

## East Herts Council Report

**Date:** 21 January 2025  
**Report by:** Head of Operations  
**Report title:** Garden Waste Subscription Charges  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

### Summary

This report outlines a proposed increase in price for the subscription of the garden waste services relating to collections from April 2025.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILTY that:**

- a) Approval is provided to increase the garden waste service charge to £59.

### **1.0 Background**

1.1 In January 2021, Council approved the introduction of a chargeable garden waste collection service which went live from April 2021. The charge was set at £49 with an early bird discount for a limited period of time at £45. The service is delivered as part of a shared waste, recycling and street cleansing service contract with North Herts District Council. Since the commencement of the service the subscription charge has not increased to reflect contract inflation and administrative cost of services. Contract inflation increased by the following rates since the start of the service, the table below shows prices should contract inflation be applied (based on previous years rate):

<b>Service Yr</b>	<b>Contract inflation % applied</b>	<b>Inflation Value</b>	<b>Charge</b>
April 2021	N/A	N/A	£49
April 2022	3.8% (21/22)	£1.86	£50.86

April 2023	9.9% (22/23)	£5.03	£55.89
April 2024	3.7% (23/24)	£2.07	£57.96
April 2025	3.2% (24/25)	£1.85	£59.81

1.2 As part of the Council's Medium Term Financial, all services areas were requested to investigate savings /income generation. Given the lack of contract inflation applied to the cost of the garden waste service it would be prudent to apply this to future subscription periods and "catch up" on missed inflation for the last 4yrs.

1.3 Data for 25/26 for other authorities is currently not available, the below table provides subscription charges for 24/25 across Hertfordshire districts.

<b>Authority - 2024/25</b>	<b>Normal Charge</b>
Broxbourne	£49.00
Dacorum	£50.00
East Herts	£49.00
North Herts	£49.00
St Albans	£63.00
Three Rivers	£65.00
Watford	£55.00
Welwyn Hatfield	£55.00

1.4 Approximately 30,000 customers are signed up to the garden waste collection service. The service is promoted from February with payments taken in March.

## **2. Proposals**

2.1 Approval is provided to increase the garden waste service charge to £59.

## **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 The price change will have a net positive impact on the budget. It is estimated this will be approximately £300,000.

## **4.0 Options**

4.1 To agree an alternative charge for the period, however this is not recommended. The current model is based on contract inflation cost over the last 4yrs.

## **5.0 Risks**

5.1 There is a potential risk that some customers find the increase in price unaffordable. Home composting and using recycling could be options for further promotion.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

6.1 Customers will be contacted should the price increase be approved.

## **Community Safety**

No

## **Data Protection**

No

## **Equalities**

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) carried out for the introduction of the chargeable garden waste service still applies to the service. The proposed increase in the subscription charge may affect people on low or no income however this is not a protected characteristic as part of an EQIA. Other options include home composting or taking garden waste to recycling centres.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

The collection of garden waste has historically required the use of non-electric large collection vehicles. The intention is to minimise the environmental impact by using Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) to replace some (or all) of the diesel usage. The charging for garden waste collection may encourage some residents to compost their garden waste which then reduces some of fuel emissions and has environmental benefits such as those relating to soil health.

## **Financial**

This is a saving/income generation option as part of the medium-term financial plan.

## **Health and Safety**

No

## **Human Resources**

No

## **Human Rights**

No

## **Legal**

In accordance with section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012, the Council may recover a reasonable charge for the collection of household garden waste.

A decision to approve the proposed increase in garden waste subscription charges is a key decision in accordance with section 3.35.6 of the Constitution as it is likely to result in new income of more than £200,000 in relation to the Council's budget.

## **Specific Wards**

All

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

Not Applicable

## **Contact Member**

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