

NOTICE OF DECISIONS TAKEN (PART 1 – FOR PUBLICATION)

MEETING: Cabinet
DATE: Wednesday, 8 October 2025
PLACE: Council Chamber
MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors: R Henry (Chair), J Thomas (Vice-Chair), M Arceno, R Broom, C DeFreitas, J Hollywell, T Plater, L Rossati, S Speller and N Williams

THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS **INSERT DATE.**
SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM **INSERT DATE.**

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest. <i>Reason for Decision:</i> <i>Other Options Considered:</i>		
2.	MINUTES - CABINET 17 SEPTEMBER 2025	
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17 September 2025 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair. <i>Reason for Decision:</i> <i>Other Options Considered:</i>		
3.	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND SELECT COMMITTEES	

Cabinet received a summary of the issues covered at the most recent meetings of the Environment and Economy Select and Community Select including:

Environment and Economy Select Committee had considered recycling in flat blocks; the promotion of recycling champions and working with young residents; and consideration of the use of CCTV at Bring Bank sites to deter fly tipping;

The Community Select Committee had received a presentation on the Council's response to cases of damp and mould in the light of the implementation of Awaab's Law from 27 October 2025.

Members thanked the Members of the Scrutiny Committees for their work and welcomed the scrutiny undertaken on these matters and looked forward to working with them and receiving the outcomes.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny and Select Committee meetings be noted.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

4.	FEES AND CHARGES 2026/7	
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Cabinet received a report seeking approval for the proposed Fees and Charges for the financial year 2026/27, covering both the General Fund (GF) (some commencing in January 2026) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance advised that the Council's 2026/27 Fees and Charges proposals formed a key part of the financial strategy to address ongoing budget pressures and supported the sustainability of vital services for the community. The charges were informed by inflationary pressures, service cost recovery, and benchmarking, and were reviewed by the cross-party Council's Financial Security Group (CFSG), with the majority of proposals receiving unanimous support.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That Fees and Charges 2026/27 for the General Fund (GF), as shown at Appendix A to the report, be approved.
2. That Fees and Charges 2026/27 for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as shown at Appendix B to the report, be approved.
3. That 2026/27 Retail Outdoor Seating fees as shown at Appendix C to the report, be approved.
4. That 2026/27 Fast track/Accelerated Planning fees (pilot) as shown at Appendix D to the report, be approved.
5. That the Strategic Director & S151 Officer be given delegated authority to approve any final changes required to the Fees and Charges, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

5.	FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 - TAXI TARIFFS	
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Cabinet received a report considering the Council's proposal to increase the fees and charges relating to taxi and private hire licensing. The aim of the increase was to ensure that the fee structure remained fair, transparent, and proportionate to the actual cost of administering the service.

The Portfolio Holder advised that in support of the Council's environmental objectives, it was also proposed that a subsidised licence fee be introduced for electric and hybrid vehicles, encouraging the transition to cleaner fuel alternatives.

It was noted that public consultation with the sector and taxi drivers had been undertaken and following analysis of the feedback received, it was recommended that the revised fees and charges be implemented through a phased approach over a two-year period.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed fee increase with a phased implementation, whereby 50% of the proposed increase is applied in 2026/27, with the full increase coming into effect in 2027/28 plus any inflation related increase part of normal 2027/28 fees and charges review be approved.
2. That the advice of the Council's Climate Action Team be supported and a reduced fee structure to incentivise the use of

environmentally sustainable vehicles be approved.

3. That it be noted that the discounted licensing structure will remain in place until the end of 2030 to align with the Council's target to achieve zero emissions by 2030 and National policy commitments, including the planned phased out of new petrol and diesel vehicle sales by 2030.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

6.	CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY ANNUAL UPDATE 2025	
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Cabinet received a report setting out the annual summary of actions taken, and progress made, on the eight strategic themes set out in Stevenage's 2020 Climate Change Strategy. Key initiatives included:

- Retrofitting homes to improve energy efficiency.
- Decarbonising the Council's vehicle fleet.
- Launching a Green Business Grant to support sustainable practices.
- Enhancing biodiversity through tree planting schemes.
- Engaging communities via the Climate Change Community Fund.

The report also highlighted action being taken by the Council at county level through the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) and the work being undertaken at neighbourhood and individual level to drive behavioural change across the town.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased to report that in order to improve the accuracy and consistency of future emissions tracking, the Council was developing a new greenhouse gas baseline and a transparent reporting framework. It was noted that while Stevenage continued to make progress towards the national net zero target, achieving this by 2030 would require ongoing legislative and financial support from central Government.

Cabinet paid tribute to those Officers and Members who had worked to ensure Stevenage was in the forefront of the Climate Change

agenda. Members were pleased to note that all new developments in the town were taking on the best environmental standards in Climate Change quality assurance guarantees.

Members were keen to ensure that all Councillors used their Climate Change Community Fund for opportunities in their wards to fund schemes to improve the environment in their areas.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. That the progress made in delivering the 2020 Stevenage Climate Change Strategy over the past year across the eight strategic areas be noted. Of particular note is Stevenage's lowest historical GHG emissions in 2023, delivering a 7.2% decrease from 2022 levels, and 22.6% lower than in the baseline year (2018) resulting in Stevenage's per capita emissions in 2023 being lower than county, regional, and national averages.
2. That work to secure ongoing external funding, partnerships, and income-generating opportunities be endorsed, particularly in terms of renewable energy generation, to support delivery of the 2030 net-zero target and build long-term resilience.
3. That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change to review and update the Strategy over the coming year as required, to ensure it continues to align with the Council's corporate priorities.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

7.	RENT SETTING AND SERVICE CHARGE POLICY 2025/27	
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Cabinet were presented with the updated Rent Setting and Service Charge Policy for 2025–2027, which set out the Council's approach

to rent and service charge setting across its housing stock.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised that the policy reflected recent legislative updates and changes to the Rent Standard, and introduced rent flexibility.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That a new Rent Setting and Service Charge Policy 2025-2027 (Appendix A).
2. That the relevant Strategic Director, after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to make minor updates and changes to this policy arising from new legislation.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

8.	URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS	
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There was no urgent Part I business.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

9.	EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS	
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It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of

Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

10.	PART II MINUTES - CABINET 17 SEPTEMBER 2025	
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It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the Cabinet held on 17 September 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

11.	ESTATES COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY	
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The Cabinet considered a Part II report in respect of a commercial opportunity.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

12.	SPORTS AND LEISURE CENTRE	
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Cabinet received a Part II report outlining the progress towards delivering the Council's new Stevenage Sports and Leisure Centre.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

13.	REGENERATION PROGRAMME UPDATE	
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The Executive considered a Part II report giving a programme wide update across the Government's Towns Fund programme being delivered by Stevenage Borough Council and Stevenage Development Board partners.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

14.	UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S WHOLLY OWNED COMPANIES AND SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES	
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Cabinet received an update on the Council's subsidiary companies and those the Council has an interest in. The report set out the current financial position for each company, identifying any financial and operational risks and any mitigation measures that were being or needed to be implemented.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

Other Options Considered:

15.	LAND AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT UPDATE DELIVERY AND DISPOSAL	
<p>Cabinet received a report seeking to update Members on progress across the existing Land and Development programme, including updates on key sites and new opportunities.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision:</i> <i>Other Options Considered:</i></p>		
16.	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
<p>There was no urgent Part II Business.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision:</i> <i>Other Options Considered:</i></p>		