX Pump Track.

Furthermore, it was noted that the Partnership was seeking to expand by recruiting more local businesses and encouraging broader community involvement, aiming to continue building a vibrant and safe town.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

CE 25/41 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26 - WASTE, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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**

**CE 25/42 AIR QUALITY MONITORING UPDATES AND AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT AREAS - RECOMMENDATIONS**

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health advised that, in line with statutory duties, monitoring of Air Quality had continued in the Borough and the Annual Status Report 2025 submitted to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) earlier this year had been appraised and approved.

Based on the evidence, the revocation of four of the five remaining Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) at Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green were recommended. Members were advised that these AQMA could be revoked as there had been significant improvement in air quality and improved pollution levels. This position was supported by DEFRA as referenced in Paragraph 6 of their Annual Status Report appraisal, attached at Annex 1. Members were pleased to note that monitoring in some form within the areas of the AQMA to be revoked would continue, to keep air quality under review in known hotspots.

The potential of relocating continuous monitoring equipment to Watlingtonbury, the only remaining AQMA, was discussed and it was explained that previous attempts had not shown exceedance of nitrogen dioxide level. The use of lamp post-mounted sensors was also noted and ongoing monitoring at known hotspots was confirmed.

In addition, air quality monitoring across the Borough would continue in line with statutory requirements and there would be flexibility to move monitoring sites currently outside of AQMA as appropriate.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the improvement in air quality over the last four years, be noted;
- (2) the revocation of the Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green Air Quality Management Areas, be agreed; and
- (3) the continuation of air quality monitoring across the Borough, including to respond to any specific areas of concern, be agreed.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

**CE 25/43 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ENFORCEMENT TEAM - UPDATE OF
WORK AND REQUEST FOR FUNDING**

Members were provided with an update on the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Enforcement Team employed by the Borough Council to work from May to November 2025.

Members recognised that the ASB Enforcement Team provided a high-profile visible presence throughout the Borough, which was reassuring to residents, local businesses, interested parties and visitors to Tonbridge and Malling. Feedback from parish/town councils and the public in respect of the scheme for this year was largely positive, with particular reference made to the successful management of Halloween-related incidents in Kings Hill and Snodland, attributing improvements to coordinated efforts between the ASB Enforcement Team and Kent Police.

It was noted that parishes which contributed funding to the pilot scheme received detailed monthly reports, while Tonbridge, as a non-parished area, was also covered by regular team visits, and it was suggested that updates could be provided at Tonbridge Community Forum, in addition to the Parish Partnership Panel.

Therefore, it was proposed that the scheme should be continued. To allow for consistency and for a more streamlined procurement process, it was proposed that the Team be funded for a further two-year period, subject to identifying suitable sources of funding, including seeking contributions from parish/town councils.

The Committee supported 'in principle' the continuation of the scheme for the next two years, allowing the procurement process for potential contractors to be undertaken in good time to secure the ASB Enforcement Team. Final endorsement would be subject to Council approval of funding in February 2026 as part of the annual budget setting process.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the continuation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Team for a further two-year period, be agreed, subject to Council approval of the funding in February 2026 as part of the annual budget setting process**;
- (2) the request for funding from Parish/Town Councils, be agreed; and
- (3) the initiation of the procurement process for the Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Team, be agreed.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

****approval of funding to be referred to Council**

**CE 25/44 WASTE MINIMISATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT AT EVENTS
ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND**

The report of the Chief Executive sought endorsement of a proposed new guidance note, attached at Annex 1, to support event organisers in aligning their events with the Borough Council's objective to remove single use plastics from their operations. Subject to Member approval, the guidance note could be issued to all event organisers for the 2026 event programme.

It was noted that the guidance would place requirements on event organisers to be fully responsible for waste, to separate the collection of recyclables and general waste and to operate a reusable cup deposit scheme.

Support would be provided in the first year through an allocation of £5,000 from the Waste and Recycling Budget to purchase re-usable cups and additional bins for waste separation. These resources would be available for loan to smaller community event organisers to help them manage waste without incurring extra costs.

On the grounds of encouraging greater use of refills and reducing waste from Council owned sites, the initiative as proposed received strong support from the Committee.

RECOMMENDED*: That the proposed guidance note, attached at Annex 1, be endorsed.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

CE 25/45 ANNUAL PORTFOLIO REVIEW- CLIMATE CHANGE

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy (Councillor R Betts) provided a comprehensive overview of climate change related activities during the current year, updating Members on EV charging infrastructure, Green Business Grants, tree planting, food waste recycling, leisure centre decarbonisation, and future carbon reduction initiatives.

Members welcomed the progress to-date and queried the stalling recycling rates compared to neighbouring local authority. It was explained that a 12-month marketing programme would be implemented to target recycling initiatives as an ongoing commitment of the Borough

Council to improve recycling rate, with particular reference made to a campaign recently launched to encourage food waste recycling.

CE 25/46 ANNUAL PORTFOLIO UPDATE - COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Cabinet Member for Community Services (Councillor D Keers) provided an in-depth update covering achievements and future plans in Leisure Services, community engagement and development, safeguarding, Customer Services and community safety, with details on facility improvement, grant schemes, safeguarding and equality training, customer service enhancements and event management throughout the current year.

Successful delivery of a wide range of community services through a coordinated approach across departments of the Borough Council met the objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy and the Annual Service Delivery Plan and were welcomed by Members.

CE 25/47 WORK PROGRAMME 2025

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during 2025/26 was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest future matters by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

CE 25/48 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no matters considered in private.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm