

Minutes of a Special meeting of the **POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Monday, 9 February 2026 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

L J Eldridge (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

D Ashby
P Barnes

A C Beal
M Geaney

J L Reynolds
J Whitbourn

In Attendance: The Director of Communities, the Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods the Group Manager - Waste and Fleet, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and the Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors R A Gibson, M Le Sage and A R Woolf.

80. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

81. WASTE POLICIES

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Communities which proposed revised Waste Policies, including the Policy Development Panel's (PDP) feedback.

The Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods, the Group Manager - Waste and Fleet, the Director of Communities and the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services attended for this item.

The Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods introduced the report which included the following:

- Appendix A - The Waste and Recycling Collection Policies considered by PDP at a Special meeting held on 17 December 2025; and
- Appendix B - The proposals which arose from the Special PDP meeting compared with the initial policy. This document also included additional notes to capture the wider discussions from the December meeting.

During the introduction, the Assistant Director stressed that whilst the proposed policies represented the default position on both the roll-out of the service and the long-term model the Council intended to deliver, it was recognised that concessions would be

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necessary during the roll-out period to support residents as they adjusted. In this regard, a significant engagement programme would accompany implementation, supported by a newly-recruited engagement team whose role would be to work with residents during the roll-out.

The Assistant Director guided members through each element of Appendix B where changes/additions had been made (in red) following feedback received from PDP members at the Special 17 December 2025 meeting.

Members considered the amended policies in turn and made the following comments:

3.1 - Waste Collection

No comments were made in respect of this policy.

3.2 – Waste Collection Provision

- Members referred to the ongoing cost of providing kitchen caddy liners, noting the figure of £8,000 per annum, and sought clarity on whether this cost included bulk purchasing across the partnership.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that the stated figure related solely to South Holland District Council's own purchasing costs. The first year's supply would cover all households, and that future costs were likely to reduce as larger quantities were procured. It was further confirmed that this cost was not shared across the partnership and related only to South Holland's provision.
- Members raised concerns that the option of a 180-litre waste bin did not appear to have been carried forward into the policy wording. They asked whether the 180-litre bin option had been discounted or whether the policy could be amended to state that 180-litre bins may be provided where appropriate.
 - The Assistant Director responded that the default provision remained the 240-litre bin, as this size had already been ordered for the roll-out, however, as the service matured, alternative bin sizes may be considered where assessed as appropriate. It was agreed that wording could be incorporated within the policy to allow for different bin sizes to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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3.3 - Bank Holiday collections and collection days

- Members sought clarification that the policy now explicitly stated the only bank holidays with altered collections were Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Concerns were also raised should residents miss their final pre-Christmas collection, noting the extended gap that could follow.
 - The Assistant Director responded that:
 - The wording for collections over the festive period had been added; and
 - The Council relied on waste being presented in order to collect it effectively and therefore substantial effort would be made to communicate changes clearly.
- Members sought information on how the calendar would be distributed, expressing concerns that residents might disregard leaflets delivered through letterboxes and suggested additional local communication methods such as via ward councillor involvement, parish magazines and parish noticeboards, particularly for residents who did not use social media.
 - The Assistant Director advised that advance communications would alert households to expect the calendar, that it would also be available online, and that multiple communication channels, as used across the sector, would be utilised to maximise resident awareness. The primary focus would be on clear, accessible household calendars delivered to every household.
- A member suggested the use of easy-peel stickers on bins as an additional reminder of Christmas collection changes. Other members did not support this method due to weather related issues.
 - The Assistant Director noted that whilst stickers could be explored, they often failed to adhere properly, especially in wet conditions, and that paper calendars were generally preferred by residents. It was emphasised that effective communication rather than stickers would be the primary tool.
- Members asked whether collection-date messaging could be included within the Council Tax bill mail-out.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that this channel was used, but as collection days varied by

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postcode, it was not possible to provide specific dates in the Council Tax envelope. Instead, residents would continue to be signposted to check their personalised calendars.

- Members queried the timeframe for the route modelling and communications to residents, raising concerns about potential changes to collection rounds after calendars were distributed.
 - The Group Manager – Waste and Fleet responded that:
 - Rounds would undergo detailed tactical modelling which included on-the-ground testing by drivers and a subsequent ‘polishing’ process to adjust boundaries based on local knowledge. Crews possessed strong local knowledge which would be integral to the testing and acceptance process, and operational considerations such as winter conditions would be accounted for; and
 - The final rounds were expected to be confirmed around late August to early September 2026, which would be followed by clear and reliable resident communication.
 - The Assistant Director added that contingency arrangements were planned to support the transition, including managing situations where residents might otherwise face longer waits between collections.

3.4 - Properties exempt from bin collections

- Members asked whether the Council had considered retaining purple sacks to keep paper and card separate for properties using sack-based collections, citing observations that such items filled current green sacks.
 - The Assistant Director explained that the purple sack trial had not been successful because moisture within the paper and card stored in sacks had caused problems at the paper mill, and the mill was unable to handle the plastic sacks. Therefore, paper and card could not be collected in sacks and must be placed in bins where provided.
- Members sought reassurance that assisted collections would continue for residents who were unable to present their waste.

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- The Assistant Director confirmed that the Council already held accurate records of residents receiving assisted collections and anticipated that the number may increase following roll-out. The newly formed Engagement Team would work with households to assess their needs and ensure those requiring support received it.
- Referring to the debate raised at the 17 December 2025 meeting, the Assistant Director confirmed that the principles for exemption of bin collections would be circulated to all councillors and that the Portfolio Holder held oversight of the operational procedures supporting such decisions. It was acknowledged that the needs of residents could change over time and a clear 'request to review' process would be in place allowing residents to seek clarification or challenge decisions. Clear communication channels would be provided to guide residents on how to request a review.
- Members raised concerns that the introduction of heavier wheeled bins could increase the workload for collection crews.
 - The Assistant Director responded that these considerations formed part of the route-modelling process, which accounted for assisted collections, new developments and the physical parameters of collection rounds. Wheeled bins were easier for operatives to manoeuvre than sacks although weights varied significantly between households depending on waste types. Redesigned rounds would improve operational efficiency compared to the current overstretched service.
- Members asked about the expected weight of a full 240-litre bin and how this compared to the current 'unlimited' sack system, noting that households currently disposing of large volumes would initially struggle with limited bin capacity.
 - The Assistant Director responded that the Engagement Team and operational staff would support residents through the transition, offering advice on waste reduction and recycling. The aim was to positively assist people who were struggling with the changes.

Councillor Beal joined the meeting at 18:22

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3.5 - Side waste

- Members queried whether households could request an additional bin, at cost, where they produced more waste than could be accommodated in their standard allocation.
 - The Assistant Director explained that under legislation, the Council had to provide a waste collection service at 'no cost' however a one-off charge could be levied for the provision of an additional residual waste bin as a temporary commercial-style arrangement. The policy wording had been changed to reflect this position and Boston Borough Council's 'big bin hire' scheme was referenced as an example of such a service.

- Members expressed concern that allowing discretion for additional bins during peak periods, such as Christmas, could create unrealistic expectations and demand across thousands of households.
 - The Assistant Director reiterated that statutory obligations required the Council to provide a waste collection at no cost but restricted its ability to charge for extra domestic residual capacity. Discretionary support during exceptional events would be considered carefully to avoid operational pressures.

3.6 - Charging for bins

Members noted that policy 3.6 had been removed as it was reflected in policy 3.16 and raised no further comments.

3.7 - Requirement to segregate waste

- Members requested that the draft pictorial guide be circulated to councillors for comment prior to distribution to residents.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that the draft version of the pictorial guide would be shared with members for feedback prior to general circulation. To complement the guide, the Council's existing online tool would also be updated to provide clear guidance on the materials appropriate for each bin.

3.8 - Approach to enforcement of regulations

- Members suggested alternative methods to tags/stickers such as leaving uncollected contaminated waste in labelled

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- bags advising of appropriate disposal.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged members' suggestions but reiterated that tags were preferred noting that behaviour change would be supported through sustained engagement.
- Members expressed concern about the additional time required to manage contamination during the early stages of implementation and the establishment of new habits.
 - The Assistant Director advised that additional support would be provided during the roll-out period, with engagement officers accompanying crews where needed and intensive work planned to assist residents in adjusting to the new requirements.
- Members asked whether the Council would keep records of tagged properties so that the engagement team could provide targeted support.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that in-cab technology enabled crews to record tagging events against individual properties, allowing patterns to be identified and informing follow-up engagement activity.
- Members highlighted that some residents might attempt to conceal contamination within bins, making it difficult for crews to identify issues.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged this challenge and emphasised that ongoing education and reinforcement of correct behaviours would be essential. Persistent non-compliance by certain properties might require further action in the longer term.

3.9 - Unadopted roads

Members did not raise any comments to the revised policy wording.

3.10 – Bin colours and waste types

- Members asked how the service would respond when residents placed materials in the wrong bin, such as presenting paper and card in the mixed recycling bin.
 - The Assistant Director explained that, although the material itself might be recyclable, the bin presented must align with the correct waste stream because paper and card will be sent directly to the paper mill.

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Crews would be unable to collect bins containing the 'right' material but placed in the wrong container. Clear information and guidance at roll-out would help prevent such errors.

- Members raised concerns about residents who were colour blind or those who might struggle to remember which bin corresponded to each waste stream and suggested that labelled or embossed bin lids be utilised to assist correct action at the point of disposal.
 - The Assistant Director stated that clear calendars and written guidance would accompany the roll-out however where issues were identified, the Council would work with individual residents to provide appropriate support

3.11 – Frequency of collection

Members did not raise any comments regarding this policy.

3.12 – Bin presentation

- Members raised concerns about the requirement for bins to be presented after 6.30pm, noting that this could be difficult or unsafe for some residents, increasing the risk of trips and falls during the dark winter months. Other members noted that an earlier time could contribute to pavement obstruction risks during the busy periods.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged these concerns but explained that the intent of the policy was to prevent excessively early presentation rather than penalise vulnerable residents and that enforcement would be proportionate and pragmatic. The chosen time aligned with practice across other Lincolnshire authorities.

3.13 – Missed collections

- Members suggested that when a missed collection was reported via the contact centre, residents be provided with a reference number confirming that re-collection had been authorised and therefore offering reassurance against action resulting from reports of incorrect presentation or fly-tipping.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that this was already standard practice and that residents would continue to receive a reference number when reporting a missed bin. This would provide

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reassurance and could be used as evidence should any queries arise during the re-collection window.

3.14 - Assisted collections

- Members sought clarification on how existing assisted collection arrangements would transfer into the new system.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that operational processes would ensure appropriate residents remained supported.
- Members stated a general unawareness of the current assisted collections service and requested that the service be more widely publicised so residents knew they could request support.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged the comment and confirmed that the roll-out period provided a valuable opportunity to promote the scheme more proactively.
- Members asked whether the housing service could help raise awareness through sheltered schemes and tenant communications.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that engagement sessions with tenant groups had already been arranged and would be used to listen to residents' concerns and gather ideas for improving communication.
- Members requested that the criteria for assisted collections be circulated so that councillors could help promote the scheme through village magazines and local newsletters. Members also suggested that posters be provided for display in community venues, churches and village halls to ensure older or less digitally-confident residents were aware of the support available.
 - The Assistant Director agreed that the criteria information could be shared and that other promotional suggestions would be explored as part of the wider communication plan. It was noted that all applications would continue to be made through the standard waste services contact routes.
- Members discussed whether greater promotion of the scheme might significantly increase demand and asked whether assisted collections could become chargeable if uptake grew.

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- The Assistant Director stressed that the service existed specifically to support those who genuinely needed help and therefore charging would not be appropriate. Eligibility depended on residents' circumstances, including whether another adult in the household could move the bin, and noted that alternative arrangements such as sack collections could be considered where suitable.
- Members sought reassurance that the scheme would not be open to abuse, querying how officers would distinguish between genuine need and inappropriate requests, such as residents seeking assisted collections while away on holiday.
 - The Group Manager – Waste and Fleet responded that Customer Contact staff used a structured series of screening questions to assess eligibility; and
 - The Assistant Director added that whilst an increase in requests for this service was anticipated, where concerns remained, engagement officers could undertake follow-up visits, and crews were also able to report issues through in-cab recording systems.
- Members asked whether assisted collections were reassessed over time, noting that some residents' needs were temporary.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that all assisted collection records were stored within the system and reviewed periodically with the frequency of review varying depending on individual circumstances.
- Members responded that a clear review period for each case was needed and suggested that Engagement Officers could support this work.
- Members queried the longer-term resourcing of Engagement Officers, given that the need for ongoing reviews might continue beyond the initial roll-out period.
 - The Group Manager – Waste and Fleet advised that Engagement Officers would be in post for three months during the current year, throughout the following year, and a small provision retained for a period into the year after, ensuring continued capacity to support residents and undertake necessary reviews.

3.15 – Additional capacity needs

Members did not raise any comments regarding this policy.

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3.16 – Charging for bins/services

Regarding chargeable item/service (a):

- Members raised concerns in respect of stolen or vandalised bins and questioned whether it was fair for householders to bear replacement costs in such circumstances. Members agreed with charging for replacement for bins only where damage was proven, and the bin was not defective.

Regarding chargeable item/service (b)

- Members asked whether the 'additional bin' accepted any type of waste for collection.
 - The Assistant Director clarified that only materials permitted within the Council's standard waste streams could be collected, and that waste placed in hired bins would still need to comply with segregation requirements.

No comments were made in respect of chargeable item/service (c)

Regarding chargeable item/service (d)

- Members queried whether the charging policy for bins at new properties still applied.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that, following the Panel's comments at the December meeting, the proposed charge for initial bin provision at new builds had been removed from the policy.

Regarding chargeable item/service (e):

- Members sought clarity on how places of worship would be treated within the policy and on the charging arrangements for village halls and community centres.
 - The Assistant Director explained that whilst all the venues listed were grouped together within the legislation, there was a distinction between premises used wholly for public meetings, which would not be charged, and those generating commercial income through hires or events, which would be charged.
- Members continued the debate on this item as follows:
 - Members highlighted the difficulty of distinguishing between charitable village halls and debated whether places of worship should also be charged;
 - It was also noted that many halls operated on a hire-based model and that such venues should be

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- charged at a commercial waste rate for collections beyond a standard provision;
 - Members noted that some premises lacked storage capacity for multiple bins and queried whether it would be cheaper for such venues to use a single commercial bin rather than separate containers;
 - Members suggested that hall hire agreements should place responsibility upon the hirer to remove rubbish/ take rubbish home however concerns were raised that this could lead to excessive domestic waste;
 - Ultimately members agreed that a consistent approach should apply, and that charging a commercial rate for collections from village halls and community centres should be considered due to the commercial usage. Members agreed this should be clearly reflected in the policy wording as 'authorised locations will be provided with one set of bins if requested and charged at a commercial rate'.
- Members queried the implications for charity shops under the policy.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that recent changes in legislation required charity shops to pay for the collection and disposal of waste that arose from their operations.
 - Members stressed the importance of early engagement with local charities so they could prepare for the potential impacts and put measures in place to separate reusable donations from waste.

3.17 – Commercial waste

No comments were made in respect of this policy.

3.18 – Collection of bulky waste

No comments were made in respect of this policy.

Additional issues raised:

- Members discussed practical matters, including bin cleaning services, noting that private companies had already begun advertising such services locally.
- Members sought clarification on when the roll-out period would formally end and when the Council would move to

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full enforcement of the new policies.

- The Assistant Director advised that significant engagement support would be provided in the early stages of roll-out and that data such as bin-tagging rates and resident queries would be monitored. Previous experience had suggested a bedding-in period of approximately two months, though the scale of changes meant this could vary. The expectation was that the full policy would be embedded by April 2027.
- The Panel discussed whether they needed to review the final version of the policies prior to consideration by Cabinet.
 - The Portfolio Holder noted that the decision had already been rescheduled from the 20 January 2026 Cabinet meeting to enable further scrutiny by the Panel at the current meeting. The Waste Policies were now scheduled to be presented to Cabinet the following week, on 17 February 2026, and any further delay could impact operational planning, including staffing and engagement strategy development.
- In conclusion, members supported the item continuing to go forward to the 17 February 2026 Cabinet meeting on the proviso that they were satisfied with the amended and fully updated policy following feedback at the current meeting. It was agreed that the full amended policy would be circulated to the Panel on Tuesday 10 February and that any comments by members were to be sent to Democratic Services by Friday 13 February 2026.

82. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.00 pm)

(End of minutes)