

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 17 December 2025 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)
L J Eldridge (Vice-Chairman)

D Ashby
P Barnes

A C Beal
R A Gibson

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

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M Geaney, M Hasan, J L Reynolds, M Le Sage and J Whitbourn

61. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none.

62. WASTE POLICIES

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Communities which proposed new Waste Policies required to implement the new waste collection delivery model.

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

The Assistant Director introduced the report and provided the panel with the legislative context, including the Environment Act 2021. Members were reminded that a new waste service delivery model for South Holland had already been approved in 2025 to meet the legislative changes. Appendix A set out strategic commitments, statutory responsibilities, 18 proposed new waste and recycling collection policies and governance information. Appendix B outlined a comparison with current policies.

Members considered the report and made the following comments against each proposed policy in turn, as outlined at

Action By

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point 3 of Appendix A:

3.1 Waste Collection

- Members were satisfied with this policy as written however one member suggested that communications reflect that that the Council decision to implement bins as the default receptacle, was not mandated by legislation.

3.2 Waste collection provision

- Members discussed the provision of kitchen and kerbside caddies for the weekly food waste collection, including the issue of liners. It was noted that a starter roll of 52 liners per household would be provided at roll-out. Views were expressed that ongoing provision of liners would drive participation and hygiene, with suggestions to allow residents to purchase additional liners if needed and for the Council to consider retailing extra rolls. Members ultimately agreed that the Council should endorse an ongoing provision of liners without an initial trial.
- Members debated whether the policy should require all food waste placed into the kerbside caddy to be bagged; some members supported a mandatory requirement, while others favoured encouragement rather than compulsion due to enforcement practicality.
- Some members suggested that the availability of 180L bins would be more appropriate for some households which may also reduce the need for some assisted collections.

3.3 Bank Holiday collections and collection days

- Members noted the proposal to collect on Bank Holidays, with exceptions over the Christmas period (Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day) and sought assurance regarding staff consultation and remuneration for Bank Holiday and Saturday working, and the need for clear resident communications.

3.4 Properties exempt from bin collections

- Members discussed the circumstances under which properties may be exempt from wheeled bins, such as taking bins through a room, insufficient storage space, or where bins would be stored on the highway.
 - The Assistant Director emphasised that exemptions

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would not be a matter of choice; residents would be required to accept the most suitable alternative arrangement offered by the Council. Where sacks were provided, these would be issued to match the capacity of the equivalent bin provision, ensuring fairness and supporting the Council's aim to reduce waste.

- Members queried how the Council would ensure that waste was reduced rather than simply compacted, noting concerns that limiting capacity might lead to side waste or fly-tipping. A member highlighted that households producing significant waste could struggle under the proposed limits, and queried the options that would be available for additional capacity.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged that behaviour change would be essential and confirmed that an engagement team, supported by County Council colleagues, would work with residents to promote waste reduction and correct recycling. It was noted that packaging changes under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) would gradually reduce waste volumes.
- Members raised concerns about rural properties with long private drives, questioning whether residents would be expected to wheel bins long distances.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that the current policy requiring presentation at the curtilage of the adopted highway would remain unchanged.
- Questions were asked about communal properties and flats, where residents currently used shared bin stores.
 - The Group Manager advised that communal bins or larger containers (up to 1100 litres) would be considered, with engagement officers working with residents and landlords to agree practical solutions. On communal bins, decisions would be based on property configuration and operational feasibility, with flexibility to accommodate different layouts.
- Members queried how the engagement team would prioritise visits and whether this could lead to inconsistencies.
 - The Group Manager confirmed that Engagement Officers would be deployed to target communal areas, flats, and properties identified through data and member input.

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- Concerns were expressed about the potential subjectivity of decisions on exemptions. Members requested a clear decision-making matrix to ensure consistency and fairness, and asked whether residents would have a right of appeal.
 - The Group Manager confirmed that internal processes would be developed to guide decisions and ensure fairness. While there would be no formal appeal process, decisions would be recorded, and residents could contact the Council to discuss concerns.
- Members stressed the need for detailed internal procedures and training for engagement officers to ensure transparency and consistency. One Member offered to observe training sessions to understand the criteria being applied.
- The Portfolio Holder noted members' comments and agreed that further clarity would be provided on the procedures sitting beneath policy 3.4.

3.5 Side waste

- Members raised concerns that this policy would increase littering and fly-tipping and felt that the second sentence, which suggested that littering and fly-tipping would reduce, should be removed. The Assistant Director responded that:
 - The intention had been to support the waste hierarchy, encourage residents to reduce waste, and ensure recycling remained clean and dry. Allowing side waste had historically led to increased littering and fly-tipping in other areas where bags were left outside bins or in streets; and
 - The wording would be reviewed to ensure that the core statement was clear.
- Members queried if limiting residents to one bin was reasonable and whether additional bins could be purchased where a consistent increase in waste was produced.
 - The Assistant Director added that the Council could set reasonable conditions for presentation. Limiting capacity encouraged waste reduction and recycling, which aligned with statutory obligations.
- Members requested that the line 'An additional bin may be provided at a cost' should be added.

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- Members asked whether bins with lids slightly open would be collected.
 - The Group Manager stated that this would be a reasonable decision for crews but guidance would be provided to mitigate health and safety risks.

3.6 Charging for bins

Members did not support a separate charging policy at 3.6 and asked that this be consolidated within policy 3.16 'Charging for bins/services'.

3.7 Requirement to segregate waste

- Members emphasized the importance of education regarding segregation of waste responsibilities and asked that all households receive the "Right Thing, Right Bin" guide and clear pictorial information at roll-out.
 - The Group Manager agreed that physical aids could be effective and confirmed that leaflets and visual guides would be distributed to all households as part of the roll-out.

3.8 Approach to enforcement and contamination handling

- Members supported the education and engagement-led approach outlined in paragraph 1.
- Members strongly disagreed with policy that contaminated recycling would not be collected, as stated in paragraph 2. Members asked that crews remove visible contamination where practicable, that action be taken to support the education-led approach, such as tag/sticker the bin with the reason for removal, but that, crucially, the remainder be collected, rather than leave a full bin uncollected for a month. Clarification was sought on expectations around loose versus bagged dry recycling and the managing of hygiene where residual contamination was present.
 - The Group Manager explained that operatives would remove visible contamination where practicable and tag the bin to inform the resident. Tags would include common contamination types and allow crews to write additional details;
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged that leaving bins uncollected was not desirable and confirmed that an advisory approach would be taken during the roll-out period, with contaminated items removed

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- and the remainder collected;
 - The Portfolio Holder responded that further work was required to clarify/develop internal procedures for handling rejected bins and ensuring timely follow-up collections; and
 - The Director of Communities noted the comments from the Panel and committed to considering how the policy could be amended to reflect the steer provided by the members.
- In respect of the policy relating to bins stored on the highway at paragraph 3, members queried whether residents could be charged for return of bins removed by the Council. They also queried whether legal action or fines would apply for repeated non-compliance.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that bins left permanently on the highway could be removed without notice and a delivery charge applied for their return. Residents failing to comply with requirements could face enforcement action, including fines under the Environmental Protection Act, although this would be a last resort. The wording would be clarified to ensure residents understood the meaning of 'highway' and the circumstances under which charges would apply.
 - Members were content with paragraph 4 as written.

3.9 Unadopted roads and long/private drives

- Members referred to paragraph 1 and queried whether the Council would stop collecting waste from properties on unadopted roads, as collections had taken place for many years on many such roads. Concern was expressed regarding the impact on residents should the service change.
 - The Group Manager agreed that the policy should allow pragmatic decisions and maintain service continuity where collections had historically occurred; and
 - The Assistant Director agreed that the word 'generally' be included to support existing services.
- Members generally supported paragraph 2 but asked how the policy would apply to properties with long private drives, noting that residents might struggle to wheel bins

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long distances and that bins left at the roadside could blow over. They queried whether flexibility could be built into the policy for exceptional circumstances.

- The Group Manager responded that the policy would clarify that the default position was for bins to be presented at the curtilage of the adopted highway but allow flexibility through case-by-case officer assessments.

3.10 Bin colours and waste types

- Members broadly supported this policy as written.
- Members suggested, in light of potential Local Government Reorganisation, that SHDC considered alignment of bin colours with those used by neighbouring authorities.
 - The Assistant Director responded that SHDC would be implementing the most economical system which other authorities would likely follow.
- Members requested that the body/base bin colour of 'anthracite grey' be included within the policy narrative.

3.11 Frequency of collection

- Members referred to the collection of paper and card in purple-lidded bins and raised concerns about moisture levels in recycling sacks.
 - The Assistant Director explained that moisture levels in sacks were too high for paper and card to go directly to the paper mill. For properties unable to have a bin, paper and card would need to be placed in the mixed dry recycling route and separated later. The contract allowed a small amount of paper and card to go through this process, which was the only option available for those properties.
- Members raised concerns about exempt properties, noting that residents could have up to eight bags at a time (noting the potential capacity of four dry mix and four paper/card bags) and raised storage challenges between collections.
 - The Group Manager acknowledged the concern and confirmed that specific messaging would be provided to exempt properties to explain arrangements clearly.
- Members suggested that the collection schedule should be

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presented in two tables—one for standard properties and one for exempt properties—and that similar clarity should be provided for the number of bags allowed.

- The Director agreed that this approach would make the information clearer for residents and undertook to review the presentation of the schedule.

3.12 Bin presentation

- Members asked how the Council would prove that a bin had not been put out on time, noting that some streets had been missed during rerouting and raising concerns about disputes when residents claimed their bins were presented.
 - The Group Manager confirmed that new collection vehicles were equipped with cameras and GPS tracking. Officers could log on remotely to view live or recorded footage, check the route, and verify whether a bin was presented. The system showed the vehicle's location, speed, and stop times, enabling quick checks when missed collections were reported.
- Regarding the third point of this policy, as discussed at 3.9, the Group Manager confirmed that the wording on presentation location would be simplified for clarity, while retaining flexibility for agreed presentation points.

3.13 Missed collections

- Member queried the procedure if a bin was missed and raised concerns about the wording “recollection will be attempted within 5 working days.” They felt this was unclear and asked whether residents would need to leave bins out for several days, which could conflict with rules about leaving bins on the highway.
 - The Assistant Director responded that where a missed collection had been reported, residents would not be penalised for leaving bins out. Crews would log instances where bins were not presented at the time of the original collection, and CCTV footage could be checked if disputes arose. Regarding the queried wording, it was agreed that the word “attempted” should be removed and replaced with a clear commitment that recollection would take place within five working days; and
 - The Group Manager added that operational flexibility was required, as recollection could happen within an hour, the next day, or later in the week

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depending on route planning. Automated responses could be utilised to confirm the timeframe of collection.

3.14 Assisted collections

- Members asked how quickly assistance would be provided if a resident living alone became incapacitated and could not present their bin.
 - The Group Manager confirmed that the process was largely automated and that assisted collections would be picked up on the next scheduled collection. Requests would be logged promptly to ensure inclusion in the route planning.

- Members queried whether there were safeguards to prevent misuse of the service, such as residents requesting assistance without genuine need. They asked whether criteria existed for temporary requests.
 - The Assistant Director explained that a series of questions was used during customer contact to assess eligibility without being intrusive. This process was already in place and ensured that requests were reasonable. It was noted that customer service teams would need to be fully briefed on the policy to provide accurate advice.

- Members asked whether crews and sheltered housing teams proactively identified residents needing assistance.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that crews often reported cases where residents appeared to need help. These observations were logged, and arrangements were made accordingly. Crews were also asked to record practical details, such as whether properties had dogs, locks, or specific access requirements. In addition engagement with housing teams was already planned, including meetings with sheltered housing providers in the new year. It was noted that current assisted collection numbers were low (around 700) but expected to rise significantly, in line with other councils where figures exceeded 1,000; and
 - The Group Manager confirmed that the collection model had been adjusted to factor in assisted collections, including additional time for operatives to return bins after emptying.

3.15 Additional capacity needs

- Members queried how objective criteria for additional capacity (household size, nappies, health needs) had been determined. It was noted that the positioning of the last 2 bullet points be reviewed to improve readability.
 - The Assistant Director explained that the numbers were based on data from other authorities and were intended to remove subjectivity by setting clear thresholds
- Members queried how Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) would be managed, noting that these properties could present unique challenges, and asked whether the policy should include specific wording for HMOs.
 - The Group Manager confirmed that HMOs would be assessed based on occupancy, similar to flats, and that landlords had a responsibility to work with the Council to ensure waste was managed appropriately.
- Members raised concerns about communal areas and asked how responsibility for contaminated bins would be determined where multiple households shared a collection point.
 - The Assistant Director acknowledged that communal areas were challenging and confirmed that engagement officers would work with residents and landlords to encourage compliance. While bins would not be individually numbered, residents would be encouraged to mark their bins for identification. It was noted that contamination in communal bins remained difficult to trace and would require strong engagement and enforcement where necessary.

3.16 Charging for bins/services

- Members asked whether residents would be charged for replacement bins if they were damaged or defective.
 - The Assistant Director confirmed that charges would only apply where damage, loss, or theft was 'proven' to be the resident's responsibility. Bins damaged due to manufacturing faults or by the Council would be replaced free of charge.
- Members queried how charges would apply to community centres and village halls, noting that these venues were

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often used for mixed purposes such as public meetings, baby groups, and private events. They asked whether one free set of bins would be provided and how additional waste would be charged.

- The Assistant Director explained that legislation required the Council to charge for waste collection where premises were not wholly or mainly used for public meetings. Community centres and village halls would receive one set of bins free of charge, but any additional waste generated by commercial activities, such as private hired events, would be charged at a commercial rate; and
 - The Portfolio Holder acknowledged that this area was complex and that further clarification would be provided prior to Cabinet consideration.
- Members asked for the charging of occupiers of new homes for initial bin provision to be removed from the policy.
 - Members asked why the Council did not currently offer a commercial waste collection service and suggested that this could provide an income stream and reduce businesses placing waste in domestic bins.
 - The Group Manager explained that legislation required the Council to arrange commercial waste collection if requested, either directly or through a contractor. The new service model and vehicles had been designed to allow capacity for a charged commercial waste service if Cabinet approved this option.

3.17 Commercial waste

Members were content with the policy as written

3.18 Collection of bulky waste

Members were content with the policy as written.

In conclusion, as members had requested a number of recommendations be applied to the policy, they requested the opportunity to review an amended version of the policy prior to Cabinet approval. The Portfolio Holder noted this request and agreed to reschedule the Cabinet decision from 20 January 2026 to 17 February 2026 to accommodate the Policy Development Panel's review of the edited policies.

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AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted; and
- 2) That the feedback of the panel be noted and that a revised Waste Policies report to be reviewed by the Policy Development Panel prior to submission to Cabinet.

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

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 9.45 pm)

(End of minutes)