

Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

14 July 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, 22 July 2026 at the conclusion of the Special Meeting 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 - 21 MAY 2026**
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2026.
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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**
Question from Daryl Osborne – Secretary, Bus Users Group Stevenage (BUGS)

With reference to the Environment and Economy Select Committee report entitled

'ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE: FINAL REPORT - REVIEW OF BUS SERVICES' dated 06/02/24, and the recommendations contained therein, what progress has been made in relation to each individual recommendation set out within that report?

Question from Jack Downie-Webb

The latest data from the CPRE reveals that there are currently 273 long-term empty homes sitting unused within Stevenage. Stevenage Borough Council frequently justifies the ongoing development and loss of our town's green spaces, such as those in and around Symonds Green, by citing housing need. However, other local authorities, including councils like Mid Suffolk and Lewes District Council, are successfully using their legal powers to tackle this issue without further loss of green space. They're implementing Council Tax premiums, using Empty Dwelling Management Orders, and pursuing targeted Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring wasted properties back onto the market.

While these tactics are already described in Stevenage Borough Council's own Empty Homes Strategy, the fact that 273 properties remain unused suggests these powers are not being used to their full effect.

Will the council commit to prioritising bringing these empty homes back into use, which it already has powers to do, before approving further loss of our green spaces?

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. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

To consider the Annual Scrutiny Report 2025/26.

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11. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

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

(1) Expanding Apprenticeship Opportunities in Stevenage

To be moved by Councillor Tom Plater

This Council notes that:

1. Apprenticeships provide a vital pathway into skilled employment for people of all ages, including young people entering the labour market, adults seeking to retrain or progress in their careers, and residents looking to develop new skills.
2. The Government has placed skills, training and employment at the heart of its mission to grow the economy and break down barriers to opportunity.
3. Recent apprenticeship reforms include measures to increase flexibility for employers and learners, reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, expand opportunities for young people, introduce Foundation Apprenticeships, and reform the Apprenticeship Levy into a Growth and Skills Levy to better meet local labour market needs.
4. Stevenage has a proud history as a centre for innovation, advanced manufacturing, engineering, life sciences and technology, with major employers including Airbus, MBDA, Autolus and GSK, alongside a growing business community requiring a skilled local workforce.
5. This Council has already recognised the success of Stevenage Works in bringing together employers, education providers and public agencies to deliver employment, skills and social value outcomes for local residents.
6. Strong partnerships between local authorities, employers, colleges, training providers and Government are essential if local people are to benefit fully from apprenticeship reforms and wider economic growth.
7. Despite progress, barriers remain for residents seeking apprenticeships, including awareness of opportunities, travel costs, confidence, access to networks, caring responsibilities and competition for placements.

This Council believes that:

1. Every resident in Stevenage should have access to high-quality education, training, apprenticeships or employment opportunities at every stage of life.
2. Apprenticeships should be accessible to people from all backgrounds and at all ages, supporting social mobility, lifelong learning and inclusive economic growth.
3. Stevenage Borough Council has an important leadership role in convening partners and ensuring that regeneration and inward investment create opportunities for local people throughout their working lives.
4. The Government's reforms provide a significant opportunity to increase apprenticeship participation, address local skills shortages and ensure businesses can access the workforce they need.
5. Existing partnerships, including Stevenage Works, provide a strong foundation on which to expand apprenticeship opportunities across the town.

This Council resolves to:

1. Work with key partners, including North Hertfordshire College, local schools, employers, training providers, the Hertfordshire skills system, Stevenage Works and business networks to maximise the opportunities arising from the Government's apprenticeship reforms.
2. Strengthen and promote partnership working across Stevenage to increase apprenticeship availability and encourage greater employer participation.
3. Work with existing contractors, developers and partners to increase apprenticeship opportunities through procurement, Section 106 agreements, social value commitments and workforce planning, whilst

ensuring that agreed apprenticeship, employment and skills commitments are effectively monitored and delivered.

4. Support the promotion of apprenticeships through careers events, outreach activity and engagement with residents, particularly those who are not currently in education, employment or training, or who may benefit from retraining and upskilling opportunities.
5. Work with local employers to identify barriers to apprenticeship recruitment and retention and advocate for solutions where appropriate.
6. Request that the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Skills reports back to Members within twelve months on progress made, including:
 - apprenticeship opportunities supported or created;
 - partnership activity undertaken;
 - engagement with local employers and education providers; and
 - recommendations for further action.
7. Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Malvern, Minister of State for Skills, welcoming the Government's apprenticeship reforms, highlighting the work being undertaken in Stevenage through Stevenage Works and related partnerships, and inviting Ministers to engage with Stevenage as an example of effective local delivery of the Government's skills agenda.

(2) Protecting Fairlands Valley Park and South Field from Development beyond Local Government Reorganisation.

To be moved by Councillor Tom Wren

This Council notes that:

1. Fairlands Valley Park is one of Stevenage's most valued public open spaces, providing essential recreational, environmental, health, and wellbeing benefits to residents of all ages.
2. The Park, including South Field and all associated green spaces, is widely used for leisure activities including walking, sport, community events, wildlife enjoyment, education, and informal recreation.
3. Public green spaces play a critical role in protecting biodiversity, improving air quality, supporting mental and physical health, mitigating flooding, and maintaining the character and identity of Stevenage
4. Future generations should be guaranteed permanent access to these open spaces for recreation and leisure purposes.
5. The maximum environmental protections are currently in place for Fairlands Valley Park and South Field under the existing town plan. There is concern that our current intentions are vulnerable to future challenges and potential changes to the town plan by successive administrations following local Government reorganisation, which may change the status of Fairlands Valley land.

This Council therefore resolves to:

6. Publicly state our firm opposition against any current or future proposal for housing development, residential construction, or urban encroachment within Fairlands Valley Park, including the South Field.
7. Explore and implement the strongest available legal protections, including but not limited to:
 - a restrictive covenant in partnership with Herts Wildlife Trust

- protected open space designation,
 - Fields in Trust protection,
 - or other legally binding mechanisms,
8. Ensure the land is permanently safeguarded for leisure, recreation, environmental, and community use only.
 9. Request that Council officers prepare a report outlining the legal options available to secure long-term protection of the Park and South Field from development other than for the improvement of existing infrastructure, including the Farmhouse.
 10. Commit to working with local residents, environmental groups, sports organisations, and community stakeholders to preserve and enhance the park for future generations.
 11. Write to relevant regional and national planning authorities confirming the Council's position that Fairlands Valley Park in its entirety and South Field must remain protected public leisure land and should not be allocated for housing development or industrial use in any future local planning framework.

12. 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 Peter Wilkins

With the introduction of food waste collection and the completion of phase 2 of the flat block recycling scheme in the Borough can the council advise what our current recycling rate is (expressed as a percentage of all waste recycled.)

(B) Question from Councillor Andy McGuinness

To date, what has been the impact of this year's inclement weather on the Council's planned schedule of environmental maintenance including weeding, grass cutting and hedge/tree pruning?

(C) Question from Councillor Phil Bibby

Would the Cabinet Member please advise how fuel inflation caused by the Iranian conflict is affecting the Council's spending against budget

(D) Question from Councillor Robin Parker

There are many publicly accessible automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) at locations in Stevenage. Some are free standing, whilst others are attached to buildings. Many of these were provided by local Borough or County Councillors via SBC Local Community Budgets (LCBs) or HCC Locality Budgets (LBs). Others are private and did not involve SBC or HCC.

I understand that the Neighbourhood Wardens check them regularly, which is excellent.

In the case of those provided by LCBs or LBs, what are the arrangements for

funding:

- repairs to them;
- maintenance of them;
- replacements of them;

.....if such actions become necessary?

(E) Question from Councillor Ashley-Wren

Since March 2023 when the council took over the management of the lakes sailing courses have remained inactive.

Are there plans to reinstate this provision that provided residents, including many young people, with opportunities to experience activities that they may otherwise not be able to access.?

(F) Question from Councillor Clark

What actions did the Council take during recent periods of extreme heat to support council tenants, including older people, those with health conditions, and those at increased risk from heat-related illness?

(G) Question from Councillor Jaysica Marvell

Many residents rely on council services or receive financial support at different stages of their lives, whether through social housing, council tax support, or other benefits and assistance. While these services provide an essential safety net, they're not always intended to be a permanent solution. There may also be people who aspire to become more financially independent where circumstances allow.

What is Stevenage Borough Council doing, either directly or in partnership with other organisations, to support residents on that journey by improving access to employment, skills, training, financial advice, business support and opportunities that promote greater independence and social mobility?

(H) Question from Councillor Tom Wren

The recent announcement of £20m of Pride of Place funding is fantastic news for the St Nicholas neighbourhood. What plans does the council have to deliver much needed improvements in the other areas of the town?

13. BUSINESS & PLANNING ACT 2020 – NEW PAVEMENT LICENSING POLICY

To adopt the Council's draft Pavement Licensing Policy.

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14. CIVIL PENALTIES POLICY

To approve the Council's revised Civil Penalty Policy.

97 - 148

15. RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025 - ENFORCEMENT POLICY

To approve the Renters' Rights Act 2025 Enforcement Policy.

149 - 194

- 16. STEVENAGE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE: ADOPTION**
To adopt a partial update to the Stevenage Borough Local Plan following the Examination in Public Hearing Sessions.
195 - 426
- 17. STEVENAGE BOROUGH REVISED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: ADOPTION**
To consider the adoption of the Stevenage Borough Revised Community Infrastructure Levy.
427 - 460
- 18. DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE UNDER THE SPECIAL URGENCY PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012**
To advise of decision(s) taken by the Cabinet in accordance with the Special Urgency provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.
461 - 462
- 19. AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES**
To note the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 2 June 2026
463 - 466
- 20. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**
To consider the following motions –
1. That under Section 100(A) 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 Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.
- 21. STEVENAGE NEW LEISURE CENTRE - WORKS CONTRACT**
To seek approval to the revised budget and revised funding strategy for the Stevenage Sports and Leisure Hub.
467 - 478