

11/280 ALLOTMENT RENT REVIEW – EFFECTIVE FROM 1st OCTOBER 2026

Background

The Council reviews allotment rents on an annual basis - the last allotment rent review was carried out in September 2024 when it was agreed that the charge would increase from 50p per m² to 53p per m². All tenants were given twelve months' notice of the increase effective from 1st October 2025.

Charging Policy

The Town Council seeks to recover an increasing proportion of the net cost of providing allotments from the tenants, thereby reducing the level of shortfall by council taxpayers. There is a correlation between any substantial price increases and the number of tenants who surrender their tenancy. This Committee needs to consider the sustainability of increasing prices – **an untenanted plot costs the Town Council more to manage and maintain than the revenue that can be generated from it being tenanted.**

Historical Charges

The table below shows the historic charges per sq. metre.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Charge per sq. metre	40p	43p	49p	50p	53p
Sq. metres	48,970	48,970	48,970	48,970	48,970
Budgeted Income (£)	19,588	21,371	23,995	24,485	25,954
Budgeted Expenditure (£)	19,996	21,058	24,165	24,443	25,560
(Shortfall) / Surplus (£)	(408)	(313)	(170)	(42)	394
Shortfall (%)	2%	(1.5%)	(0.7%)	(0.2%)	1.5%
Average Annual charge (based on 143m²)	57.20	61.49	70.07	71.50	75.79
Average Weekly charge (based on 143m²)	1.10	1.18	1.35	1.38	1.46
% increase (compared to previous year)	0%	7:50%	14.0%	2.0%	6.0%

The charge per m² in 2017/18 was 34p; 2018/19 was 37p and 2019/20 and 2021/22 was 40p.

Current situation

The Council continues to seek ways of reducing cost and working more effectively. At this time, with the changes within the Leisure and Environment budget, and allotment maintenance being brought in house, it recommended to apply RPI to the previous years budget. The annual RPI annual inflation rate for July 2025 was 4.8%. (Please note the RPI figure figures for August 2025 have not yet been published).

	Estimated Outturn For 2025/26	Estimated Budget for 2026/27
Staffing Costs (inc NI and Pension) (£)	11,760	12,324
Allotment Maintenance	13,800	14,462
Total Expenditure (£)	25,560	26,786

The following table indicates the potential changes required to the charge per sq. metre to fully fund.

Charge per sq. metre	53p	55p
Sq. metres	48,970	48,970
Budgeted Income (£)	25,954	26,934
Budgeted Expenditure (£)	26,786	26,786
(Shortfall)/Surplus (£)	(832)	148
(Shortfall)/Surplus (%)	1.5%	0.6%
Average Annual charge (based on 143m²)	75.79	78.65
Average Weekly charge (based on 143m²)	1.45	1.51
% increase (compared to previous year)	5%	4%

Water Charges

Mains water charges are recharged to each allotment site and collected from tenants on an annual basis. This approach is both equitable (since tenants on each site only pay for mains water they have used) and encourages tenants to adopt alternative more environmentally friendly ways of collecting and recycling rainwater (thereby reducing their dependency on mains water and saving money) thus supporting the Council's values of raising awareness of environmental issues, improving the quality of the environment and encouraging an environmentally friendly ethos.

Water meter readings are taken at the end of the summer growing season to ensure that the costs could be calculated and included in the invoices that are sent out in October each year. Costs are split proportionately with tenants of plots less than 125 m² (standard half-plot) pay 50% of the charge

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED**:

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) to agree to increase from 53p per m² to 55p per m²; and
- (3) to recommend to Finance & Policy Executive the charge agreed in (2) for the year commencing 1st October 2026.

Should Members have further questions, please contact the Chief Executive/Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

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