

**Date:** Thursday 9 January 2025 at 4.30 pm

**Venue:** Jim Cooke Conference Suite, Stockton Central Library, Church Road,  
Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TU

**Cllr Paul Rowling (Chair)**  
**Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Vice-Chair)**

Cllr John Coulson  
Cllr Jason French  
Cllr Barbara Inman  
Cllr Alan Watson

Cllr Richard Eglington  
Cllr Shakeel Hussain  
Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

## **AGENDA**

### **5 Scrutiny Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres**

To consider information from the following organisations in relation to this scrutiny topic: (Pages 7 - 16)

- Business Forums / Groups
- SBC Adults, Health and Wellbeing

**Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting**

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please

Contact: , Senior Scrutiny Officer, Gary Woods on email [gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk)

**KEY - Declarable interests are:-**

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

**Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance**



**Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Subject	Description
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
<b>Land and property</b>	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
<b>Licences</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
<b>Securities</b>	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
  - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

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## Community Safety Select Committee

9<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### Dementia friendly Plus project

#### Summary

This report outlines the projects aims and its successes since the outset. It explains how the project has diversified yet remained within the initial brief.

The report highlights how the education program has benefitted pan disability as much as Dementia and how it supports and promotes good communication with all businesses.

I will give some examples of what the businesses have given back to the community and how our people have their say in what evolves.

This report does show how in the current economic climate, all agencies must work together and recognise the changing needs of the disease process for its people who are affected by it, the carers, and the cared for.

Finally, it will say how inclusion and communication has started to support our town centres making people living with dementia and their loved ones feel safer and supported whilst enjoying a meaningful environment for as long as they can. Feedback is they feel welcomed greatly in all our 6 towns and it is generally recognised, by them, that although we still have some work to do, we are moving forward. This is reinforced to me by visitors to the town, that they too feel welcomed and happy to work with Stockton Borough.

#### Detail

This is a Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council initiative, originally Stockton BID and SBC. I am the only worker in the team, which was initially a part, and in the last 2 years, a full-time role.

1. There are over 200 businesses that are accredited as dementia friendly with SBC. The businesses include small retailers, larger stores, theatres cinemas, schools, hospitals, undertakers, licenced drivers, libraries, churches, community policing, town markets, community centres, sports and leisure facilities, virtual businesses, voluntary groups and organisations, SBC internal departments, local councillors, hospitals, care homes and care at home businesses. Some are simply owner / self-employed businesses such as home help services.

Each business undergoes an annual / bi-annual review to show their sustainability. The initial application form is reviewed by various groups of people with lived experience and we have just started a mystery shopping process with a simple form for our people with lived experience to complete. The feedback is delivered verbally by me at the review or before, if possible, to the business.

2. Some of the support or pledges given back to the community by the businesses are as follows:
- One hotel in Stockton hosts a monthly drop in whereby people living with dementia and their loved ones, people who's loved ones have gone into care or died, and some people who are simply lonely come to have a chat and drink as much coffee, tea and have cakes. This is supplied throughout the afternoon and the £1.00 cost is donated to a dementia charity. It is staffed by the hotel staff although I attend as it is a good networking event for me to listen to feedback and be informed of any needs personally or in the community which I can take back to the best people to deal with the concern / issue. This drop in often has the local community police in attendance and occasionally new businesses, a service lead or a department from the Council will attend to chat if they need feedback or views on a topic. This is where I remind people of local and national initiatives that provide safety and security such as Johns campaign, The Herbert Protocol, our carers support education program, and let people know what is going on in the community.
  - We do have similar drop ins ran by other businesses / groups on a formal and informal basis such as local cafes and community centres, public houses and sports facilities.
  - Music and dance events are in every one of our 6 towns. Business do charge but this is nominal, and the carer usually attends free. One of our larger venues has a monthly singalong songbook which is well attended. Again, I attend this as a good networking venue because of the wide range of abilities and areas of need it supports. This same venue supports entertainment for events requested by the Livewell hub and our transformation teams regarding their work with care homes. We also host a Hippy Happy Shake 2x yearly and try to use a venue in each of our towns for each tea dance. Things like this showcase the venue for their accessibility, and welcoming approach through their awareness training which is simply a person centred approach to dementia care.
  - Each of our main sporting facilities and some smaller ones are dementia friendly and all support health to a level for everyone's ability with staff who understand their individuality. Several of our people with dementia still attend swimming both independently and in supported groups. Feedback from these people is that they feel confident with the staff or organisation around them. They feel safe and confident enough to still use their community doing things they want to do. The sport also supports physical as well as mental health. Another business is a Yorkshire based football facility who supports our Stockton communities in various venues for chair based and walking football. Bowling clubs and parks are also DF accredited, and walks and bowls play a large part in our people's lives. This is indoor and outdoor.
  - Care Homes and care at home providers are accredited. 60% of our care homes have embarked on the care home accreditation. It is now actually on our assessment form that they are working with us and asks how many staff have undertaken the awareness as there is a minimum ask of 50%. Care homes however do strive to achieve 100% once they see its value. Some of our people's families in our care homes feed back positive and some negative comments and this means they comfortably know an issue will be addressed and they are given peace of mind.



- We now have care at home embarking on this using Skills for Care guidelines.
  - With our internal services, accreditation of the education hub led to me addressing all care academy workers and this meant they had all undertaken a person-centred approach to Dementia care awareness before embarking on jobs in our community and care homes.
  - Our director of H&SC requested all our staff in adult H&SC become a dementia friend and to this I have worked with the training department to start to create three tiers of training to current standards on dementia. Tier 1 is completed and commenced, Tier 2 is almost completed, and Tier 3 is planned this year.
  - Feedback from level one and its predecessor is very good and is bespoke to the departments. Staff say how they have implemented this in their work.
  - The businesses awareness has also had very positive feedback and often reinforces their good practice but explains why an issue may have arisen. It is allowing them to maintain their customer base for longer and for people to remain shopping or being entertained / dined with them for longer too. I do not have facts to footfall or if this has increased since we began however, feedback is very evident from our people living with this disease that we are creating those welcoming spaces in our communities and a variety of activities, accessible shops and a good customer service with their increased understanding of dementia and customer needs.
3. Our town centre improvement has started and is well underway. The plans for the Stockton urban park were shared publicly and amongst our groups and it created a lot of conversation as there were some people in my particular client group, who saw this as destroying their memories. Lots of discussion and a critique of the park has slowly helped them through this period of change. They now view this as an area where they can meet their families and friends, watch their grandchildren having fun and dine out any time of the day. It is an opportunity for a day out, not just a shopping centre. I have attached the work I did for our town centres improvement manager for regeneration and growth (see **Appendix 1**) which is a helpful piece of work to support all our towns as we invest in them to increase their public appeal and thus footfall.
  4. Transport has always been voiced as a problem. Working with our licensing team, we now have a mandatory requirement for our licensed drivers to be a dementia friend which has had good results. A few drivers have even rung to ask what they should do if they have encountered a problem. One driver was fully supported by our safeguarding team too for his own and the customers protection.
  5. The dementia friendly Stockton sticker is seen a safe place too. When seen on shop windows, on license driver's cabs and police cars, there is a degree of comfort there. I do work with our warm space's projects etc to try to make all our spaces dementia friendly.

## Summary

From the point of view of our people living with dementia, their carers and the local businesses I deal with, our borough is certainly welcoming although some places are better than others. People are aware of the levelling up projects underway such as Billingham and Thornaby town centres.

There are areas that need to be more consistent such as litter left in shop doorways from homeless people using them during the night. Aggressive begging is still there but our people say this has reduced visibly.

The biggest bonus is in the staff awareness sessions for the businesses as it talks about how people with dementia see things and why people need more time in our busy world. It makes us look at what people can do and not what they cannot. Businesses soon realise that change does not always carry a cost, and small changes are often the most beneficial. A good example of this is one of our centre managers responded to a Facebook message saying they loved their new toilet facility for visually impaired and how it could benefit any disability however, she had a colostomy and needed a shelf to prepare her products. Within 24 hours and with minimal cost the shelf was in place with a very positive comment and thanks being made.

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## Stockton Urban Stockton Park & Waterfront

Comments re Dementia friendly

The project looks fantastic although I cannot grasp the scale easily.

Contrast:

The design shows seating and there does need to be plenty, however, seating needs to be clearly visible to a person living with dementia. Seats do not need to be bright primary colours and can still look natural and aesthetic. There needs to be a definitive contrast in the shading of the seat in relation to its base and to the floor. If using wood, then remember weathering will alter the contrast, so what looks good initially, can easily pale into insignificance and thus lose its purpose. If a person cannot define a seat, they will not recognise it as a seat. Examples of this are on the current high street and silver street. If an arm rest is used, then this too should have a contrast to the seat by shade or materials used. Some seating needs to have a backrest to aid comfort and posture.

Flower beds can be block colours or form simple patterns within each bedding area. Bright colours and primary colours are more easily recognised as a pleasing picture.

Shrubs and trees can cause some discomfort to PLWD but this is something to simply be aware of. If they are planted on green areas and they are green shrubs/trees, they may not be easily visible as they blend in. The trunk or a copper beech etc will be distinctive and create a contrast. Planting in an enclosed bed with a border may be helpful or plant shrubs with a contrasting foliage.

If you post notices or use a notice board, then a clear font such as arial, larger font size makes it easily readable. There needs to be a border and a contrast to the print i.e. black print white card. The border could be as simple as a darker notice board with notices spaced even as little as a 2.5cm apart to allow the person to differentiate between each one. This is also linked to vision and perception, and is mentioned below.

Steps and gradients should be clearly identified and will also be linked to the areas mentioned below. It may be useful to have fencing or a colour

change to mark the edge of the walkways. This could be bark chippings or shale to contrast with the walkway differentiating the start of adjoining areas. In areas of planting which are for observation only, it is important to understand that people may walk amongst these or start to garden for themselves. It would be lovely to have a DIY area for meaningful occupation and could be adopted by a voluntary organisation such as greenlinks to ensure maintenance. It could be that some planting used as a border could be in a raised bed and of a sensory nature. These will need to be robust such as lavender, roses (with no or limited thorns) even eucalyptus, as they will be touched. A border or something contrasting such as slate or bark, will reduce unwanted intervention due to it being perceived as a barrier if the contrast is strong.

Steps should be clearly identified to minimise slips trips and falls. It is important to note that the direction of edgings need to be clear, a good contrast and point in a vertical manner to minimise slips trips falls and reduce fear/anxiety fears. Horizontal strips, lighting etc will be perceived as a barrier as these people cannot differentiate depth or height thus exaggerating their movement. An example of this is in the ally near green dragon yard to Silver St.

Gradients should be gentle to support walking or pushing a wheelchair, and seating should be available along the route. It is important to note that some seating should have an arm rest to assist rise and sitting or to assist in standing sitting. This also aids people with poor posture and sitting balance

It is noted there are bus shelters, and presumably these are the high St slides. It is important to note that timetables are at least A3 and of the clear font and contrast to see. As most shelters are clear then it is important that the frames for these are of a good contrast to be easily read and recognised and prevent frustrations resulting in behaviours that challenge people around the immediate area. There is a good example of one bus stop near the globe where the stand has a seat and a larger print timetable, but the others revert to normal type.

Advertising is important to the authorities, but it is important people can recognise what bus to catch before what perfume might be good to wear!

Choice of walkway materials are difficult as PLWD have physical as well as hidden disabilities. This may be visual, mobility or brain damage which affects all the categories in this critique.

#### Vision:

Peripheral vision is the first part of the vision to deteriorate so people will not be aware of hazards, signs etc to the side. The positions of the lamp posts are central on what appears to be the waterfront slide, this is a positive thing as people will have them in direct line of vision.

People living with dementia need 2.5 times more light than normal so shady darkened areas will not always benefit them

The above point is also important on a seasonal note as the natural light is poorer in the winter months therefore the park may have less usage at this time or need more lighting at this time.

Thinking of the activity in the amphitheatre, there is a need for a view point that is a little quieter as some people do not like to be in amongst the noise as it may become confusing and raise agitation levels. This is a good thing to have to look out onto the river too. Viewpoints need to be wheelchair accessible and it would be helpful if benches have arms at the end as some people do need this for balance and to rise and seat themselves for a comfortable view point. Remember the need for seating is for the PLWD and their carers. Other areas such as the children's play area will be an attraction as PLWD often like to watch the children play, may have young children themselves as young people are being diagnosed in Stockton as awareness is being raised, and grandparents still do a lot of child minding.

#### Signage:

Signage needs to be a minimal as each destination point or life station within the park is a signpost in its own right.

A children's play area is clearly seen as what it is, a children's play area, so requires no immediate signage for people living with dementia. They generally like to watch and interact with them even visit with their own children/grandchildren. Appropriate seating is important around this area.

The café will need signage as it is not obvious, but the signage will need to be words and pictures for all to identify with it. Remember the need for contrast too. Primary colours or another clearly contrasting colour. Lights especially flashing lights may cause confusion and may invoke seizures. Mirrored signs are to be avoided as this will cause distress to some people and could start arguments as they see their reflections as intrusive and provoking, i.e. staring back at them.

Traditional signs pointing in different directions are good as they invoke memories of walks places etc. They do need to be clear with a font of a good contrast and identifiable.

If there is a need for signs, contrast, combined words and pictures and clear font is better for cognition.

Height of signs is important. Eye level and clearly placed also remember poor peripheral vision is common.

Signs need to be durable and not fade or discolour. If letters are effaced or damaged, repair/replace as soon as possible.

Perception:

Damage to the parietal lobe means perception is greatly altered. Highly patterned items may appear to the person as a swarm of insects, a pit of snakes and to them this is real. This is worth knowing for any artwork in the park.

Outlines may be seen as scary things so consider this if there are sculptures.

The wind blowing through the trees on a windy day may be perceived as people whispering or fighting so beware of planting in areas that normally are effectuated by prevailing winds. Wind chimes may have similar effects.

Earlier we spoke of darker areas or damaged areas such as a black tarmac repair being perceived as a void because a person with dementia cannot perceive the contrast as high, low or flat to the ground. This in turn may create anxiety/fear and increases slips trips and falls potentially as well as aggression.

Cracks in pavements, litter and graffiti can all be perceived as something other than what it is, thus increasing anxieties etc as stated above, Housekeeping needs to be good to prevent this.

Availability of shade and drinking water is essential. It may be on a hot day, a person feels thirsty and hot. Their boundaries have been eroded away causing them to not remember what is right and what is wrong. This means they may drink from water features and start to remove their clothing. Shaded area and a drinking fountain may help to divert this potentially disinhibited behaviour.

Music is always a positive and the amphitheatre is a positive note but consider some regular gentle music throughout times it is not being used.

Finally, View points along the frontage of the river even as far as the slipway will allow full accessibility to this beautiful vista and allow people with limited mobility and the need to stay out of a crowd to still feel included.

These points are not exhaustive but a good broad view of this wonderful project.

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