

**Report of the Portfolio Holders for Environment and Climate Change, and
Resources and Personnel Policy.**

Garden Waste Subscription Fees 2025/26

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the 2025/26 garden waste subscription fees.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that:

- 1. The subscription fee for the first garden bin be increased by £2.**
- 2. The subscription fee for additional garden bins be increased by £1.**
- 3. From 1 October 2025, the subscription fee for the first garden bin be reduced to £26 and any other additional bins are discounted by 50%.**
- 4. The method of communication regarding the new garden waste season changed from a direct letter to a leaflet for each household, be approved.**

3. Detail

The collection of garden waste is a non-statutory recycling service. The aim of the garden waste subscription fee is to assist the Authority in the delivery of this service to those residents who choose to subscribe.

On 23 October 2023, the Department for Food, Environment & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) provided an update on the anticipated waste reforms stemming from the 'Our Waste Our Resources: A Strategy for England', published in December 2018. In the update, DEFRA confirmed that local authorities could continue to charge for garden waste collections.

An income target of £1,029,000 was set for the 2024/25 garden waste subscription period. As of 1 November 2024, 22,417 properties have subscribed to the current season generating an income of £1,028,000.

Compared to the previous year, the number of subscribers in 2024/25 has decreased by 2%.

Outlined in the **Appendix** are options relating to the proposed fees for the 2024/25 garden waste collection service and a change in the way that residents are notified about the garden waste season.

4. Key Decision

This report a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it effects communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards or electoral divisions in the Council's area.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

It is vital that the price increases are supported and revenue income maximised in order to meet the Council's anticipated budget gap in 2025/26. Ongoing marketing continues to drive forward the service with the aim of increasing the volume of subscriptions. The proposed increases in the price for the first bin and for any additional bins would generate useful additional income. The Business Strategy approved by Cabinet on 5 November 2024 included an additional £47,000 in Garden Waste income from an expected fee increase from similar volumes of service users in 2025/26. The fees and charges agreed by Members will be built into the budget setting process for 2025/26.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The Council is the waste collection authority for the Borough with a duty to collect specified forms of waste. Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 states "no fee shall be made for the collection of household waste except in cases prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State". Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 states that fees may be made for the collection of household garden waste. Additionally, Section 45(3) (b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 requires that collection authorities make a reasonable fee for the collection of household garden waste.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The garden waste collection scheme encourages appropriate diversion of waste away from the black-lidded bin, thus helping to mitigate against additional carbon emissions.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

Not applicable.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.