

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 10 June 2026

Time: 2.00pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Richard Henry (Chair), Myla Arceno, Rob Broom, Coleen De Freitas, Tom Plater and Loraine Rossati

Start / End Time: Start Time: 2.00pm
End Time: 3.30pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nazmin Chowdhury.

Councillor Myla Arceno declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 relating to the Renters Rights Act Enforcement Policy as a landlord for a property in Stevenage.

2 MINUTES - CABINET 11 MARCH 2026

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 March 2026 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

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 Overview and Scrutiny and Select Committees including:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Biodiversity Duty Monitoring, Indoor Market relocation and implications of Local Government Reorganisation;
- Environment and Economy Select Committee – Draft Climate Change Action Plan, progress in response to the scrutiny review of recycling in flat blocks, work programme for 2026/27 which had identified fly-tipping as a priority area;
- Community Select Committee – Annual Crime and Disorder report, the Cabinet Member response to the Committee's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion scrutiny review, work programme which had identified damp and mould as a key area for further scrutiny.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment expressed his appreciation for the work undertaken in relation to biodiversity. The Member welcomed the continued progress and development of the discussion in this area.

Members were pleased to note the inclusion of fly-tipping in the work plan which was a growing issue not only in Stevenage but nationally.

The progress being made in relation to recycling was welcomed, including the introduction of food waste recycling and wider changes to the Council's waste services. Appreciation was expressed to officers for their work in delivering these improvements. The Portfolio Holder also advised that a review of progress would be requested at the end of the month.

The Leader thanked the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Members for their continued commitment and the valuable role they played in strengthening governance and decision-making.

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

4 **PAVEMENT LICENCE POLICY**

Cabinet received a report relating to the draft Pavement Licensing Policy setting out the Council's approach in the granting, monitoring and enforcement of Pavement Licences within the Borough of Stevenage (excluding the Town Centre), in accordance with the Business and Planning Act 2020. It was noted that the Policy established a clear, consistent and robust framework for the granting, monitoring and enforcement of pavement licences across Stevenage (excluding the Town Centre), supporting businesses such as cafés, restaurants and public houses to safely extend their offer into outdoor spaces.

Members were advised that the Policy had been informed by informal consultation, with feedback incorporated where appropriate. It had also been considered by the General Purposes Committee on 14 April 2026, which recommended its adoption to Cabinet without further amendment, providing additional assurance on its robustness and readiness for implementation.

A Member welcomed the work undertaken to improve accessibility and consistency in the use of outdoor dining areas across the High Street and local shopping areas. It was noted that revised arrangements, including the removal of equipment at the end of each day, would help maintain clear pavements and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the recommendations of the Councils General Purposes Committee to adopt the Policy at their meeting on 14th April 2026 be noted.
2. That the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Pavement Licensing Policy 2026 (attached at appendix A) be approved.
3. That the Policy be recommended to Council for adoption.
4. That it be recommended to the Council that minor inconsequential amendments to the Policy, following its adoption be delegated to the Director of

Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member/Portfolio Holder.

5 **CIVIL PENALTIES POLICY**

Cabinet received a report requesting consideration of the Council's revised Civil Penalty Policy which set out the approach to determining the level of a civil penalty in all cases where regulatory breaches or offences were established under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other legislation relating to private rented sector housing standards.

Members were advised that the policy supported a robust approach to enforcement action where landlords failed to comply with their legal obligations to their tenants. It was noted that income recovered from paid civil penalties would continue to be ring-fenced for private sector housing enforcement work.

Members were advised that a public consultation exercise had not been conducted due to the policy revisions being largely determined by the relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Consultation had been carried out internally within the Environmental Health and Licensing service; no changes to the policy were required. The Portfolio Holder informed Cabinet that the General Purposes Committee had considered the Policy at its meeting on 14th April 2026 and no additional points or suggestions were made.

A Member expressed thanks to the Licensing Team for their work, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Renters' Reform/ Renters' Rights legislation.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Civil Penalty Policy, attached as Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. That the Policy be recommended to Council for adoption.

6 **RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

Cabinet received a report requesting consideration of the proposed Renters' Rights Act 2025 Enforcement Policy. The Policy aimed to ensure that effective regulatory action would be taken where landlords failed to comply with their legal obligations and that enforcement powers were applied in a fair, transparent, proportionate and consistent manner.

Cabinet were advised that the policy provided clarity on the approach the Council would take. In summary, landlords were expected to be compliant with the law and where non-compliance was established, the Council would normally take formal action. Informal action might be taken to achieve compliance in the first instance where there were strong reasons for doing so.

Members were pleased to note that for residents, this would mean clearer rights with greater confidence that poor standards would be challenged, and stronger action taken where landlords failed to meet their legal responsibilities. The Policy set out a more assured and visible approach to enforcement, helping to improve housing conditions, tackle poor practice, and would create a more balanced and accountable private rented sector locally.

It was noted that a public consultation exercise was not conducted as much of the policy content related to matters prescribed by the legislation and statutory guidance. Internal consultation had taken place within the Environmental Health and Licensing and Housing Options services resulting in no changes to the policy were required. The General Purposes Committee had considered the Policy at its meeting on 14th April 2026 where no additional points or suggestions were made.

Members were pleased that the proposed measures would help to deliver safer and more stable housing for residents within the community and commended the work undertaken by Officers in progressing this locally. They were also pleased to note that the Council was taking a proactive approach to implementing forthcoming Renters' Rights legislation, particularly in relation to Section 21 "no-fault" evictions.

It was agreed that there might be some uncertainty regarding the scale of demand arising from these changes. Officers advised that while it was considered that current resources were sufficient, it would be important to keep capacity under review as the position develops.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the proposed Renters' Rights Act 2025 Enforcement Policy attached as Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. That the Policy be recommended to Council for adoption.

7 ADOPTION OF STEVENAGE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE

Cabinet received a report providing an update on the outcomes of the Main Modifications consultation on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update, following the Examination in Public Hearing Sessions.

Members were advised that through the Examination in Public Hearing, the Inspector had concluded that a number of Main Modifications were required to ensure the Plan could be found sound. These modifications were subject to public consultation between February and March 2026 and did not result in any substantive changes to the overall direction of the Plan.

Members were pleased to note that the majority of key strategic development sites had already secured planning permission and were now being delivered on the ground, supporting new homes, major regeneration schemes and the creation of jobs and opportunities for residents. Alongside this, the Council continued to play a direct and proactive role — building new council homes, accelerating regeneration across the town, and working to protect and enhance the natural and built

environment.

The Leader emphasised the importance of maintaining a long-term focus for the town in the context of Local Government Reorganisation and welcomed the update on the Local Plan which reflected the delivery of new homes, jobs, improved station facilities, enhanced leisure and cultural provision, and better links to the town centre. It was also noted that the changes would provide greater clarity and certainty for developers, residents and other stakeholders.

Members expressed their appreciation to the Planning Team for the significant work undertaken in progressing the Local Plan Partial Review over the past two years.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update, incorporating Main Modifications (Appendix C to E) and associated Proposals Map (Appendix F) be adopted.
2. That the Partial Update be recommended to Council for adoption.
3. That it be recommended to Council that minor inconsequential amendments to the Local Plan be delegated to the Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member / Portfolio Holder, prior to the Local Plan being adopted.
4. That the feedback from the Planning & Development Committee on the content of this Cabinet Report be noted.

8 **ADOPTION OF REVISED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

Cabinet received a report providing Members with an update on the progress of the Stevenage Borough Revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), following progression through the Examination in Public stage.

Cabinet was advised that the revised CIL reflected updated evidence on viability and development across the Borough, ensuring the right balance between supporting continued investment and development, while maximising contributions to the infrastructure that benefitted residents and communities.

It was advised that the work undertaken had placed the Council in a strong position for the future, particularly in providing a clear policy framework for developers. It was noted that this would be especially important in the context of Local Government Reorganisation.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the contents of the Inspector's Report (Appendix A), following the Examination in Public Hearing Session be noted and that the Stevenage Borough Revised Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (Appendix B) be adopted.

2. That it be recommended to Council that the Stevenage Borough Revised Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (Appendix B) be adopted.
3. That the feedback from the Planning & Development Committee on the content of this Cabinet Report be noted.

9 **LGR STRUCTURAL CHANGES ORDER SUBMISSION**

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to the Council's proposed response to a consultation from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), regarding the drafting of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Structural Change Order for Hertfordshire.

The Leader advised that as the report was not circulated five clear days prior to the meeting, he had accepted the matter as urgent due to the requirement for Hertfordshire authorities to provide a single response within the timeframe to MHCLG. He also advised that the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny had agreed to waive call-in, reflecting both the urgency of the decision and the necessity of progressing within the limited time available.

Members were informed that the Structural Change Order would establish the detailed legislative and governance framework for transition to new unitary authorities, including how services, assets, responsibilities and decision-making arrangements would transfer and operate.

It was noted that Hertfordshire's proposed response had been developed through close collaboration across all eleven councils and reflected a shared officer-level view on the practical arrangements needed to support a smooth and effective transition.

The Chief Executive reported feedback from the Hertfordshire Leaders' Group. It was confirmed that the Structural Changes Order would establish joint committees covering proposed unitary arrangements. Members noted that naming conventions for the future authorities would be determined by shadow authorities at a later stage, although some initial preferences had been expressed. Clarification was also provided that the question regarding political proportionality on joint committees posed by MHCLG applies to Hertfordshire County Council.

The Chief Executive also advised that feedback had also been received from the MHCLG advisor which highlighted the strength of cross-party and cross-tier collaboration in Hertfordshire, encouraging early establishment of voluntary joint committees, emphasising the need to focus on improved outcomes for residents, and recognising the importance of addressing wider financial challenges across the public sector.

A Member emphasised that, throughout the transition period, it would be essential to ensure that residents continued to receive high-quality services, while also providing staff with as much clarity and stability as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed responses detailed in Appendix A to the report be approved and authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise the response and submit to MHCLG in accordance with the required timeframe.

10 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

11 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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.

12 **LAND AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE WITH CONTRACT AWARDS/LAND SALES BRAGBURY END SCHEME**

The Cabinet considered a Part II report in respect of the Land and Development Programme Update with Contract Awards/Land Sales Bragbury End Scheme.

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

13 **BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE CONTRACT**

The Cabinet considered a Part II report in respect of the Business Technology Centre.

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

14 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR