

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date: Monday, 24 November 2025

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Cavendish Road Depot Meeting Room SG1 2ET

Present: Councillors: Leanne Brady (Chair), Robert Boyle, Jim Brown, Forhad Chowdhury, Alistair Gordon, Claire Parris, Ceara Roopchand, Peter Wilkins and Jade Woods

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 6.45pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andy McGuinness and Dermot Kehoe

2 MINUTES - TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Environment and Economy Select Committee meeting held on 7 October were approved and signed by the Chair.

3 DRAFT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW INTO RECYCLING IN FLAT BLOCKS

The Committee reviewed the draft report and recommendations regarding recycling in flat blocks. The officer presented the recommendations, followed by a discussion with members who suggested amendments and raised questions as outlined below.

Members stated that officers would need to be careful about selecting individuals as "Recycling Champions." The Head of Service, Environmental Operations, stated that regarding Recycling Champions there would likely be around 10 across the town, and it would be necessary to offer some form of incentivisation with possible awards as a means of recruiting. Officers would closely monitor the conduct of the Recycling Champions. The officer agreed to add a clarifying statement to the report.

Members asked if the coloured wraps to be used on bins would also indicate the types of items that can be placed in each bin. The officer showed members the proposed design for the stickers that will be placed on bin fronts and lids to provide this information.

The officer explored the option of coloured wraps for the lids of bins but clarified that such wraps are not currently available. Instead, stickers will be used on the lids for the flat blocks. Priority will be given to flat blocks that do not already have any

labelling information.

Members raised a question about how contaminated bins were identified during collection. The officer confirmed that collection teams open the lids to conduct a visual inspection. However, if contaminated items were hidden at the bottom of the bins, they may not be visible during inspection.

Members highlighted the need for CCTV at Bring Bank Sites to deter fly-tipping. The officer clarified that items placed next to full bins were considered as fly-tipping. Members also inquired about any concessions for low-income households regarding bulky waste collection. The officer confirmed a 25% reduction on bulky waste collection rates for low-income households.

Members expressed concerns about a previous report proposing a reduction in the number of Bring Bank Sites in Stevenage. Officers reassured the Committee that this will be reviewed after the new flat block recycling measures have been in place for 12-18 months. The data collected during this period will guide the review process. The Committee will be consulted at each stage of the review.

Members sought clarification on whether recycling information would be available in alternative languages. The officer confirmed that accessibility has been a key consideration. Information provided to residents will be largely pictorial to improve accessibility. Officers also confirmed that the new recycling information would be available in alternative formats upon request and Officers would investigate the provision of a braille version

Members suggested that the wording of the recommendations be amended to explicitly address accessibility issues. The officer agreed to update the report to include this consideration.

Members requested that signage be placed at recycling points to inform residents of the consequences and financial implications of fly-tipping. Additionally, they recommended that the most used bins be placed in prominent locations to discourage contamination. The officer explained that having only one type of bin at a location can contribute to contamination, as all types of waste may end up in that single bin.

Members acknowledged the difficulties of implementing different recycling procedures across the various flat blocks in the town. The officer explained that they are working on solutions tailored to each individual flat block. It was agreed that the recommendation would be amended from Douglas Drive to Vardon Road, as this is the affected block that should be referenced.

In response to concerns about non-residents using flat block bins, the officer explained that public highway bins will be fitted with combination locks. Operatives will have master keys to access all the bins.

The officer confirmed that a patent for the 3-wheeled bin mentioned in the report could not be obtained. However, officers are looking into the protection of the design and also commercial opportunities for the bin were currently being explored.

It was agreed by all members that signage should not be overly descriptive. The primary focus will be on encouraging positive behaviour and educating the public, rather than enforcing rules or regulations.

In the draft report, section 3.1.8, it is referenced that £700,000 had been secured through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). This figure is now £1.2 million and will be updated in the final report.

The Chair thanked members for their contributions to the report and noted that a final version would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

4 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part I Business

5 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required.

6 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part II Business

CHAIR