

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

13 January 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage on Wednesday, 21 January 2026 at 7.00pm and you are summoned to attend to transact the following business.

Yours faithfully

Tom Pike
Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 17 DECEMBER 2025

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council on held on 17 December 2025.

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3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications that the Mayor may wish to put before the Council.

4. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

None received.

5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL

None received.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None received.

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S UPDATE

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, the Leader of the Opposition shall be given the opportunity to raise one matter relevant to the Borough that has arisen since the last meeting of the Council. The Leader of the Council shall then have the opportunity to advise the Council of matters relevant to the Borough that have arisen since the last meeting.

9. UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS

To receive updates from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees on the recent activities of those Committees.

10. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

In accordance with Standing Orders, the following motions have been received for consideration:

(1) Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic

To be moved by Councillor Coleen De Freitas

This Council welcomes the changes already made to Government guidance, in that it removes the local connection requirement for care leavers when applying for and being allocated local social housing. The Council will ensure that guidance and support will be given to care leavers in accordance with its legal and statutory responsibilities.

This Council notes that:

- a) care experienced people face significant barriers that impact on them throughout their lives. Care leavers make up 25% of Britain's young homeless population, and adults who have spent time in care are far more likely than their peers to die prematurely.
- b) despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account and care experienced people often face direct and indirect discrimination in many areas of life, including housing, health, education, relationships, employment and criminal justice.
- c) the Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.
- d) current Care Leaver provision ends at age 25, whereas recognition of care experience as a protected characteristic would mean that care experience would be taken into account for a lifetime – in the same way as the discrimination and hardships resulting from care experience last a lifetime.

This Council therefore resolves that:

- 1. it recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination and will treat care experience as if it were a protected

characteristic, and expects councillors and Council staff to challenge negative attitudes and prejudices towards care experienced people.

2. Equality Impact Assessments relating to any future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by this Council will now also include impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally have a protected characteristic.
3. requests that the Chief Executive undertakes an assessment of current policies and service areas provided by Stevenage Borough Council to determine impact, including any financial impact, of this policy change.
4. in its delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty, this Council will include care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who have a protected characteristic in services and employment.
5. this Council formally calls upon all other bodies, including other local authorities in Hertfordshire, to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as this recognition may be introduced by legislation.
6. this Council will proactively seek and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies.

(2) May's local elections in Stevenage must go ahead

To be moved by Councillor Andy McGuinness

This Council understands the importance of having a replenished electoral mandate from the people of Stevenage which can only come through the ballot box. This Council also affirms the sanctity of elections which should only be cancelled in the most extreme of circumstances. Therefore, this Council believes that the scheduled local elections for Thursday 7th May 2026 in Stevenage should continue as planned and there is no current compelling reason, linked to local government reorganisation, to cancel them.

(3) Motion: Practical Environmentalism – Delivering Cleaner Streets and Better Value for Residents

To be moved by Councillor Mason Humberstone

This Council notes that:

1. Stevenage Borough Council declared a “Climate Emergency”, committing officer time and financial resources to strategies and targets largely outside the Council's direct control.
2. Residents consistently identify cleaner streets, safer parks, reduced fly-tipping and better maintenance of public spaces as higher priorities than aspirational, costly and unrealistic climate declarations.

3. This Council faces ongoing financial pressures, including debt, which require a sharper focus on value for money and frontline delivery.

This Council believes that:

1. Environmental policy should focus on practical, visible improvements to the local environment rather than symbolic declarations.
2. Council resources should be directed toward outcomes residents can see and feel in their daily lives.
3. A cleaner, safer and well-maintained town is the most effective form of local environmentalism.

This Council resolves to:

1. Rescind the Council's Climate Emergency declaration and discontinue non-statutory programmes, strategies and reporting arising from it.
2. Redirect all associated funding and officer time toward:
 - Reducing Council debt;
 - Strengthening frontline services;
 - Improving core environmental enforcement and maintenance.
3. Adopt a "Practical Environmentalism" approach, prioritising:
 - Stronger enforcement against fly-tipping, including increased use of Fixed Penalty Notices and prosecutions;
 - Enhanced street cleaning, litter removal and waste enforcement;
 - Improved maintenance of parks, play areas and community spaces;
 - Faster response times to environmental complaints.
4. Report annually to Full Council on:
 - Environmental enforcement outcomes;
 - Cleanliness and maintenance standards across the town;
 - Savings achieved and how they have been reinvested in frontline services.

11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CHAIRS/PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

in accordance with Standing Orders, written answers to the following questions will be circulated on a supplementary agenda.

(A) Question from Councillor Julie Ashley-Wren

Fire brigades nationally have been warning about the increasing danger of fires from lithium-ion batteries in e-scooters and home modified e-bikes. The London Fire Brigade recently announced there have been 169 e-bike and 36 e-scooter fires in the capital up to the end of September, sadly resulting in two fatalities

What proactive action is the Council taking to reduce the risks of these serious fires in our council properties, and in particular within our flat blocks?

(B) Question from Councillor Robin Parker

The SBC website states that Chronicle magazine is delivered up to 5 times a year. How many times was it actually delivered in 2023, 2024 and 2025; how many addresses were missed each time; what checking was done (and how) to obtain these figures; what remedial action is taken for missed addresses?

(C) Question from Councillor Stephen Booth

Regarding the new food waste disposal scheme, I understand that DEFRA will be covering the initial set-up costs of this, the Government's so-called "Simpler Recycling" scheme, how will ongoing and annual service costs be met and how much will this amount to annually? Given that waste collection authorities may decide "frequency and methodology for collection in a way that meets local needs and provides value for money for taxpayers" what consideration has been given to alternative collection methods to that proposed by the Council?

(D) Question from Councillor Peter Wilkins

The Council website states it aims to remove offensive graffiti before other graffiti, and within one day of receiving a report, and all other graffiti within five days. Can you provide data that shows the councils performance against these standards for removing graffiti and offensive graffiti?

(E) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness

What costs have been already incurred by the Council and how much officer time has been taken up in dealing with Local Government Reorganisation in Hertfordshire?

(F) Question from Councillor Tom Wren

At the council meeting held on 24th July 2019 I asked a question asking for figures for the number of council trees felled and replanted in the proceeding 3 years. This showed the council was not meeting it's pledge to plant replacements trees nearby for all felled trees. Please could the same figures be provided for each year 2020-2025.

(G) Question from Councillor Rob Henry

Does the Labour administration agree with me that free, fair, and open elections are fundamental to our democratic process and must be protected without exception?

(H) Question from Councillor Mason Humberstone

Can this administration explain what it is doing to ensure that local infrastructure and essential services are not overwhelmed by the increasing number of new developments in our town?

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12. HRA BUDGET AND RENT SETTING 2026/27

To update Members on the proposals for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets and rent setting for 2026/27.

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