Full Council Meeting (Wednesday 11th March 2026) **(Agenda Item 14)**

Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council

Report Title: Fees and Charges
Roeshot Hill and Walkford Road Allotments

1. Introduction

This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for allotment plots for the upcoming financial year. The purpose is to ensure that allotment rents remain fair, sustainable, and reflective of the rising costs associated with site maintenance, administration, and future improvements. The parish council is required to review its fees annually to ensure they remain appropriate and financially viable.

2. Background

The parish council currently manages allotment plots at Roeshot and has seen increasing demand for plots in recent years. Operational costs have risen due to general inflation, grounds maintenance, water usage, waste removal, and administrative time. The last review of allotment fees was undertaken in March 2024, and since then, costs have continued to increase. A review is therefore necessary to ensure the service remains cost-neutral and sustainable.

3. Current Fees

- Standard price per rod £9.50 per year

These fees are invoiced annually from 1st April.

4. Cost Analysis

The following ongoing costs have been identified for the allotment site:

- Water supply and meter charges
- Hedge trimming and boundary maintenance
- Waste disposal and skip hire
- Administrative time
- Repairs to fencing, gates, and infrastructure

Since 2024, the UK has continued to experience inflation levels above the Bank of England's 2% target. Throughout 2024 and 2025, inflation generally ranged between 2% and 4%, reflecting ongoing increases in the cost of goods, services, and utilities. This

sustained period of higher inflation has contributed to rising operational costs for the allotment sites, including maintenance, water usage, and administrative support. In light of these pressures, an inflation-linked adjustment to allotment fees would help ensure the service remains financially sustainable

5. Proposed Fees for 2026/27

To ensure the allotments remain financially sustainable, the following increases are proposed:

The proposed increase aims to cover the rising operational costs while keeping allotments affordable for residents.

6. Impact on Tenants

The proposed increase represents a modest rise in annual costs for tenants. The council recognises the importance of allotments for wellbeing, food growing, and community engagement, and has therefore kept increases to the minimum necessary to maintain the service.

Tenants will be notified of any changes in advance, with new fees taking effect from 1st April 2027.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parish Council:

1. **Approves the proposed allotment fees for the 2026/27 financial year**, as set out in Section 5.
2. **Applies an annual increase of between 2–4%** to reflect inflation and rising operational costs.
3. **Reviews fees annually** to ensure they remain aligned with actual expenditure and service demands.
4. **Continues to monitor site maintenance needs** and allocates budget accordingly.

Vanessa Ricketts FSLCC
Clerk and RFO
January 2026