STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 14 July 2026
Time: 6.00pm
Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Leanne Brady (Chair) , Peter Wilkins (Vice-Chair) , Jim Brown, Claire Parris, Jade Woods, Doug Bainbridge CC, Jan Bainbridge CC, John Blackwood, Jaysica Marvell, Graham Spencer and Nigel Williams

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.30pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2026

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026 were agreed by the Committee.

3 FLY-TIPPING REVIEW - OFFICER PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation on the fly-tipping review, which provided an overview of the Council's current approach to fly-tipping, performance data, enforcement activity and proposed improvements.

Members were advised that approximately 2,800 incidents of fly-tipping were reported annually, with the Council adopting a zero-tolerance, intelligence-led approach. It was noted that there was a focus on prevention, education, enforcement and the prompt removal of waste.

A question was raised whether there were seasonal trends in fly-tipping incidents. Officers advised that reports remained relatively consistent throughout the year, with slight increases during the summer months and around the Christmas period.

The Committee discussed the collection and analysis of fly-tipping data. Members questioned whether information could be broken down by ward or specific locations to better identify local issues. Officers explained that this was not currently possible using the existing reporting system but advised that the Council's new digital system would enable more detailed hotspot analysis in the future.

Discussions took place regarding waste types, locations and the cost of fly-tipping. Officers explained that household waste, including furniture and mattresses, remained the most common form of fly-tipping, while the majority of incidents

occurred on Council owned land.

Members were advised that disposal costs largely fell to Hertfordshire County Council, with the Borough Council primarily incurring staffing and operational costs. Officers also clarified the Council's responsibilities in relation to highways, Council land and privately owned land.

Members raised questions regarding previous recycling initiatives, including electrical recycling facilities and skips being supplied at various neighbourhood centres, with the example of one at the Oval provided. It was suggested that the reintroduction of these schemes could assist in reducing fly-tipping. In response, officers agreed to review the reasons for the previous withdrawal of the facilities.

The Committee considered comparative fly-tipping data across Hertfordshire, and Members noted that Stevenage recorded significantly higher numbers than many neighbouring authorities. Officers explained that this was largely due to more comprehensive reporting arrangements, with Stevenage recording incidents from Council housing estates, flat blocks and bring bank sites that were not consistently reported by all authorities. Members welcomed the Council's robust approach to recording incidents despite the higher reported figures.

Officers advised that the comparative enforcement data across Hertfordshire would be shared with Members, where available, to provide additional context regarding Stevenage's performance.

Members received information on enforcement activity between April 2025 and April 2026. Officers advised that 129 perpetrators had been identified through investigations, resulting in voluntary clearance of waste in many cases, two tenancy enforcement actions and thirteen Fixed Penalty Notices of which eleven had been paid.

Members questioned the number of formal enforcement actions compared with the overall number of reported incidents. Officers explained that enforcement action could only be pursued where sufficient evidence existed. A member noted that they had received a letter from the Council regarding fly tipping next to their household bin which they thought it had been issued as they had left their bins out a day early. Members discussed these incidents of fly-tipping and reiterated the importance of education in achieving compliance before formal action became necessary in these cases.

The Committee also discussed repeat offenders and cross-border fly-tipping. Officers confirmed that educational advice was provided where appropriate and advised that the majority of identified perpetrators were Stevenage residents, although cross-border enforcement remained possible where evidence, such as vehicle registration details, was available. Members requested further information regarding repeat offenders, which officers agreed to provide following the meeting.

The Committee welcomed the introduction of the Council's new digital reporting system, which enabled the identification of fly-tipping hotspots across the town. Officers highlighted areas including Canterbury Way and Broadwater Crescent as

having higher levels of reported incidents and advised that the improved data would support targeted enforcement and education campaigns.

Members also received an overview of the Council's reporting and investigation process. Officers explained how reports were assessed, evidence gathered, CCTV reviewed, witness statements obtained, and enforcement action progressed where the evidential threshold was met.

Members noted that there had been recent negative reporting of the number of fixed penalty notices issued in Stevenage and it was suggested that officer should consider countering this with a good news story focusing on the successful interventions that officers have with the public through education and making them clean up their own fly-tipping.

Members asked about the availability of CCTV footage, the use of anonymous witness statements, the threshold for criminal prosecution, and whether the Council could recover the costs of clearing fly-tipped waste from offenders. Officers advised that CCTV partnerships were generally effective, anonymous reports could be used where appropriate, larger-scale or more serious incidents could be referred for criminal prosecution, and proposals to recover clearance costs from repeat offenders were currently being considered as part of the review.

Members sought clarification on the preferred method for reporting fly-tipping. Officers confirmed that the Council's online Report It service was the preferred reporting route, as it enabled reports to be processed more efficiently. Members requested that officers shared this information with Members.

The Chair stated that they were grateful for the explanation regarding the disparity between the number of reported incidents of fly-tipping in Stevenage and the relatively low number of fixed penalty notices issued due to the level of work that is undertaken with known fly-tippers which don’t appear in the figures. However, now that the team was fully staffed, it was hoped that the gap between over 2000 reported incidents of fly-tipping and 129 enforcement cases would be narrowed, and the Committee would be focused on achieving this.

The Committee noted the presentation and welcomed the ongoing review, the improved use of data to identify hotspot locations and the continued development of enforcement and preventative measures to reduce fly-tipping across the Borough.

It was noted that:

- Officers agreed to review the reasons for the previous withdrawal of electrical recycling facilities and skips supplied to various neighbourhoods.
- Officers to consider using good news stories focusing on the successful interventions of fly-tipping.
- Officers advised that enforcement data across Hertfordshire would be shared with Members.
- Members requested further information regarding repeat offenders, which officers agreed to provide following the meeting.
- Officers would share information on the Report It system to members as the

way to report fly-tipping.
- Officers to monitor and increase fly-tipping enforcement and reduce the disparity between reported incidents and enforcement action.

4 **ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE ACTION TRACKER 2026**

The Committee reviewed the Action Tracker and considered proposed updates to the Select Committee's future work programme.

Members agreed that an update on the Waste and Recycling in Flat Blocks review would be beneficial during the following year. It was noted that the date of the Executive response would be added to the Action Tracker.

The Committee also agreed that a review of the Skills Agenda should be scheduled following the opening of the new college campus to consider its impact on skills provision and the local economy.

Members agreed to defer further scrutiny of bus services until after the relevant item had been considered by Council, with a view to revisiting the matter in 2027 if required.

During discussion, Members suggested that the Climate Emergency Action Tracker should provide greater clarity regarding the purpose of the HART programme and reiterated the importance of focusing on reducing overall waste generation, alongside increasing recycling rates.

Members also questioned the rationale for linking the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure with cycle routes within the action tracker and sought clarification on the purpose of the proposed action, and consideration be given to whether the reference should be deleted if it was no longer necessary.

Members noted that the Committee would continue to receive its regular Climate Emergency updates twice yearly, with a greater emphasis on local delivery and outcomes. It was also agreed that the previous COVID-19 review on the Action Tracker would be replaced with a review of the impact of the cost of living crisis.

Members further highlighted the ongoing social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and noted that these issues would be considered through the Skills Agenda review and, where appropriate, referred to the Community Select Committee.

The Committee noted the updates of the action tracker.

5 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

6 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**:

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 paragraphs1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access toInformation) (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.

7 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR