

**Date:** Thursday 14 December 2023 at 4.30 pm

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

**Cllr Robert Cook (Leader)**

Cllr Nigel Cooke  
Cllr Clare Gamble  
Cllr Steve Nelson

Cllr Lisa Evans  
Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy  
Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE

**AGENDA**

- |           |  |                 |
|-----------|--|-----------------|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Evacuation Procedure</b>  | (Pages 7 - 8)   |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   |                 |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>  |                 |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Minutes</b>   |                 |
|           | To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 16 November 2023.                                       | (Pages 9 - 14)  |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Financial Update and Medium Term Financial Plan</b>   | (Pages 15 - 28) |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>0-19 Children's Public Health Programme: Partnership with Harrogate &amp; District Foundation Trust</b> | (Pages 29 - 48) |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>2023 Event Summary and 2024 Memorial Lighting Calendar</b>  | (Pages 49 - 58) |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Lived Experience and Making It Real Board</b>   | (Pages 59 - 66) |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Annual Report of the Governing Body for the Learning &amp; Skills Service</b>                           | (Pages 67 - 70) |
| <b>10</b> | <b>LA Governor Appointments</b>  | (Pages 71 - 74) |

**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.

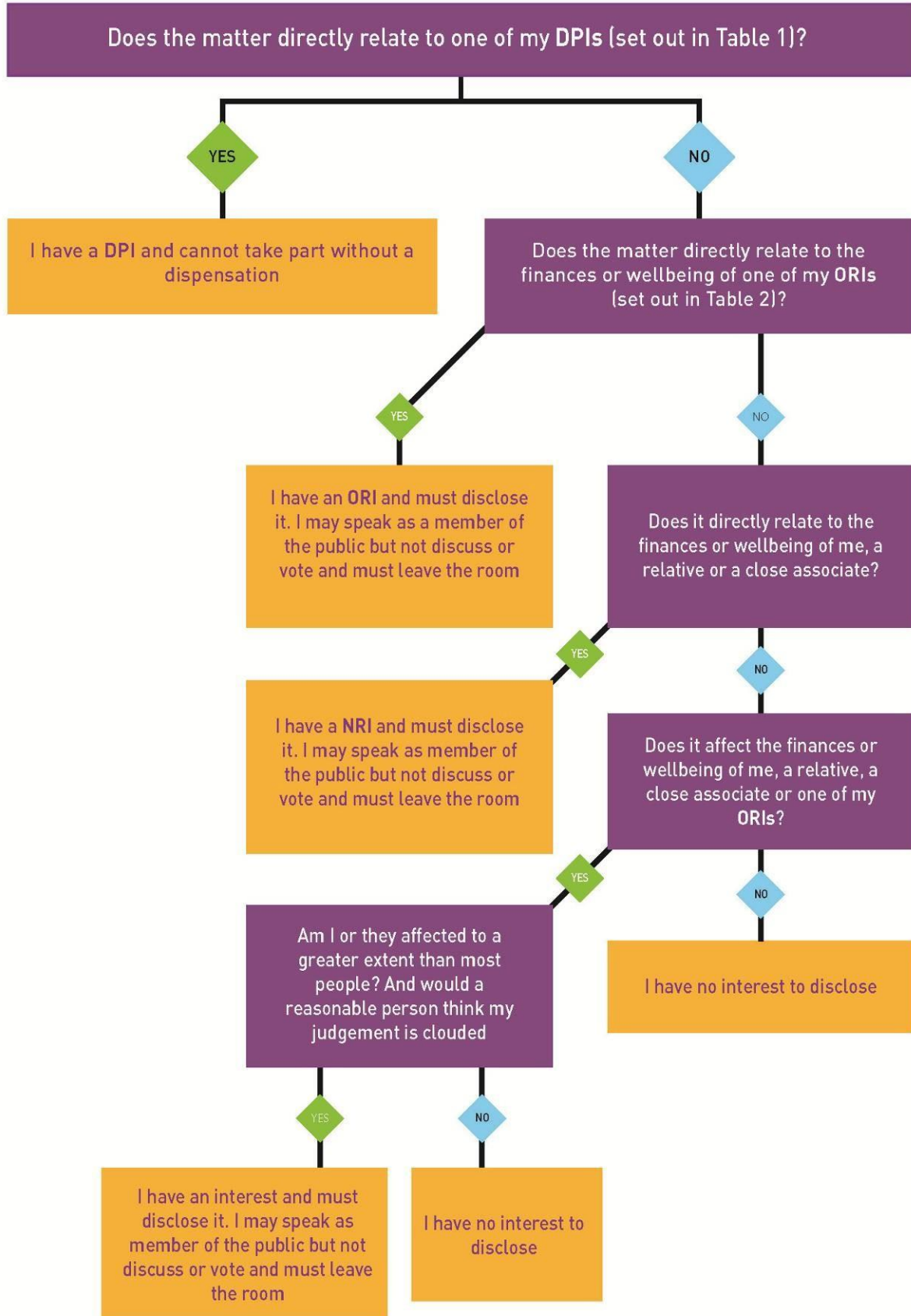
Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please

Contact: Democratic Services Officer, Peter Bell on email [peter.bell@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:peter.bell@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**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<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

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Jim Cooke Conference Suite, Stockton Central Library** **Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping**

If the fire or bomb alarm should sound please exit by the nearest emergency exit. The Fire alarm is a continuous ring and the Bomb alarm is the same as the fire alarm however it is an intermittent ring.

If the Fire Alarm rings exit through the nearest available emergency exit and form up in Municipal Buildings Car Park.

The assembly point for everyone if the Bomb alarm is sounded is the car park at the rear of Splash on Church Road.

The emergency exits are located via the doors between the 2 projector screens. The key coded emergency exit door will automatically disengage when the alarm sounds.

The Toilets are located on the Ground floor corridor of Municipal Buildings next to the emergency exit. Both the ladies and gents toilets are located on the right hand side.

### **Microphones**

During the meeting, members of the Committee, and officers in attendance, will have access to a microphone. Please use the microphones, when directed to speak by the Chair, to ensure you are heard by the Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank



## CABINET

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday 16 November 2023.

**Present:** Cllr Robert Cook (Leader), Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member), Cllr Lisa Evans (Cabinet Member), Cllr Clare Gamble (Cabinet Member), Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Cabinet Member), Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member).

**Officers:** Mike Greene (CE), Garry Cummings (DCE&F, T&P), Ged Morton, Geraldine Brown, Jonathan Nertney, Fiona Srogi, Peter Bell (CS), Elaine Redding (ChS), Reuben Kench (CS,E&C), Carolyn Nice, Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Marc Stephenson (A,H&W) and Marc Cole (R&IG).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Marc Besford and Cllr Carol Clark

**Apologies:** , .

### **CAB/43/23 Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

### **CAB/44/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CAB/45/23 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **CAB/46/23 Minutes of Various Bodies**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to members for consideration:-

TVCA Cabinet – 22 September 2023

TSAB – 14 June 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes be received.

### **CAB/47/23 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023**

Consideration was given to a report that set out the proposed changes for polling districts and places taking into account the submission of the Acting Returning Officer

and feedback received from the consultation. The consultation ended on 29 October 2023.

Each Local Authority was required to carry out reviews of Polling Districts and Polling Places in its area.

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 changed the timing of these reviews and reviews must be held within a 16-month period starting on 1 October every fifth year after 1 October 2013. Ward boundaries were unaffected by the review.

The Council's last statutory review was carried out in 2018 and an interim review was held in 2022 when a number of changes were made as a result of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Ward Boundary Review. The changes approved by Council on 23 November 2022 were implemented and in place for the May 2023 local elections held in the Borough.

A Council's area was divided into polling districts with one or more districts making up a ward, with a polling place being the area or building within a polling district in which a polling station is situated. The Council must identify the polling districts and polling places within the Borough. The (Acting) Returning Officer is responsible for identifying the polling stations within the polling place.

The Electoral Commission Guidance was detailed within the report.

Polling districts changes had been considered to include existing and future Parliamentary boundaries. This would be achieved by merging into appropriate adjoining polling districts as identified in the 2022 review and keeping some small polling districts that due to the geography of the Parliamentary Boundary were unsuitable to combine with neighbouring polling districts. The review considerations were outlined within the report.

During the 2023 Elections, the opportunity was taken to complete the Electoral Commission's evaluation templates in order to assess the suitability/ accessibility of the polling place/ station. Presiding Officers were also asked to record any complaints/comments received.

The Boundary Commission had undertaken electorate projections as part of the Parliamentary Boundary Review 2023 and the Local Government Ward Boundary Review 2022. The recommendations take into consideration these predictions as well as the increase in postal voters that we have seen since 2021.

The Returning Officer's submission summarised the existing arrangements, key issues identified from the 2023 Elections, any notable projected changes in electorate and makes proposals for changes to polling districts / places.

Mobile polling stations continued to be used where no alternative venues could be found. Mobiles stations were expensive and unpopular with voters and suggestions for alternative venues were always welcomed. The use of some schools as polling stations continued to be a problem when the safeguarding of children cannot in the view of the schools be assured, and in these circumstances alternative venues had been identified. The proposals considered Electoral Commission Guidance that the number of electors allocated to a particular polling station should not exceed 2,250

and also the introduction of Voter Identification which was more resource intensive on polling day.

Any further feedback and comments from the 2024 Elections in relation to the suitability of existing polling stations would be considered in the planning for future electoral events and statutory reviews.

The consultation was published on 1 October 2023 with a closing date for comments of midnight on 29 October 2023. The Acting Returning Officers submission summarised the existing arrangements and their proposals to reduce the number of polling districts by 8, by merging a number of polling places that use the same polling place and keeping 5 smaller polling districts due to the changes in Parliamentary Boundaries.

RECOMMENDED to Council the changes to Polling Districts and Polling Places, as outlined in the Acting Returning Officers recommendations, incorporating the responses to the comments laid out in the table within the report.

### **CAB/48/23 Winter Planning Update**

Consideration was given to a report that gave a winter planning update.

The report provided an update on Winter planning work across the Council, working with partners. This included measures in place across Adult Social Care (ASC) to respond to Winter pressures and the associated increase in service demands.

Winter 2022/23 presented significant challenges to communities and the health and wellbeing system with cost-of-living pressures, ongoing Covid circulation, flu and other respiratory infections.

To protect vulnerable groups at greater risk, the national decision was taken to start vaccination for flu and COVID on 11th September 2023, starting with care homes and over 75-year-olds. An attachment to the report set out eligible groups. Vaccines were being evolved constantly in response to the virus.

Community pharmacies also offered flu and Covid vaccinations to those who were eligible. Flu vaccinations could also be purchased from community pharmacies by population groups who were not eligible for a free flu jab through the NHS. Covid vaccinations were not available for purchase. A list of community pharmacies who had signed up to offer COVID-19 and Flu vaccines was attached to the report.

An attachment to the report set out eligible groups for the flu vaccine. Flu vaccinations for 2-3-year-olds, school-age children (reception to year 11) and children in clinical risk groups started in September, delivered by the school immunisation service and aiming to finish by 15th December 2023.

In addition to the activities detailed within the report the Council (working with its partners across the VCSE sector) had a range of ongoing activities which would support the borough's residents, specifically those who were experiencing hardship due to the current cost of living challenge. These were detailed within the report.

Beyond continuing the work described in this report, key updates or proposed changes in approach (e.g. in response to a new threat to population health) would be brought to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet as needed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **CAB/49/23 Major Incident Plan 2023-2026**

Consideration was given to a report on the Major Incident Plan 2023/2026.

By law the Council had a responsibility to prepare and maintain a Major Incident Plan outlining the Council role during the life saving and recovery phases of an incident. The Council were supported in doing this by the joint authority's arrangement which was known as the Emergency Planning Unit, who provided specialist advice and support in the preparation and maintenance of the plan.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act, the Council was duty bound to frequently review the major incident plan to ensure it was fit for purpose and adequacy considers the known risks and appropriate responses available within Stockton on Tees. A copy of the Major Incident Plan 2023/2026 was attached to the report.

RESOLVED that the Major Incident Plan 2023/2026 be agreed.

### **CAB/50/23 Director of Public Health Annual Report**

Consideration was given to a report on the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

Under the Health and Social Care Act (2012), the Director of Public Health had a duty to prepare an independent annual report. As across local authorities nationally, there was a hiatus in producing these reports due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequently due to the recovery work to stand back up core public health duties and services and catch-up key work which had been achieved.

The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022 aimed to capture an overview of key activity from a public health perspective, over the course of the unique and challenges events of the Covid-19 pandemic. It also sought to summarise the learning from this period from a public health perspective and describe some of the activity since, in response to this learning.

Recovery across the health and wellbeing system and society continued and learning would continue to be embedded in the approach of public health going forward, working with partners.

The report described some of the key work undertaken with partners and communities during the course of the pandemic and the actions since. Working alongside communities and Elected Members was an essential part of the local public health response.

Embedding learning and monitoring of public health activity would continue to be overseen and reported through the Lead Member, Corporate Management Team and Health and Wellbeing Board as part of core business.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Director of Public Health Annual Report be received.

This page is intentionally left blank

## AGENDA ITEM

## REPORT TO CABINET

14 DECEMBER 2023

## REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

### CABINET DECISION

**Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook**

#### FINANCIAL UPDATE & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

##### SUMMARY

The report provides an update on the on the financial position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September for the current year (2023/24) and presents outline plans for the 2024/25 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Members will note that despite significant efforts around cost mitigations, inflationary and demand pressures have continued and the projected position for 2023/24 is now a projected overspend of around £6.9m. The financial position has been communicated to all managers and staff and everyone is being encouraged to challenge all spend to try and mitigate the impact. As outlined in previous reports, any overspend will need to be funded from reserves. Work is underway to assess reserves and this will be incorporated into the MTFP report in February.

The report also outlines the indicative MTFP for future years. It should be noted however that, future years funding levels are assumed based on announcements made to date. This will only be confirmed upon receipt of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which is expected week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> December. Many of the pressures around inflation, Adult's Services, Children's Services and pay awards experienced in the current year are continuing and this has been built into projections.

The local government finance settlement for 2023/24 included the referendum limit for 2024/25, setting Council tax at 3% and the Adult Social Care levy at 2%. The current MTFP is based on a 2.9% increase and no application of the Levy. The Budget Report in February will consider the council tax levels however given the overall position the Council will need to seriously consider increasing the rise to the referendum levels anticipated by Government.

The position for the Council, based on the assumptions in the report and an increase level of council tax still mean there will be a gap of £5m in 2024/25 and £8m by 2025/26. In simple terms, we need to reduce our base budget position by £9m, so we must reduce our spending. Our planned programme of transformation is key to doing this, while also ensuring positive outcomes for our residents.

Despite the budget challenges, we remain ambitious for Stockton-on-Tees and getting a better future for everyone who lives, works and plays here. We are confident we can work with our partners and communities to put in place new and innovative approaches which will not only save money but also reshape what we do for the better and in the best interests of our residents. We will do this through our Powering Our Future Programme which see the Council focus its transformation around the following five principles.

**Communities Powering Our Future:** We need to change the way we work with our communities so they use their knowledge, skills and strengths to help them deliver positive outcomes for themselves. Not only will this save money, it will mean that our residents are healthy, happy and feel like they belong.

We will empower communities and increase individual, family and community level activities, helping people and communities to be independent and have less reliance on Council services.

**Partnerships Powering Our Future:** By working with partner organisations we can make sure our residents have support when they need it and that Stockton-on-Tees provides opportunities which make it a great place to live, work and play.

**Transformation Powering Our Future:** Our ambitious and entrepreneurial spirit will make sure our residents have bright futures. We will work with our partners and communities in new ways, embracing technology and different approaches to create opportunities and reduce inequality, using the limited amount of money we have available.

We will continue to carefully manage our resources. We will focus on creating a new relationship with communities, while providing efficient services that offer value for money and are valued by our residents.

**Colleagues Powering Our Future:** Our talented workforce will step up to the challenging budget situation by using their knowledge and skills to work with our partners and communities in innovative, adaptable and dynamic ways with the best interests of our residents being the focus of everything they do.

Our people will be empowered to work together and do the best they can for our communities.

**Regeneration Powering Our Future:** Our exciting regeneration projects will make sure Stockton-on-Tees is a place of choice for business. Not only will this generate more income through Council Tax and Business Rates, there will be more employment opportunities too, which will reduce demand on services, saving us money.

Our borough will be recognised for its thriving economy at the heart of Tees Valley and as a place where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

In order to address the budget gap we need to act quickly so the first of the transformation reviews delivered through the Powering our Future programme are taking place between now and early next year.

In the meantime, all staff are being instructed to think carefully before authorising any spending and to consider how the Council can work with our partners and communities to ensure the best possible outcomes for residents, despite a reducing budget.

## **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/DECISIONS**

To update Members on financial performance in 2023/24 and to outline proposals for the 2024/25 Budget and MTFP based on latest available information.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the updated financial position for 2023/24 be noted.
2. That the revised Capital Programme at **Appendix A** be noted.
3. That the emerging issues for the MTFP be noted.



**DETAIL****FINANCIAL POSITION 2023/24****FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****GENERAL FUND**

- Members will be aware that the report to Cabinet in September, which covered the first quarter of the financial year, reported a pressure of £3.7m caused by significant pressures within Children's Services as well as the anticipated 2023/24 pay award. These pressures are being faced by authorities across the country and there are several stories in the press covering the financial pressure many local authorities are experiencing.
- The report explained that officers would be exploring opportunities for in year savings to mitigate use of reserves.
- The following table details the projected budget outturn position for each Directorate in 2023/24, based on information to 30 September 2023. The table shows that despite the efforts around in year savings, the position has deteriorated due to further pressures.

Directorate	Annual Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Q1 Over/(Under) £'000	Forecast Variance at Q2 Over/(Under) £'000	Movement from Q1 £'000
Adults & Health	86,851	88,427	0	1,576	1,576
Children's Services	48,651	55,947	5,000	7,296	2,296
Community Services, Environment & Culture	52,269	51,868	234	(401)	(635)
Finance, Development & Regeneration	13,612	13,377	(145)	(235)	(90)
Corporate Services	11,944	11,724	(212)	(220)	(8)
Corporate Items	9,441	6,861	(2,677)	(2,580)	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,768</b>	<b>228,204</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>5,436</b>	<b>3,236</b>
Pay Offer Pressure		1,500	1,500	1,500	0
<b>Revised Total</b>	<b>222,768</b>	<b>229,704</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>6,936</b>	<b>3,236</b>

**Reasons for movements since Quarter 1 over £100,000****Adults and Health**

- The growth in demand for residential placements has continued to increase. This is generating a financial pressure against budget of £1.5m. Additional monitoring and senior management decision making has been implemented to reduce the impact from the Discharge to Assess process which is impacting. 56% of the placement activity is relating to people coming out of hospital and we need to work with our NHS partners to address and reduce this demand. The pressure on services is being seen across all areas of needs. Within older people, this appears to be a result of people moving from a hospital discharge bed into a long stay placement. Work is ongoing with our NHS partners to mitigate some of the risk and impact in this area. Use of BCF underspend has been requested and there have been some additional costs via the s75's resulting in funding being passported through to Adult Social Care (£800,000).
- In Learning Disabilities, new placements are costing significantly more and there is one high-cost place due to a young person moving from Children's into Adults. A key project within the transformation programme will be to consider approach to re-ablement to support independent living and reduce reliance on residential provision. Discussions across the Tees Valley have started to explore opportunities to share and reduce costs as all authorities are experiencing significant increases within this market.

6. Within community-based care, reduced demand on the service has generated a projected savings against the home care budgets of (£280,000). This is offset by overspend on direct payments £310,000.

### **Children's Services**

7. Members will also be aware of the improvement agenda within children's services. Work is underway to understand the longer term impact of COVID, and map what the new normal is post covid. There are also new national requirements around care leavers which require a new and improved approach to care leavers. The challenges around the financial position are also aligned with the improvement work and again this is a key strand of the transformation programme. An interim management structure has been introduced within Children's Services to build capacity at a senior level to deliver improvements across the service practically, in relation to external placements and staffing.
8. Recruitment to social worker posts continues to be extremely difficult. Maintaining a stable highly experienced social work force is a national challenge. Work is underway to develop a robust work force plan not only linking into the corporate offer but looking to attract social workers into our social work academy. The academy will support the professional development of our staff new and existing whilst also addressing the retention challenge. The overall pressure anticipated as a result of employing agency social workers is now expected to be around £1.6m.
9. The financial pressures relating to children in our care continue to increase. The external care market continues to drive up costs and availability of places is extremely scarce creating very high competition. The predicted overspend on residential placements and professional services to support Children in our Care has increased to £5m, which is in the main driven by the significant increases in the cost of care, rather than a large rise in numbers of children in residential settings. There are 7 placements costing in excess of £10,000 per week with one exceeding £14,000. This would equate to a total annual cost is £4.4m for these 7 children alone.

### **Community Services, Environment and Culture**

10. The concessionary fares deal has now been agreed through TVCA, generating a further saving of (£330,000).
11. The growth in demand for the community transport service continues to increase. The cost of maintaining vehicles and fuel costs have increased. The overspend across these areas has increased by £170,000.
12. As noted in the last report, energy prices are lower than seen previously. However, this remains a very volatile area, and any potential impact of recent international events is yet to be understood. This remains an area that we are keeping under close review. TAL are anticipating a saving against their energy budget in year of (£500,000). This will be a saving against the additional funding we provided to TAL in recent years due to higher energy prices.

### **Finance, Development and Regeneration**

13. There are a number of vacancies across the directorate which are generating further financial savings of (£250,000). There are some roles which remain particularly difficult to recruit to, one of which is planning and due to the volume of work, use of agency staff has been necessary at a projected cost of £100,000.
14. (£200,000) new burdens funding has been received within the Revenues and Benefits service for both council tax and business rates relief schemes.

15. There is anticipated to be £150,000 pressure within Wellington Square shopping centre. This is due to rent incentives offered to tenants as well as some vacant properties.
16. The anticipated shortfall on rent allowances has increased by £120,000.
17. The Powering our Future report to cabinet in July approved the introduction of a new Directorate, Regeneration and Inclusive Growth. The financial analysis will be updated to reflect the new organisational structure next financial year; therefore, the analysis above continues to be presented in the historic format.

### **Corporate Services**

18. There have been no significant movements in the projected position for Corporate Services.

### **Corporate Areas**

19. We were notified on 1<sup>st</sup> November that the pay award for 2023/24 for employees on National Joint Council terms and conditions has been agreed with the trade unions. The terms of the payaward are that all employees paid up to spinal column point 43 receives an additional sum of £1,925. This was paid to employees as part of their November salary. The pay award for employees on Chief Officer grades had previously been agreed and paid.

### **Employee Turnover**

20. Members will recall that as part of the budget setting a turnover provision was built into staffing budgets this year of £2.5m. This reflects the natural turnover of staff and the consequential saving in budgets. All areas other than Childrens Services are achieving this level and the reason for the shortfall in that area is agency staff costs as previously outlined.

### **General Fund Balances and Reserves**

21. The Council aims to retain General Fund Balances at a prudent level, currently £8,000,000.
22. As described in para 3 above, should the projected position for the current financial year 2023/24 materialise at year end, then the sum of £6,936,000 would need to be funded from reserves.
23. Earmarked reserves have commitments and plans for their use, however given the current financial position we are reviewing each of these commitments to identify for potential release sums sufficient to cover the projected year end deficit.
24. This use of reserves is not sustainable, as once used, they cannot be used again to fund any future pressures. The smaller the overall amount of available reserves becomes, the more risk the council is exposed to. It is therefore essential that we look to avoid further use of reserves as well as looking at means to replenish reserves.

### **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024 – 2028**

25. The projected position across the medium term has been reviewed:

#### **Current Approved MTFP**

26. The current approved position in February 2023 was as follows:

	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Budget Gap (+) / Surplus (-)	1,125	3,451	1,911

## Outlook

27. Members will recall that the Council are currently working within a one-year financial settlement from the Government/DLUHC. Previous reports have highlighted the significant uncertainty this brings, with no long-term settlement being in place.
28. In December 2022 government published the Local Government Finance Policy Statement 2023/24 to 2024/25. This set out principles and national funding totals for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. The actual allocations for 2023/24 were announced in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement in February 2023.

The headline announcements for 2024/25 were:

- Council Tax Referendum Limits – The referendum limit for core council tax will remain at 3% and 2% for the Adult Social Care precept. There have been no announcements for subsequent years, but we have assumed that the limits will stay at these levels for future years.
  - The presumed full increase in council tax and Adult Social Care Council Tax Precept are factored into the chancellor's forecasts for funding available to support key pressures including adults and childrens social care.
  - £1.9bn nationally for the Social care grant. This is funding re-directed from the adult social care reforms. Adult social care charging reforms were delayed by two years to October 2025. There have been no further announcements on this to date.
  - £1.7bn split between the NHS and local government to fund hospital discharges and increase capacity in the residential and care at home markets.
29. The Autumn Statement on 22<sup>nd</sup> November announced a small number of measures in relation to local government finance.
    - Business rates – the business rates for all sizes of businesses have been frozen for a number of years and local authorities have been compensated through a Section 31 grant in line with inflation. From April 2024 the small business rates multiplier will continue to be frozen, however the standard multiplier will increase by inflation at 6.6%. The impact of this nationally is anticipated to be neutral, however the impact at a local authority will not fully be understood until the provisional local government finance settlement in December.
    - The Funding Simplification Doctrine will come into force in January 2024 which is intended to be an important step in simplifying the local funding landscape. This will aim to assess suitable distribution methodologies for new funding streams. This doctrine will consider all new funds that are made available exclusively to local authorities by central government, but explicitly excludes funding within the Local Government Finance Settlement and services mandated by statute such as; schools, Children's and adult social care and public health.

30. It is currently unclear whether there will be a further one- year settlement for local government or one covering multiple years. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is now expected to be announced week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> December.

## Changes to current expenditure plans

31. Since the report to Cabinet in February 2023, there are a number of changes which will require the MTFP to be updated. The additional pressures encountered in the current year which were largely unknown at the time the budget for 2023/24 was set, will need to be incorporated into the plan.

32. The existing MTFP includes an annual uplift in 2023/24 of £1.5m in respect of the impact of NLW and inflation increases on Adult Care Fees. The recent announcement setting the National Living Wage level for 2024 at £11.44, was higher than anticipated. We are also seeing significant growth in the number of placements in the current financial year and it is anticipated that this will continue into future years. We are seeing particular pressure amongst providers within the care at home market and work is ongoing to understand the potential implications of this. Therefore additional sums will need to be allocated from 24/25 onwards. Based on the anticipated inflationary increases and growth pressures, this is expected to be around £3m. As mentioned previously, this will be a key focus of the transformation programme.
33. As set out in paras 6 to 8 above there are still considerable ongoing pressures on Children's Social Care, particularly relating to the costs of children in our care, which is a national issue, being experienced by the majority of local authorities.
34. Children's Services has a major arm of the transformation programme, which is aimed at improving outcomes as well as building a sustainable financial envelope. This is made up of five pillars-
- Workforce development
  - SEND, High Needs and Early Years
  - Placement Sufficiency
  - Corporate Parenting and Care Leavers
  - Intervention, Early Help and Prevention

Work is underway re-assessing the budget position which is considering :

- The age profile of current children in Care
- An estimate of growth based on trends
- Current staffing establishment and reliance on agency costs

There are a number of interventions underway to explore opportunities for improvements and cost reductions. These include :

- An edge of Care service which will provide intensive support to help Children to remain home safely and avoid coming into care.
- A revised approach to re-unification to support Children moving home from Care
- A revised approach to commissioning and procurement
- A review of placements to ensure clear plans are in place for young people including opportunities for alternative provision.
- Developing a Social Work Academy to support recruitment of social workers

All of this work will inform the overall budget position and based on current information, this is anticipated to require an increase in base budget of £6m.

35. The financial impact of the agreed pay award for 2023/24 will continue into following years. An assumption has also been made on the potential level of the pay award in 2024/25 and 2025/26 and incorporated into the table below. The assumptions are 2024/25 4%; 2025/26 2% and 2026/27 2%.
36. Members will be aware that the Council's current waste contract is coming to an end in 2026. A major piece of work is currently ongoing to procure and build a replacement Energy from Waste site which is planned to be located in Redcar. The revised arrangements will result in an increased cost of disposal due to the current favourable rates within the current contract and this will be a pressure of from 2026/27.
37. Stockton's current Household Waste Recycling Centre is a shared facility with Middlesbrough Council located on Haverton Hill Road. Suez manage and operate the HWRC, on our behalf, and the current contract expires in March 2024. Members will recall funding was allocated to identify and purchase a new site. Negotiations are ongoing to secure a contract extension until the new

location is ready for operation. An update will be brought to cabinet covering the future operation of a new facility.

38. The exciting waterfront development in Stockton town centre will open up an attractive and thriving new area for our borough. There are annual maintenance costs associated with the new development which need to be incorporated into the plan.
39. Costs of community transport are also affected by inflation and are increasing as a result of fuel costs and retendering of contracts. The volume of service users is also increasing which is creating a bigger cost to deliver the service.
40. Local authorities are required to insure against various risks and we take a measured approach to risk through a combination of self-insuring and taking out insurance premiums. We hold an insurance fund to cover those risks that we self-insure against. An actuarial review a number of years ago identified that the fund could be reduced in line with their latest valuation so we have been releasing this excess into the MTFP over recent years. The latest actuarial review indicates that the fund is now at an appropriate level, so alternative funds are required to replace this within the MTFP.
41. The Bank of England base rate and gilt rates have continued to increase over the past year, meaning the interest rates for investments and borrowing have also increased. This is having a benefit in that we are earning higher interest on the cash balances we have available to invest. It also means that the cost of borrowing has increased. We continue to be extremely prudent and manage our cash flow very carefully and we will only borrow when necessary, this could create an additional pressure through increased costs of borrowing.
42. The projected expenditure pressures are summarised in the table below:

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<b>Pressures identified</b>			
Adults Social Care	3,000	3,000	3,000
Children In Our Care	6,000	6,000	6,000
Pay Award 23/24	2,389	2,641	2,898
Pay Award 24/25 (4%)	930	954	979
Waste	0	(300)	1,100
Waterfront Development			380
Community Transport	500	750	750
Insurance Fund		500	1,000
Interest Rate Risk Contingency	500	500	500
<b>Pressures</b>	<b>13,319</b>	<b>14,045</b>	<b>16,607</b>

### Income and Resources

43. The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is expected late December. This will contain the provisional funding allocations for 2024/25. There has not been any indication of whether the provisional settlement will cover future years post 2024/25. The funding assumptions are based on the information available, but they are subject to change.
44. Council Tax and Business Rates – projections of council tax and business rates income are being updated and the figures underpinning this report will be kept under review prior to the final budget report in February. At this point the updated MTFP includes the latest position on Council Tax Base and Business Rates income, including projections of growth in the Council Tax Base and business rates and assumptions regarding the impact of inflation on the business rates multiplier.

45. Business Rates has undergone a full revaluation for 2023/24. A new list came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The recent Non -Domestic Rating Act 2023 was passed confirming that revaluations will now take place every three years from 2026. The impact of this is factored into the anticipated business rates income in future years.
46. The response to a government consultation on planning fees was announced this summer. This introduces changes to planning fees and as a result we anticipate an increase in the amount of fees collected.
47. Members will recall the additional money allocated into the budget in recent years to fund the higher costs of energy. These prices are slowly beginning to fall, however there remains significant uncertainty in the market. The impact of recent international events upon supply and prices is unknown. Our energy is purchased through NEPO, a regional organisation governed by the 12 North East local authorities. NEPO provide regular updates and analysis which helps to inform to forecast future costs. The approved MTFP already assumes a reduction in prices from 24/25 onwards. We are forecasting that energy costs will fall further, creating a greater saving in future years of the MTFP. It is also anticipated that the support to Tal for higher energy costs will reduce.
48. The current plan assumes a Council Tax increase of 2.9% in each year (1.9% core council tax and 1% Adult Social Care levy). Government will retain the referendum limit at 5% in 2024/25, with indications that this may continue through to 2028 (and assuming in the published information outlining resources available to Local Government that this is enacted.) A 1% increase in Council Tax would mean an increase of 34p per week for a Band D property (23p for Band A). The potential additional resources available should either of the elements be increase would be:
- Core Council Tax £1m per year
  - Adult Social Care Precept £1m per year
49. Whilst final decisions will be made as part of the budget report in February, given the extent of the financial pressures, for planning purposes it has been assumed that the increase will be in line with the referendum levels set by Government.
50. These changes to resources and income are summarised in the table below:

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<b>Potential Additional Resources / Savings Identified</b>			
Business Rates	(5,100)	(5,250)	(5,250)
Council Tax and Social Care Levy – 2024/25	(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Planning Income	(300)	(300)	(300)
Concessionary Fares	(700)	(700)	(700)
Energy Savings	(1,080)	(1,080)	(1,080)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(9,180)</b>	<b>(9,330)</b>	<b>(9,330)</b>

### Summary Position

51. A summary of the projected budget position over the MTFP is outlined below:

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Approved Budget Position	1,125	3,451	1,911
Expenditure Pressures	13,319	14,045	16,607
Additional Income and Resources	(9,180)	(9,330)	(9,330)
<b>Budget Gap (+) / Surplus (-)</b>	<b>5,264</b>	<b>8,166</b>	<b>9,188</b>

52. The above table demonstrates that there is a significant projected budget gap over each year of the medium term plan.
53. In order to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 and to have a sustainable medium term financial plan the Council needs to identify and agree a robust plan to address the financial gap.
54. The Report to Cabinet and Council in February 2023 and the Quarter 1 Report for 2023/24 both highlighted that the emerging financial position may mean that further savings will be required into the medium term. As illustrated in the table above at para 43 significant savings of c£9m per annum will require to be identified order to achieve a balanced position.

### **Resolving the Budget Gap through Transformation Programme**

55. The meeting of Council in February will need to consider how to resolve the Budget Gap, which is currently estimated at around £9m across the MTFP and members have agreed that the transformation programme will be the approach. Further details will be presented in February but given the challenges we will need to progress the reviews at pace and the reviews will consider how current service provision meets the outcomes we desire. The reviews will inevitably require difficult decisions around areas where we will need to stop or reduce as well as considering alternative approaches such as enhanced community involvement.
56. There is a significant focus on Childrens improvement and transformation and this is covered in paragraph above. In addition, the first stage of reviews have been identified and these areas are ongoing. The areas in the first stage of transformation are
- Waste and Recycling
  - Fleet
  - Regulatory Services and Security Services
  - Re-ablement, Intermediate Care and Adult Social Care provision
  - Corporate Administration Review
  - Community Transport
  - Preventative Services
  - Planning for the Life course – Transition to adulthood
57. In response to the increased budget gap urgent work is ongoing to identify areas that can be escalated and outcomes fast tracked through the transformation programme. This may be bringing areas forward that were already planned to be part of the transformation programme, or identifying new areas for review.

### **Risks**

58. It should be recognised that there are risks remain which may impact on the position set out above and across the MTFP. These include:
- Future levels of Government Funding (The position regarding government funding should be clearer in late December, at least for financial year 2024/25).
  - Level of Pay Awards in future years
  - Inflation
  - Funding uncertainty beyond 24/25
59. If the additional risks materialise and create further financial pressures across the duration of the MTFP then further savings would be required to be identified to balance the position over the medium term.

### **Potential Capital Costs/Cost Pressures**



60. Inflationary pressures are also driving up construction costs alongside other supplies and services which is having a significant impact on the capital programme budgets and deliverability. Whilst many of our major projects are at the design stage which means inflation can be managed within the funding envelope, there is a significant risk that for some schemes this will not be the case. This is being considered and again will be included in the budget report.

## **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

61. The updated Capital Programme is set out at **Appendix A** and summarised in the table below:

	<b>Current Approved Programme £'000</b>	<b>Programme Revisions £'000</b>	<b>Revised Programme £'000</b>
<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2026</b>			
School Investment Programme & Childrens Services	47,847	(21)	47,826
Regeneration, Development and Growth	14,067	4,170	18,237
Town Centres	139,525	(1,862)	137,663
Transportation	43,901	(189)	43,712
Community & Environment, Culture & Leisure	19,508	214	19,722
Adults, Health & Wellbeing	4,122	13	4,135
<b>Total Approved Capital MTFP</b>	<b>268,970</b>	<b>2,325</b>	<b>271,295</b>

62. The Capital Programme will be updated in the report to Cabinet and Council in February.

### **Reasons for movements over £100,000**

#### **New schemes**

##### Community & Environment, Culture & Leisure

- Solar panels have been installed on Ingleby Barwick Leisure Facility, funded from revenue contribution to capital earmarked as part of the Climate Change strategy, £113,000.

#### **Additional Funding**

##### Housing

- Additional grant funding for Disabled Facilities for 2023/24 has been received and included in the programme, £157,000.

##### Regeneration & Town Centres

- As referenced in the Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres Regeneration update report to Cabinet in July 2023, Accommodation strategy has increased by £2,419,000.
- Additional £2m TVCA grant has been included for the Indigenous Growth Fund and £250,000 has been transferred to Town Centres Investment.

#### **Revisions**

##### Transport

- A S106 agreement for works at the Horse and Jockey roundabout has been removed from the programme while the scheme is being assessed, £186,000.

##### Adult's and Health

- Sandown Road project has been removed from the capital programme as a result of reviewing the use of the building, £150,000.

#### Regeneration & Town Centres

- Costs related to the development of regeneration blueprints and masterplans are to be removed from the capital programme, £1m.

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

63. As part of the process of making changes to policy or delivery of services, we consider the impact on our communities. No changes to policy or service delivery are proposed as part of this report.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

64. None

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

65. The report updates Members on the MTFP and Capital Programme.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

66. None

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

67. This MTFP Update Report is categorised as medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk. Understanding cost pressures and future government funding over the coming weeks/months will be key to understanding and mitigating this risk.

### **WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS**

68. N/A

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

69. None

**Name of Contact Officer: Garry Cummings**

**Post Title: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance, Transformation and Performance**

**Telephone No. 01642 527011**

**Email Address: [garry.cummings@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:garry.cummings@stockton.gov.uk)**

## Capital Programme September 2023 – Appendix A

CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2026	Current Approved Programme	Programme Revisions	Revised Programme	Expenditure Apr 2017 - September 2023
<b>SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME &amp; CHILDRENS SERVICES</b>				
School Investment Programme	39,487,839	(73,378)	39,414,461	20,632,184
Children Investment	8,358,931	53,000	8,411,931	600,173
<b>SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME &amp; CHILDRENS SERVICES</b>	<b>47,846,769</b>	<b>(20,378)</b>	<b>47,826,391</b>	<b>21,232,357</b>
<b>REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT &amp; GROWTH</b>				
Inclusive Growth & Development	6,986,642	1,750,000	8,736,642	401,114
Office Accommodation	7,080,721	2,419,790	9,500,511	1,459,296
<b>REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT &amp; GROWTH</b>	<b>14,067,363</b>	<b>4,169,790</b>	<b>18,237,153</b>	<b>1,860,410</b>
<b>TOWN CENTRES</b>				
Stockton Town Centre Schemes	2,914,451	0	2,914,451	1,127,760
Reshaping Town Centres	29,662,960	(750,000)	28,912,960	718,801
Billingham Town Centre	10,000,000	0	10,000,000	273,219
Thornaby Town Centre	29,800,440	0	29,800,440	2,216,423
Re-Development of Castlegate Site	43,635,313	0	43,635,313	16,024,208
Yarm & Eaglescliffe LUF	22,000,000	70,000	22,070,000	2,111,264
Infrastructure Enhancements, Regeneration & Property Acquisitions	1,512,366	(1,182,032)	330,334	38,617
<b>TOWN CENTRES</b>	<b>139,525,530</b>	<b>(1,862,032)</b>	<b>137,663,498</b>	<b>22,510,293</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
City Regional Sustainable Transport	19,877,605	(10,000)	19,867,605	3,460,140
Other Transport Schemes	20,559,744	70,000	20,629,744	14,082,102
Developer Agreements	3,463,351	(249,171)	3,214,180	3,136,358
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>43,900,700</b>	<b>(189,171)</b>	<b>43,711,529</b>	<b>20,678,600</b>
<b>COMMUNITY &amp; ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE &amp; LEISURE</b>				
Energy Efficiency Schemes	1,132,724	113,788	1,246,512	1,244,941
Environment and Green Infrastructure	12,046,663	50,000	12,096,663	2,568,530
Building Management	3,409,918	50,000	3,459,918	823,102
Vehicle Replacement	2,918,704	0	2,918,704	1,425,541
<b>COMMUNITY &amp; ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE &amp; LEISURE</b>	<b>19,508,009</b>	<b>213,788</b>	<b>19,721,797</b>	<b>6,062,115</b>
<b>ADULTS, HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</b>				
Adults & Public Health Investment	616,628	(150,177)	466,451	257,555
Housing Regeneration	1,465,311	0	1,465,311	0
Private Sector Housing	2,040,174	163,255	2,203,429	1,179,482
<b>ADULTS, HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</b>	<b>4,122,113</b>	<b>13,078</b>	<b>4,135,191</b>	<b>1,437,037</b>
<b>Total Approved Capital MTFP</b>	<b>268,970,484</b>	<b>2,325,075</b>	<b>271,295,559</b>	<b>73,780,811</b>

This page is intentionally left blank

## AGENDA ITEM

### REPORT TO CABINET

14 DECEMBER 2023

### REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure & Culture - Lead Cabinet Member - Cllr. Stephen Nelson  
Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Cllr Lisa  
Evans**

## **PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT WITH HARROGATE DISTRICT FOUNDATION TRUST FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE CHILDREN'S 0-19 HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAMME**

### **SUMMARY**

This report aims to provide the background and detail for the proposed partnership with Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) to deliver Public Health 0 to 19 Health & Wellbeing Programme through the mechanism of an **agreement** made under **section 75** of the National Health Services Act 2006 between partners (NHS bodies and local authorities).

The proposed **Section 75 agreement** includes arrangements for delegating the functions described in the report to the NHS partner. Delegation is permitted where it if it would lead to an improvement in the way those functions are exercised.

The health-related functions, detailed within the paper are part of a wider programme of support which consists of health visiting, school nursing and children and family's healthy weight, infant feeding and nutrition services. These services are more commonly known as '0 to 19' and 'Growing well, growing healthy'. Currently the services are delivered by HDFT through an existing contract which commenced 01 April 2018 and expires 31 March 2024.

The programme aims to promote the health and wellbeing of families and children aged 0-19 or up to age 25 with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). It offers practical advice, interventions, and support on a range of topics related to parenting, health, and wellbeing. The service also works in partnership with other services and agencies to support and enable families to access health information and services appropriate to their needs – such as primary and secondary care, family hubs, children's services, voluntary organisations and nurseries amongst many others.

The report sets out:

- The background of the Programme
- The strategic alignment to the Local Authority's approach to Transformation, Powering our Future and the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees framework to improve outcomes for communities in the Borough and address inequalities, particularly health inequalities for children, young people and adults.
- The proposed use of a Section 75 Agreement to delegate the specific health-related functions to HDFT under the Section 75 of the National Health Act 2006

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)/DECISION(S)

Cabinet is recommended to agree the use of a Section 75 Agreement for proposed partnership arrangements to ensure that the Council continues to meet the Local Authority statutory obligations for the provision of the mandated contacts of the Healthy Child Programme and National Child Measurement Programme. The proposed approach will lead to continued improvement in functions, efficient service delivery and quality with the aim to improve Public Health outcomes for children, young people, and families.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the background and the alignment to the strategic direction of the Council. The summary of evidence used to inform the commissioning approach is outlined in **APPENDIX 1**.
2. Agree the use of a Section 75 Agreement under Section 75 of The National Health Service Act 2006.
3. Delegate the responsibility for agreeing and finalising the terms of a new Section 75 Agreement to the Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing and Director of Corporate Services through their authorised officers in line with the Council's Schemes of Delegation.

## DETAIL

The recommendations in this report recognise that following the recent comprehensive review of the 0 to 19 Children's Health & Wellbeing Programme, the current service is performing well and is well received by stakeholders and communities. To maintain and improve services in the context of increasing pressures across the children's health and social care system, partnership and collaboration offer opportunities to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families.

### Background

1. As determined by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Local Authorities have held statutory responsibility for Public Health services including the provision of school nursing services in 2013 and then in 2015 Health Visiting services.
2. Local Authorities' specific-health related functions relating to this provision include providing information and advice, providing services to promote healthy living and providing services for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness. Specifically, this includes, but is not limited to, child development reviews, weighing and measuring of children and medical inspection of pupils.
3. In 2018, Public Health commissioned HDFT to deliver the new integrated 0 to 19 wellbeing model and pathway. It was informed by evidence of what works to improve outcomes and developed collaboratively with Children's Services and partners. The 2018 procurement was a significant transformation with the integration of two separate services, the 0 to 5 Health Visiting service and the 5 to 19 School Nursing service, and the development of the children and family healthy weight offer and the family outreach and volunteering service (the latter now part of the strategic partnership for children's services with Family Action). It was designed to work in conjunction with other organisations and departments with a responsibility for children's health, wellbeing and social care, both within the Council and external to it.
4. In 2023, a programme of work was completed to determine the best way in which to provide these services in the future, to continue to improve outcomes for children and families, and build on existing partnerships working across the children's health and social care system, whilst acknowledging there are significant pressures on resources, finances, a growing level and complexity of need, health inequalities and poverty. All of which is increasing the level of demand for a service that is required to provide universal and targeted support.

5. The current contracts for both elements of the programme - the health visiting / school nursing offer (contract value £3,486,151) and the children and family healthy weight offer (contract value £687,199) are due to end on 31 March 2024.
6. Public Health have undertaken a significant amount of work with partners and families to consider the future of the provision and the best approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and families from 1 April 2024. This has been undertaken in the context of the post-COVID pressures, and changes in the NHS, Children's Services and Education since 2018.

### **Current Provision**

7. The Public Health vision for children and young people (CYP) is to strengthen and support the foundations for children to be born, grow and develop safely, free from harm in an environment in which they can thrive. The aim is to give every child the best start in life and beyond through the further development of the public health CYP wellbeing programme, in line with evidence of best-practice and the national commissioning guidance to contribute to an improvement in health outcomes and a reduction in health inequalities for children and families.
8. The national healthy child programme (HCP) 0 to 19 aims to bring together health, education, and other main partners to deliver an offer for ill-health prevention and support. Effective delivery of this programme is reliant upon a wide range of partners and services working collaboratively, specifically the HCP aims to bring together the evidence of what is important to improve good health and wellbeing and resilience for all children now and in the future.
9. The national commissioning guidance and Healthy Child guidance prescribes that the delivery model is one of a graduated response starting from universal support and early prevention and increasing with level of need ('proportionate universalism'), promoting wellbeing, and contributing to reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities. It provides an invaluable opportunity to identify families that need additional help and support and protect children who are at risk of poor outcomes. It aims to:
  - help parents, carers or guardians develop and sustain a strong bond with children.
  - support parents, carers or guardians in keeping children healthy and safe and reaching their full potential.
  - protect children from serious disease, through screening and promoting immunisation.
  - reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating and physical activity.
  - promote oral health.
  - support resilience and positive maternal and family mental health.
  - support the development of healthy relationships and good sexual and reproductive health.
  - identify health and wellbeing issues early, so support and early interventions can be provided in a timely manner.
  - make sure children are prepared for and supported in all childcare, early years and education settings.
  - build integrated partnership across the 0 to 19 children's health and social care system.
  - empower children and families recognising the active role they play in improving outcomes.
  - focus on building community networks and resilience rather than a reliance on services (asset-based approach).
10. Locally, the commissioning of the 0 to 19 Health & Wellbeing Programme delivers on the Council's statutory responsibilities and is in line with the national direction and guidance. It is part of a universal Public Health pathway of support for children and families from the antenatal period through to adolescence. It includes the delivery of the mandated functions within the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) and mandated contacts within the Healthy Child Programme (HCP). The offer is led by Health Visitors and Public Health school nurses operating within a skills mixed team, along with the Children and Families Healthy Weight and lifestyle service. It provides families with a programme of health and development reviews, supplemented by advice and interventions around physical and emotional wellbeing and parenting support.

## Commissioning Evidence

11. In planning for the re-commissioning of the services, a programme of work was completed overseen by a steering group chaired by the Director of Public Health which included partners from Children's Services, the Integrated Care Board (ICB), and Council procurement and contracting colleagues. A working group reporting to the steering group coordinated the work to establish the evidence needed to inform decision-making and the future direction for the service.

12. The following programme of work was undertaken, a summary of which is outlined below:

- Rapid epidemiological health needs assessment
- Service Review
- Consultation & Engagement
- Co-production
- Options appraisal

Colleagues across the ICB and Children's Services were engaged early to be involved in the work and provided with updates and opportunities to feedback and provide critical oversight into the decision making. A report was also taken to CMT in April 2023 to outline the approach and work programme.

13. The work undertaken formed the evidence base to inform commissioning intention and approach. An overview and summary of this evidence can be found in **APPENDIX 1** of this report including a summary of the consultation and engagement response from stakeholders and communities.

## Recommendations from the evidence and consultation

14. From the breadth of work undertaken, there was a strong evidential basis for the future commissioning of the 0 to 19 Programme. In summary:

- There are increasing health and wellbeing needs for children, young people and families and increasing complexity, including a significant number of safeguarding pressures.
- The service is predominantly staff - resources are already tight, providing additional challenges in terms of growing complexity of need.
- The service has adapted and been responsive to changes particularly within the organisation of the 0 to 19 children's health and social care system.
- The service is well received by partners, children, and families however there are opportunities to improve awareness, knowledge, the SEND offer and communication.
- There are significant wider system pressures that significantly impact service delivery and operation.
- Where it is possible to benchmark, the service is performing highly and outperforms regional and national performance indicators; there is also a need to improve further develop performance monitoring and better utilise the available population health data.
- Clarifying the role of the 5 to 19 nurses is important, ensuring their public health / early prevention skills are protected and maximised for the benefit of children, young people and families, in the context of increasing safeguarding pressures.
- The service has drifted 'downstream' to more acute activity - the evidence reviews, and consultation feedback are clear that the service should maintain the public health focus upstream as a universal offer with early support and intervention where needed.
- Strengthening the asset and community element of the service is important.



- Clarity of the role and contribution of the service to mental health and transition post-16 is needed.
- Flexibility to respond to population changes, changes in the system and national policy is fundamental to continue to provide the best services for children and families.
- Given the role the service has across a very large system, there is a growing need for partnership working, collaboration and strong system leadership.

### **Options Considered**

15. The decision on the approach to commissioning was informed by all the available evidence, an options appraisal, and the need to continue to improve service functions and outcomes and align strategically with the Council and Public Health priorities.
16. For outsourcing, there is currently evidence of a very limited market, which was ascertained through market testing. The local NHS Foundation Trust determined that there were other opportunities in which they would engage meaningfully with the development of the 0 to 19 programme rather than direct provision. In addition, a commissioned contract would not provide the same flexibility to improve outcomes as identified by the review.
17. Based on collective advice, and the programme of work, it was determined that insourcing would not meet the objectives and address the findings of the evidence review and approach to improve service functions and outcomes. It was acknowledged that a clinical organisation of this size, complexity, and cost would require a significant amount of resource and time at a period of significant transformation and challenging budgets.
18. After careful consideration of the options, the recommendation is to enter into a Section 75 agreement with HDFT to deliver an integrated 0 to 19 Programme. This approach aligns with Public Health and wider system priorities including the need for a flexible and responsive offer that contributes to a shift to primary prevention and early intervention, co-production, and co-design to reduce health inequalities and improve service functions and outcomes. Furthermore, it reflects the broad range of interdependencies for the service and the need for strong strategic alignment, shared values, and principles across the children's health and wellbeing system. The recommendation was presented and considered by CMT in June 2023. CMT supported the programme of work and the recommendation. CMT also acknowledged that the limited market requires local system leadership to improve the position for any potential future commissioning and should be an important consideration by the Tees Valley ICP.
19. HDFT are a known provider which can, and do, work in partnership with the Local Authority to achieve better outcomes for children and families. They are recognised as valuable partners in the wider system and deliver the 0-19 services in various Local Authorities across the region and are nationally one of the largest providers of community services for Children, Young People and Families.

### **Strategic Alignment**

20. The proposed section 75 partnership approach builds on existing working arrangements across the children's health and social care system and cements the opportunity to further embed early intervention and prevention and co-production through its design and development. The strategic objectives for the approach are:
  - Facilitating resilience and support for transitions including parenthood, early years, and adolescence.
  - Renewed focus on earlier (primary) prevention and early intervention.
  - Improving engagement with minoritised and marginalised groups

- Providing the right support at the right time for vulnerable children and families and children with health needs
- Core principles of the approach are focused on equity, fairness and being community centred.

21. The partnership outcomes are to be agreed as part of the final draft of the agreement. The proposed draft outcomes are:

- More children and young people achieve positive physical and emotional milestones.
- Achieve and sustain a high rate of completion of the mandated, and Stockton-additional, contacts, with increased universal contacts with children and families across the 0-19 provision.
- Further development of the whole school approach to healthy weight with increased links and engagement with early years and education settings.
- The voice of children, young people and families are at the heart of the offer, including their increased involvement in decision making and service development.
- Increased engagement with families from priority groups and areas of deprivation across the provision and through co-production.
- An increased number of families report a positive experience of using the service.
- Through partnership working the needs of children and families are identified early ensuring they receive support from the right person/professional in the right place at the right time.
- More children and young people, particularly those who are vulnerable, are supported through periods of transition.

### Council Transformation Programme

22. The approach to the partnership through the use of a Section 75 Agreement contributes to the aims of the Council's objectives to deliver excellent and efficient services that are financially sustainable and reduce inequality and is in line with priorities of the Council Programme. As outlined in the Governance Board detail below, the Partnership set up under the Section 75 Agreement will embark on a process of development and improvements consistent with the transformation programme objectives.

23. As the service currently performs well, it will continue to operate in the same manner at the commencement of the proposed section 75 agreement. The Partnership Board will however develop a transformation programme where a set of agreed priorities will be developed into action plans and projects.

24. The priority areas for improvement will be developed in partnership and collaboration with key partners such as Children's Services, in acknowledgement of the significant financial pressures and demand within Children's services. The partnership provides an opportunity to consider shared priorities and complement the children's transformation agenda, particularly regarding the Early Help offer. It will be important to ensure opportunities to support the Early Help agenda are recognised as part of the service developments, and in line with evidence for the Healthy Child Programme, National Guidance for 0 to 19 provision and the evidence of what is needed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the children's population in the Borough.

25. In order to deliver on the breadth of the HCP, the Partnership Board will work across the VCSE, Health and Education and capitalise on the service's partnerships to ensure a coherent offer of support is available to meet the aims of the HCP.

26. As stated, the direction of travel is for the service to have increased capacity to focus on early (primary) prevention and early intervention. The research evidence is clear that investment in both early (primary prevention) prevention and early intervention helps create the best circumstances for children to thrive and be healthy and therefore also reduce need and demand on Council services over time.
27. A process of continuous quality improvement will be employed and will require system partners to input into design. The aim is to then implement changes within the existing structure in a well-planned and sequenced manner, recognising this will take time. Initial priority areas are:
- Meaningful involvement of communities and families at the governance level and integrated throughout the quality improvement cycle.
  - Developing "realistic" minimum levels of service delivery (to estimate how much capacity could be re-allocated to support improvement areas I.e., more emphasis on early intervention and primary prevention).
  - Reprioritising the 5 to 19 offer of the service within current capacity
  - Improving monitoring and evaluation system for the service (performance, KPIs, contract management, as well as monitoring quality improvement)
  - Reviewing the safeguarding model and configuration as part of a wider system discussion
  - Build on the role of the service and partnership to influence the wider health and wellbeing offer across partner agencies for children, young people and families and build capacity across this system.

Further areas for development based on findings from the review will then be agreed and developed through the Partnership Board and partners.

28. To support this work, a ring-fenced transformation budget will be identified to support the service development and transformation work, to cover costs associated with the plan and provide specific programme management support. Its use will be directed by the Partnership Board.
29. The partnership arrangement is also aligned with the wider Council programme of Powering our Future – contributing to workforce development, centring on communities, efficient services, and reducing inequalities. It also supports A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Children's Plan.
30. The partnership offers a collaborative approach to working with families to address their current and future needs. Through this, the intention is the service can continue to adapt and further integrate with the wider children's health and social care system where this makes sense, which would help maximise resources and remove traditional barriers to services for children and families.
31. Community asset-based approaches will be fundamental in the development, and delivery, of the service. Harnessing the skills, knowledge and lived experience of Stockton's families and other organisations is an important approach to building capacity, resilience, networks, and a sense of control over a family's own wellbeing. Through co-production Public Health has already started conversations to support shaping how the future of the service will be delivered. The partnership board will consider the voices of communities and system partners in its decision making. Co-production will be included in the specification and governance arrangements.

### **Proposed Section 75 Agreement**

32. A Section 75 Agreement is made under Section 75 of the National Health Act 2006 and enables NHS bodies and local authorities to enter arrangements which are prescribed in secondary legislation. It allows local authorities to delegate health-related functions to NHS providers to deliver together with their NHS functions. Critical to the success of the partnership is a strong

agreement and relationship with HDFT. Their track record provides a solid foundation for further developing the partnership arrangements.

### Consultation

33. The legislation requires the Council and HDFT to consult with relevant stakeholders on the proposal to enter into the section 75 arrangement. A survey was open from 15 September 23 to 06 November 23 and shared with stakeholders and partners across the system. The initial period of consultation was extended due to the low response rate.
34. The survey received a total of four responses: of these, three reported no concerns. Two of the three left a comment: 'there are no issues' and 'it is the best for SBC residents'. One of the respondents had answered that they had a 'question or concern'. The respondent stated they felt the provider was 'competent' but that reported experiences were 'not always excellent'. The respondent also reflected that the local ICB should be 'working to ensure that there are local services for local people to ensure investments remain locally'.
35. As noted within the section under 'Options Considered' on page 8 of this report, the limitations of the current market were acknowledged by the Council's CMT and market stimulation was proposed to be considered by the Tees Valley Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). As noted through all the evidence and surveys, where there are areas of development and improvements, the feedback from communities is positive and partners felt the current service to be an integral part of the system. Through the agreement, the partnership will consider Social Value alongside the approach to continuous quality improvement. Any significant future changes or developments because of the work of the Board will ensure all relevant stakeholders and communities are consulted as part of the process and, wherever possible, included in the development and design of services.

### Terms of the Agreement

36. It is proposed that the Section 75 agreement with HDFT will start on 1 April 2024 incorporating Lot 1 (Healthy Child Programme), Lot 2 (Growing Well, Growing Healthy) and the Resilience Pilot. The proposed agreement has been developed in partnership between HDFT and Stockton Borough Council.
37. The Partnership shall commence on 01 April 2024 ('the Commencement Date') for a term of five (5) years ('the Initial Term') and terminate automatically on 31 March 2029 ('the Expiry Date') unless:
  - terminated earlier in accordance with Clause 31 (Termination) or other prior lawful termination; or
  - the Council shall have the option to extend the Initial Term for up to five (5) periods of twelve (12) months or such other period of combined twelve-month periods as agreed, in writing, with the Partner.
38. The term has been determined based on the need to allow time to achieve the necessary service transformation and developments, time for the partnership to evolve and for changes to embed into the system. The extension period allows for flexibility, prior to the end of the initial term an assessment can be made on the current context, the service and the position of the Local Authority. It allows the Council to enter into any combination of extensions e.g. 1 year, 3 years or the full five years. Both parties have the right to serve notice via a break clause, with 12 months' notice.
39. The financial envelope for the initial term is set at £4,173,350 p.a. and is allocated from the existing Public Health Grant.

40. Subject to resources available it is anticipated that there is a separate ring-fenced budget to support the transformation work outlined in the transformation section. The funding allocation for this will be determined on an annual basis.
41. The financial envelope for further extensions will be agreed at the time of determining the period of extension and will be agreed in line with usual financial processes. Further detail of finances is outlined in the finance section.
42. The arrangements and details of the Section 75 agreement will be finalised by negotiation. Through the Section 75 agreement, performance management of the service delivery remains a priority and it is clear that financial accountability remains with the Council. Service delivery will be expected within the financial envelope agreed and responsibility for mitigating any overspend will remain with HDFT. Agreement on how any underspend is used must be secured through the Healthy Child Board.

### **Governance**

43. The agreement and the service will be governed through the establishment of a Healthy Child Board (**APPENDIX 3** sets out a draft Terms of Reference and overview). The Board will be chaired by the Director of Public Health and a Vice Chair will be nominated by HDFT. Additional members of the Board will be identified from the ICB, Children's Services and Public Health.
44. Representatives have been identified to ensure that the Service is cognisant of, and aligned with, NHS children's services that are delivered by other providers (for example, primary care services; ophthalmic services audiology; continence; speech and language; and other relevant Local Authority children's services such as Early Help, Family Hubs and Education Services).
45. An interim Board will be established prior to commencement of the agreement and a key priority will be to work with communities to determine how to meaningfully represent children and families within the Governance structure as a key part of decision-making processes.
46. The Board will embrace meaningful scrutiny and will work with identified strategic partnerships to develop a 'critical friends' function. The Board will identify and work with strategic partnerships and functions (e.g. Children and Young People's Partnership, Council Transformation Board, Health & Wellbeing Board, Integrated Care Partnership place sub-committee) and determine how best to achieve the 'Critical Friends' function. The function of the 'Critical Friends' is to acknowledge the legitimate interest of key stakeholders in the service's development within the wider 0 to 19 system and the shared strategic priorities.

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

47. As of the 1 April 2024 the service will continue to be delivered in the same way. This will maximise continuity for families and organisations in the Borough reflecting the important role that the Programme plays in the wider system. Nonetheless as previously outlined the ongoing transformation and quality improvement work may change some aspects of service delivery.
48. The transformation work is intended to improve outcomes. As and when transformation work takes place impact assessments, including health equity impact assessments, will be completed on any changes that may affect service delivery or groups within the community.
49. The aim of the approach is to embed co-production and the voice of families, therefore there will be on-going engagement, consultation, co-design and co-production within the principles of the agreement.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

50. We make a commitment to work together to be the best Corporate Parent that we can be and acknowledge the Partnership and the Board provides further opportunity to support this, with

HDFT committing to do their best as part of the 'extended family'. As a Partnership we will work collaboratively with the system to strengthening the health and wellbeing offer for Children in Our Care (CIOC) and Care Leavers.

51. We have identified a need to improve support for transitions (as identified under the evidence summary section of the appendix) and will make the commitment to include Care Leavers to help determine the role of the service and offer for transitional support, including how best to support Care Leavers to understand and take ownership of their own health and wellbeing needs. We will continue to support the wellbeing offer as outlined in the corporate care leavers policy.
52. We are committed to design and develop services with children and families, this includes ensuring where possible CIOC and Care Leavers are involved as part of the approach to co-production as described earlier in the report, increasing opportunities for them to express their views and wishes and have an active role in shaping services for children and young people across the Borough.
53. As we progress through the process of continuous quality improvement, we will consider the needs of CIOC and Care Leavers as part of our Equity Impact Assessments, to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by any changes or developments.

*Contribution: Jane Smith, Service Lead Strategy Quality & Improvement*

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

54. The service will be funded from the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant and its spending for this purpose is in line with the conditions of the Grant. The total value is £4,173,350 per annum. Subject to resources available it is anticipated that there is a separate ring-fenced budget to support the transformation plan. The funding for this will be determined on an annual basis in line with the Council priorities and position. Budgetary responsibility will remain with the Local Authority, but financial monitoring and oversight will be conducted via the Healthy Child Board.
55. The initial term of the agreement is for 5 years with the option to extend for a minimum of 12 months, with the option to extend up to a maximum of five years. The Section 75 Agreement includes an option to terminate the agreement with 12 months' notice.
  - The total value per annum is set for the initial term so long as the Public Health ring-fenced grant continues. Any changes to the grant will require joint discussions between both parties to the agreement with final decisions made in line with current Council priorities and procedures. Any potential resulting impact on service provision will be a matter for Members.
  - Budget for extensions will be negotiated and agreed in line with usual Council processes and will be determined based on the public health ring-fenced grant and Council position.
  - Agenda for Change uplifts will be determined annually based on national direction and any potential uplifts to the ring-fenced grant.
  - The transformation budget will be determined annually based on the Council priorities and public health ring-fenced grant and any potential uplifts in line with usual Council processes; this funding is not to be used for 'on-going spend' but to support transformation work.
  - As part of the partnership annual review, a full financial review will be required against spend and delivery.
  - Social value and value for money considerations are included in the Section 75 agreement alongside considerations of effectiveness, efficiency and impact and throughout any service developments as part of the process of continuous quality improvement.
  - liability for any overspends shall sit with the Trust except where the Council and the Trust agree otherwise. Any underspend at the end of the Financial Year will be agreed between the Partners with the intention to reinvest in the Service. Any underspend on termination or expiry of the agreement shall be returned to the Council in full.

*Contribution: Strategic Finance Manager*

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

56. The use of a Section 75 agreement is considered the most legally robust option for the Council in order for the Council to discharge its specific health-related functions prescribed in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
57. Due to the nature of the services covered under this Act, there is a limited supplier market, particularly in relation to the provision of school nursing services, health visiting services, services to promote healthy living and services for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness. A limited supplier market means that there is less flexibility if a procurement process is followed under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 as the predominant driver is commercial profit. This driver often restricts flexibility and creativity in the way services are improved and delivered throughout the duration of a contract, and often poses greater legal risk and challenge as to what can be delivered, within the contract price, over the duration of the contract.
58. Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 allows Councils to commission their specific health-related functions to NHS bodies "...if the arrangements are likely to lead to an improvement in the way in which those functions are exercised" (Section 75(1)). Accordingly, the use of a section 75 Agreement between Councils and NHS bodies is, by its statutory nature, driven by service improvement as opposed to profit. The legal implication of this means that it provides greater opportunity to engage meaningfully with the development of the 0 to 19 programme and to improve outcomes as identified by the review, within the set financial envelope. This will, more likely, lead to an improvement in the way those functions are exercised, as required under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006.

*Contribution: April Pilgrim, Lead Solicitor*

## RISK ASSESSMENT

59. There are several risks associated with the proposed approach for this service as set out in this report. These include:
- **Defining Outcomes:** There is a risk that the outcomes (see paragraph 21 of the report) desired from this service are not clearly defined in line with strategic objectives or are not achievable. **Mitigation:** a review of the service and outcomes has been undertaken with wide ranging consultation with stakeholders and service users. The review has included a health needs assessment.
  - **Delivering Outcomes:** There is a risk that the partnership will not perform and deliver the required outcomes. **Mitigation:** Appropriate governance arrangements (Appendix 4) will be established to monitor the development and delivery of the service and to assess progress towards achieving the desired outcomes.
  - **Financial Risk:** There is a risk that the service cannot deliver the desired outcomes within the agreed budget envelope. **Mitigation:** The budget has been established with the knowledge of the current service and budget. The budget will be monitored within the governance arrangements (Appendix 4). Liability for any overspends shall sit with the Trust except where the Council and the Trust agree otherwise.

*Contribution: Martin Skipsey, Assistant Director, Procurement & Governance*

## WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

60. This service is universal and operates in all wards in the Borough. Families and organisations from across the Borough have been invited to take part in the service review, co-design and in consultation on the proposed Section 75 agreement. Their responses highlighted that service is an important part of the wider system but that there is scope for improvements as set out in the report. These views will be considered in the ongoing service developments.

61. It is the Partnership's intention that families and communities continue to be included in the co-design and co-production of the 0-19 Wellbeing Programme and will be part of its governance structure as per the Section 75 Agreement. As there is no change to service provision, Councillors have not been consulted, but they will be as and when it is relevant for the transformation work.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A in addition to those mentioned in body of the report.

**Name of Contact Officer: Sarah Bowman-Abouna**

**Post Title: Director of Public Health**

**Contact: [sarah.bowmanabouna@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.bowmanabouna@stockton.gov.uk)**



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### Summary of Evidence

##### Overview

62. Findings from the programme of work established that whilst some of the protective factors for children's health were improving such as educational attainment, and some other indicators such as teenage pregnancy and substance misuse had reduced, there are still increasing levels of need for children's health and wellbeing. This is in the context of widening inequalities, increasing poverty and deprivation and increasing social and emotional challenges (**APPENDIX 2** summarises some key figures).
63. This context poses significant challenges for both the 0 to 19 wellbeing programmes and the wider system. The programme works in partnership across the health and social care system, and as pressures have increased within the system, the current 0 to 19 programme has often become the default service for providing support. This creates additional pressures and challenges for a service that provides both universal and targeted provision and has had some impact on its ability to deliver on its early prevention responsibilities, particularly in the 5-19 age group.
64. Across the system there has been a lot of change in terms of health and social care configuration since 2018. COVID also changed both the needs of the population and the way health and social care operated. Reviewing the original specification, it has been clear that HDFT have exercised a degree of flexibility to respond to need and ensure the service provided was in line with system changes as well as continuing to support particularly the most vulnerable families during the height of the pandemic. This highlighted the importance of a flexible and responsive service.
65. The service cost is predominantly attributed to staffing - the 0-19 (25 SEND) and Growing Well, Growing Healthy services are delivered by a skills-mixed team of 79.51 WTE, ranging from Band 3 to Band 8, who are based in locations across the borough, including Family Hubs.

##### Healthy Child Programme

66. The service has consistently met its performance targets, and there have been no concerns regarding delivery of the contract. Whilst there was a dip in performance during COVID, this was the case nationally and the service bounced back quickly. Reviewing benchmarking of the mandated contacts, the 0 to 5 elements improved and they consistently outperform national, regional and common statistical neighbour comparators (**APPENDIX 2**).
67. As of September 2022, the service had over 9,700 children aged 0-5 on its caseload split between three locality teams made up of Health Visitors and Early Years Practitioners. The service has bucked the national trend in being able to recruit and retain staff but is stretched due to staff absence (mainly in health visiting and not always work-related) and the growing needs of families across the spectrum of need, including complexity in safeguarding.
68. Across the 5 to 19 element of the service through screening, emotional wellbeing support, resilience and mid-teen reviews, the service has on average around 2000 contacts with children and young people a month (April 22 to Jan 23). At June 2023, the generic nurses and junior public health nurses were supporting 130 children on their caseloads.
69. Both national guidance and the current local service specification for the 5-19 element of the service are less prescriptive than for the 0-5 element. Taken together with the significant changes in children's services, education and the NHS, this has resulted in a lack of clarity for the service, partners and families. Given the flexibility in the national guidance, there are different approaches nationally to commissioning this service, meaning that benchmarking is not feasible. However,

the local service review found there were significant challenges in achieving the level of intervention and support required for young people and families due to safeguarding pressures

70. In addition to its expected safeguarding duties, the service is fulfilling a safeguarding role as the 'health' representative on behalf of the wider 0 to 19 health system, which has significant implications for the 5-19 teams' ability to deliver its early intervention and prevention offer. This is a challenge that pre-dated the existing contract and accounts for an estimated 90% of generic Public Health nurse capacity at the time of review. The issue of 'health' representation in the safeguarding system is a challenge for the system as a whole to address, to ensure the most appropriate representation is available, through health professionals with knowledge of the child and their circumstances.
71. In early 2020, the model was expanded to include a resilience pilot focused on early intervention and community-based support for young people with emerging risk-taking behaviours and their families (e.g. low-level substance misuse, support for emotional wellbeing). The pilot is aimed at 10–19-year-olds (up to 25 SEND) and builds on the mid-teen reviews pilot work, which supports year 9 students with a range of needs including low-level substance misuse, body image and anxiety. The mid-teen review pilot slowed due to COVID, however in 2022, 5 secondary schools opted in. 881 Year 9 students had a health and wellbeing review, 46% required follow up by the service of which 32% were classified as 'urgent' by the service. Several children were identified who were previously unknown to services or schools who required further holistic support (more detailed reporting of these numbers is a priority for the future service).

#### Growing Well, Growing Healthy

72. In 2021/22, Stockton-on-Tees achieved a participation rate of 98.9% for the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), this is higher than both the regional and England average. The Growing Well, Growing Healthy Children and Families Healthy Weight offer, which provides interventions, training, educational programmes, and expertise to partners is an offer that is relatively unique to Stockton-on-Tees. It has frequently been described as an example of good practice across a range of partners and commissioners and as such, there are no similar services against which the service can be benchmarked.
73. In 2021/22 the Growing Well Growing Healthy Service screened over 1,130 children for healthy weight and provided sensitive initial support and advice to almost all the parents of those children with high BMI. They provided on-going interventions for over 300 children and families. Alongside interventions the team also trained a broad range of training to workforce across education and family hubs, supported the development of pathways between the service and secondary care, hosted a number of support groups and has been developing links to the borough's healthy schools programme.
74. The Growing Well, Growing Healthy service performs well; it is seen as an integral part of the offer of support for children and families within the Borough and has been flexible and responsive to need. In addition, areas were identified for future development. The service has worked closely with Family Action (which delivers family hubs in partnership with children's services), and the resilience offer is working with local youth and community groups. However, further work is needed to establish an asset-based approach and working into communities. The service is also still developing its prevention offer and its contribution to whole-school approaches. Capacity and the pandemic have been significant challenges to developing this to-date and the work will be a priority in the future model. It is clear there are opportunities to build on what works, particularly enhancing existing relationships with schools and the community and using these routes to expand the universal offer of support to families.

#### **Consultation and Engagement**

75. Throughout the work on the 0-19 programme, we have worked with children, young people, families and stakeholders to ensure that their voices are central to the review and our approach to developing the 0-19 programme. The consultation work ran from February to March 2023 and

included surveys, focus groups and a Healthwatch project on community engagement. In total we received 416 responses including:

- 176 Parents, Carers and Guardians
- 128 Stakeholders
- 15 Children and Young People
- 97 responses via Healthwatch

76. The responses recognised some of the good work the service already does to support local families and we heard from stakeholders and families who felt the input of the Public Health nurses was 'invaluable' and they appreciated the 'responsiveness and flexibility' of the service. Nonetheless, there were 4 key areas that were highlighted as opportunities for development:

- Improved knowledge and understanding of the service
- Improved communication, access and availability
- Increased early intervention and prevention with timely support for ongoing needs with a focus on the identified health priorities (emotional wellbeing, risk-taking behaviours, child poverty, missed education, SEND/neurodiversity)
- Improved awareness of, and access to, support for neurodiversity and SEND

77. Following the engagement work we held a system development session to review the feedback and provide an opportunity for partners to comment on the work so far and on future direction. The session was well attended and included staff from Children's services, Education, NHS Trusts and VCSE organisations.

78. Stakeholders were clear that there should be a renewed focus on early intervention and upstream prevention, improved partnership working and asset building within families and communities. The service should continue with their mandated contacts, including the mid-teen review and their holistic approach to children, young people and families, to aid understanding of the barriers and challenges that families are facing. The stakeholders felt that the programme's offer could be clearer and may be improved by better defining their criteria to manage expectations and workload. Transitions were recognised as a potential key point for support or intervention, including with SEND children.

79. We also worked with a group of families who attended several sessions to discuss the current service, health needs of families in the Borough values and principles that should underpin the future service. We will build on this work to embed the voice of families into the 0-19 programme.

## **APPENDIX 2 – KEY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION (CURRENT SERVICE)**

For the first three quarters of 2022/23 the completion rate for the mandated contacts was between 93.5% and 97.0%. However, the national comparison data is only available for 2021/22, comparison with our service shows:

- 89.7% (1,716) of New Birth Visits were completed within 14 days, which is higher than the England average of 82.7%.
- 90.1% (1,694) of infants received a 6-to-8-week review, which is significantly higher than the England average of 81.6%.
- 94.1% (1,794) of children received a 12-month review, which is significantly higher than the England average of 82.0%.
- 89.1% (1,854) of children received a 2- 2 1/2-year review, which is significantly than the England average of 74.1%.

## APPENDIX 3

### 0 to 19 Governance Interim Partnership Board (DRAFT – Pending agreement with the Board and partners)

#### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Role

- 1.1. The Board will provide strategic oversight for the implementation of the Section 75 Partnership arrangement.
- 1.2. The Board will work according to the agreed Partnership Principles (see Appendix A).

#### 2. Background

- 2.1. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Public Health team is proposing to enter into a Section 75 agreement with Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) for the ongoing delivery of the 0-19 service. This will create a formal partnership to provide the 0 to 19 Programme to the local population. The agreement is proposed to start in April 2024, subject to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Cabinet approval.
- 2.2. These Terms of Reference describe the responsibilities, functions and ways of working for the Governance Partnership Board.
- 2.3. There will be an Interim Governance Partnership Board to direct and oversee the work planned prior to the start of the agreement. This will include:
  - Approval of the Terms of Reference for the Governance Board and the Project Management Team.
  - Approval of initial design priority areas (using yet to be determined criteria).
  - Approval of design briefs for the Project Management Team.
- 2.4. The Interim Board will be superseded by the formal Governance Partnership Board.

#### 3. Membership

- 3.1. The board membership will comprise:
  - 3.1.1. Chair: The Director of Public Health for Stockton Borough Council
  - 3.1.2. Vice Chair: HDFT Triumvirate Member
  - 3.1.3. Consultant in Public Health
  - 3.1.4. Public Health Strategic Health and Wellbeing Manager
  - 3.1.5. HDFT General Manager 0-19
  - 3.1.6. HDFT Service Manager 0-19
  - 3.1.7. Project Manager
  - 3.1.8. LA Children's Services
  - 3.1.9. Health Commissioning (ICB)
  - 3.1.10. Children and Families (Placeholder)
  - 3.1.11. HR<sup>1</sup>
  - 3.1.12. Contract Management<sup>2</sup>
  - 3.1.13. Performance and Intelligence<sup>2</sup>
  - 3.1.14. Finance<sup>2</sup>
  - 3.1.15. Administrator<sup>2</sup>
- 3.2. It is expected that members will have adequate time to attend Board meetings, ensuring enough time for preparation and completion of any potential actions following the meeting where necessary.
- 3.3. In exceptional circumstances, if a member is unable to attend a meeting of the Board, they will be responsible for nominating a suitable deputy to attend in their absence.

#### 4. Functions/Purpose

Overall, the Board will provide strategic oversight and accountability of the successful implementation of the Section 75 partnership agreement.

---

<sup>1</sup> As and when required

<sup>2</sup> May submit reports or attend depending on the agenda

- 4.1. The Board will provide oversight for on-going service delivery.
- 4.2. The Board will provide oversight for the programme of transformational change work.
  - 4.2.1. Decide upon a priority list for, and sequence of, (re)design projects.
  - 4.2.2. Review and agree a design brief for each design project.
  - 4.2.3. Review and decide upon the design solution proposed by the project management team.
- 4.3. The Board will discuss and agree the procedures and processes for how the Transformation budget is to be disseminated and accounted for.

## 5. Accountability and Reporting

- 5.1. The Board will report into their respective organisational structures.
- 5.2. The Project Manager will report directly to the Board as per clause 6.4 of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement.
- 5.3. The Project Team will escalate any identified risks or challenges to the Board in accordance with clause 11.5 of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement.

## 6. Decision Making and Quoracy

- 6.1. For a Board meeting to proceed, there must be at least two representatives from each of the partner organisations.
- 6.2. The following members shall be considered voting-members:
  - 6.2.1. Chair
  - 6.2.2. Vice-chair
  - 6.2.3. Consultant in Public Health
  - 6.2.4. Strategic Health and Wellbeing Manager
  - 6.2.5. HDFT General Manager 0-19
  - 6.2.6. HDFT Service Manager 0-19
- 6.3. The aim will be for the Board to reach full consensus on decisions. If no consensus can be reached, then a majority vote of two thirds shall apply.
- 6.4. Any issues that arise pertaining to the Section 75 Partnership Agreement will defer to the Dispute Resolution section (item 30) of the Partnership Agreement.
- 6.5. Voting rights will be reviewed on an annual basis
- 6.6. The Board will set a framework for the Project Team so there is absolute clarity regarding the parameters for decision making, as opposed to the decisions of the Board itself.

## 7. Frequency of Meetings

- 7.1. In year one, the Board will meet every 8 weeks, with every other meeting conducted in person.
- 7.2. It is expected that the following meetings shall always be conducted in person and that members will ensure their availability to attend:
  - 7.2.1. Annual Performance Reviews
  - 7.2.2. Financial
  - 7.2.3. Disputes

## 8. Secretariat

- 8.1. Administration support will be provided by SBC in relation to the circulation of agendas and minutes for meetings.

## 9. Review

- 9.1. The composition and functioning of the Board can be reviewed and adapted to ensure it remains fit for purpose throughout the lifetimes of the Section 75 agreement.
- 9.2. At minimum, the Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the following Partnership Agreement key timeframes:
  - 9.2.1. At commencement of assembling the formal Governance Partnership Board.
  - 9.2.2. Six months after the formal Board is established.
  - 9.2.3. At the annual review.
- 9.3. An extemporaneous review can be called if the Partnership deems it necessary.

## Terms of Reference Appendix A

### Principles

The Partners agree to adopt the following principles for partnership working:

1. To be openly accountable for the performance of the Partners' respective roles and responsibilities set out in this Section 75.
2. To take joint ownership of challenges and problems encountered during the delivery of the section 75 whilst considering the different perspective of each organisation.
3. To communicate openly and transparently about major concerns, issues or opportunities relating to the delivery of this Section 75, the service, and the partnership at the earliest opportunity.
4. To commit to learn, develop, and seek to achieve full potential from the Service and the wider 0 – 19 Children's System.
5. To share information, experience, knowledge, and skills to learn from each other and develop effective working practices.
6. Take a strength based, solution focussed approach to collaboration and partnership working, especially to identify ways to address issues and concerns, eliminate duplication of effort, mitigate risk, and reduce cost.
7. To adopt a positive outlook and behave in a positive, proactive manner.
8. To act in the best interests of Service Users and their families and to ensure that they are always at the forefront of decision making.
9. To acknowledge that the Section 75 is delivered within a wider 0 to 19 children's system and the role that the service and partners have within that system.
10. To commit to keeping the workforce and staff in mind, recognising that they are fundamentally the service and hold expertise and experience that is valuable to the delivery of the Section 75.
11. To commit to acting with openness, integrity, and kindness during the operation of the partnership, particularly in the context of decision making and constructive challenge
12. Recognise that partners have an equal voice and should be heard and respected, whilst acknowledging the partner's distinct roles and responsibilities.
13. To commit to working towards and always aiming for co-production in approach to the partnership

The Partners agree to adopt the following principles to working together with families:

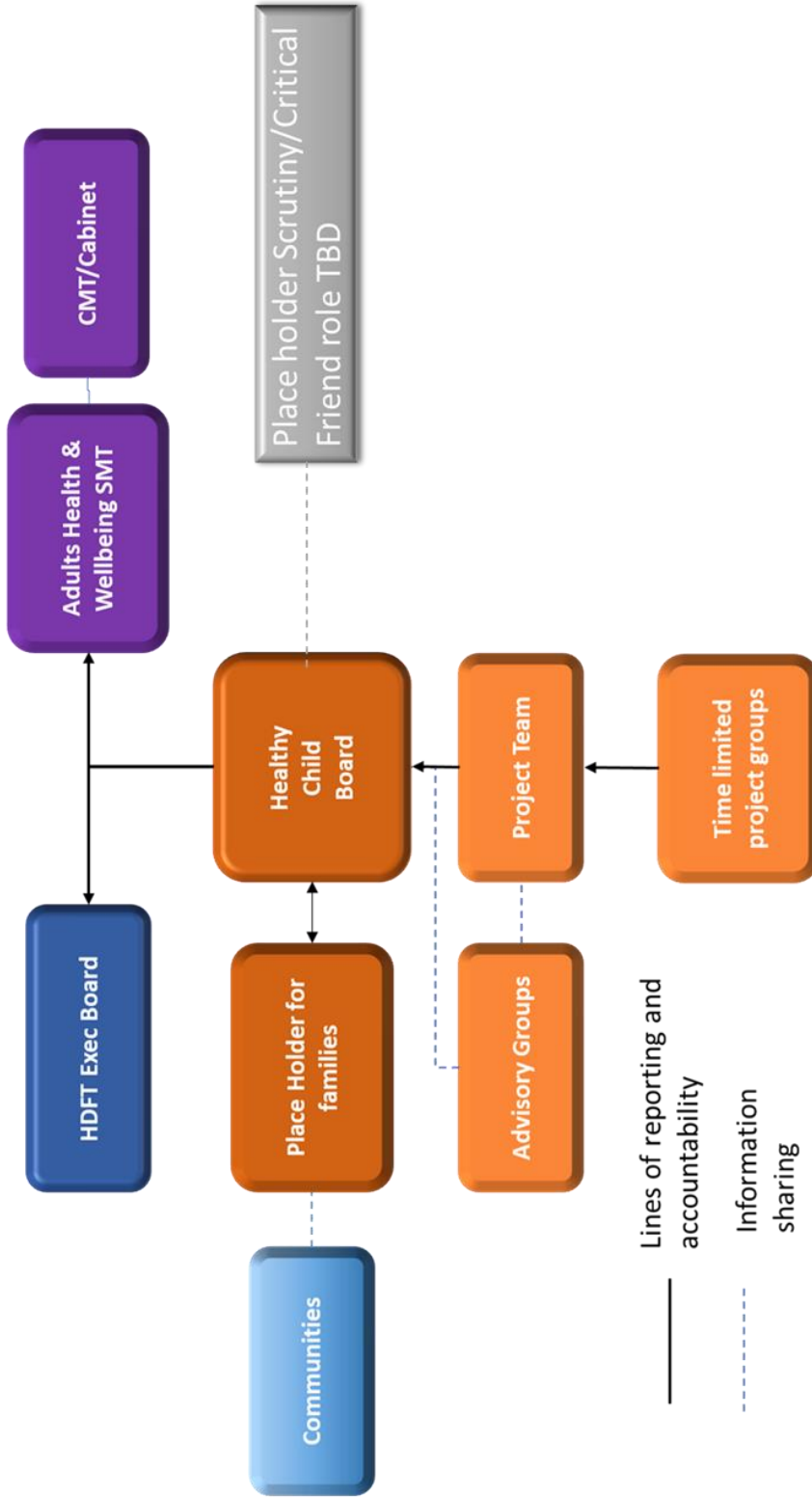
1. To work with children and families from a position of strength, and value family's' intrinsic and extrinsic assets, resources, skills and knowledge
2. To commit to working towards and always aiming for co-production in approach to the partnership
3. To work towards embedding an approach of relational practice with children, families, and communities.
4. To recognise that children and families are experts by experience.
5. To take a holistic approach to support and, where appropriate, be an advocate for families

The Partners agree to adopt the following principles for service design:

1. To maintain the principles of a whole system approach to service development and partnership working
2. To be realistic, recognising that we need to ensure that we work in the most effective way, and use resources in the most efficient way.
2. In conjunction with 3.1 the partnership will ensure through service development that we are clear that we operate from the position of where we can provide the best expertise and additionality, working to ensure families receive the support at the right time from the right professional.
3. Service design will embed the principles of equity and fairness, with the aim of addressing inequalities in service provision, and across the system.

## APPENDIX 4 – GOVERNANCE

# Governance





**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**XXXXXX**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

## **CABINET DECISION**

**Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture – Cllr Nelson**

### **2023 EVENT SUMMARY AND 2024 MEMORIAL LIGHTING CALENDAR**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report provides an overview of the Council's 2023 Events Programme, including community led events and street parties which have been delivered by third parties on Council land. Despite the challenges of unpredictable weather and rising costs of delivery, our biggest event, Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF) received very positive feedback in the independent market research, with 90% believing it to be good for promoting the area and a good use of Council resources.

In addition, the report provides the suggested calendar for memorial lighting for 2024.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To note the success of events programme during 2023
2. To approve the memorial lighting calendar for 2024
3. To delegate to the Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make in year amendments or additions to the lighting calendar.

#### **DETAIL**

1. The Borough's event programme continues to be popular with visitor numbers and satisfaction levels remaining high over the past year. There has been a good mix of small, medium and large-scale events delivered across the six towns, and new events, such as Siren Fest Emergency Vehicle Show and Festival of Thrift, have been added to the annual programme.
2. The Council's resources continue to be deployed across the Borough to enable local event organisers to deliver their own community focussed events which, although supported, are delivered independently of the Council. Practical support includes specialist advice, access to relevant Council services, and financial support for safety officers, road closures, signage and programming etc., all of which helps communities to manage their own events and celebrations in a safe manner.
3. The delivery of the Council's events programme, including community led events, has not been without its challenges in 2023. Heavy rainfall and frequent high wind levels have resulted in delays, rescheduling and in some case full cancellation of events. Events that

have been impacted include, SIRF, EID, Festival of Thrift, BIFF, Yarm Fair and more recently the Council's Halloween event which was cancelled due to heavy rains and high river levels.

4. The Council is mindful of the ongoing impact of climate change for outdoor event work and is currently reviewing operational delivery and processes in this area. Consideration is being given to restriction on the use of temporary demountable structures and additional assessment of event spaces/ground surfaces. Financial risks, associated with the impact of adverse weather, is also a key consideration for future programming and the design of new event spaces.
5. External event management and safety expertise has continued to be needed in 2023, especially for large scale and complex events. This was exacerbated by a vacancy in a crucial role and the recent appointment of an Event Development and Production Manager will now enable a rebalance of the use of external crew/professionals in 2024, especially at a senior level. The new post holder will drive event design, safety planning, procurement and use of resources, which will all support our future events programme and wider culture ambitions.
6. Internally, there continues to be a joined-up approach across Council teams in the delivery of our events programme and we acknowledge the effort and support provided from service teams including Enforcement, Highways, Legal, Communications, Media, CFYA and Design Services. The effectiveness of this joint working and ability to respond to unexpected challenges has been very evident this year, particularly in relation to the impact of adverse weather and changes to programme and overall delivery.

#### Large Scale Events

7. Part of our large-scale event programme is temporarily impacted due to the ongoing major redevelopment work on Stockton's riverside and high street locations. The suspension of these events which includes Stockton's Fireworks, Super Car Saturday and Stockton's Cycling Festival has been planned and communicated to Members and our communities.
8. The Council's Events Service is currently working with the Town Team, contributing to the design of the new riverside spaces and planning for the continued use of the existing riverside spaces, with a view to producing a large-scale programme of events in preparation for 2025/26

#### **SIRF**

9. SIRF is a long-standing Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), funded to present high quality work and support the street arts sector. SIRF 23 is in the first year of a three-year funding agreement with ACE (2023 – 2026) and our festival continues to be highlighted nationally as an exemplar of the development of sustainability in street arts.
10. SIRF has a strong reputation for showcasing international programmers, new commissions and we provide one of the largest and most diverse outdoor street arts festival in the UK. Whilst our ambition is to sustain this reputation and to continue to support artistic development and new work, the wider sector is facing a lack of investment leading to a shortage of ambitious large-scale outdoor street arts shows. This is particularly true of international work, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find new and exciting shows of the calibre associated with our festival.

11. Whilst the declining capacity within the street arts sector is concerning, this does provide an opportunity for SIRF to assess and reshape its own future delivery and influence the sector. This will be a key piece of work in 2024 and we intend to have early conversations with ACE and other key cultural partners.
12. There continues to be financial challenges associated with inflationary pressures for technical suppliers for SIRF and this, together with rising costs for artists due to high demand and low availability, is a risk area. We will continue to apply for additional funding from ACE which is outside of our 3-year NPO investment, as well as other funding streams including those managed by TVCA, who are one of our main Cultural Partners.

### **SIRF 2023 – Delivery & Sector Development**

13. SIRF 2023 hosted an impressive 41 companies, including 7 international groups and 155 individual performances. Although access to our usual Riverside event space was not possible this year, our programme remained ambitious and we delivered some exceptional moments, with a strong artistic programme and community elements.
14. A theme throughout this report has been the impact of adverse weather on our event programme and delivery of our festival was affected by heavy and sustained rainfall. Poor weather conditions resulted in significant delays and rescheduling of the programme, across all days. Footfall levels dropped to 38,800 visitors compared to previous years, which have ranged between 50,000 – 65,000 visitors.

15. Despite the weather conditions and the resultant cancellation of a number of performances, visitor satisfaction from our independent market research remained positive, with most of the key satisfaction indicators reaching 90% plus. These include:

**86%** of attendees rating the festival overall as **good or very good** in 2023, compared with 95% in 2022, [94% in 2019] and [90% in 2018]

**90%** stated that the festival is a **good use of council resources** in 2023, compared with 94% in 2022 [94% in 2019] and [89% in 2018]

**90%** of attendees stated that the festival is **good for promoting Stockton** as a place to live, work or visit in 2023, compared with 95% in 2022 [93% in 2019] and [92% in 2018].

**91%** of people stated that coming to the event has a **positive effect on their health** and wellbeing, compare with 92% in 2022.

Lower than usual footfall has impacted economic outputs in 2023. Direct spend per head is reported as £39.27 compared to £47.99 in 2022 and the **total direct economic impact** is **£991,360** compared to £1.73m in 2002.

16. Participation and engagement work is a key theme for SIRF and there are many opportunities for residents, children and community groups to engage in high quality arts experiences. The popular Community Carnival included 750 participants, representing diverse groups across Borough. We had the largest group to date of Tees Valley based artists working with our communities, delivering workshops to create costumes, music and dance pieces for the parade. The Carnival is very popular with our SIRF audience, and this year was no exception with over 5,000 visitors lined along high street to watch the parade.
17. The major events presented by Stockton Council are designed to be accessible to all our communities and as such we continue to develop 'Accessible SIRF'. This year's festival was part of a national pilot for an Audio Description Tool, *The Difference Engine* which is a real time audio description tool. We commissioned 5 new audio description resources to

enhance the experience for our deaf audiences. We intend to deliver and promote this service in subsequent festivals.

18. British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation was added across the festival, including a digital BSL interpreted access film that provided a guide to deaf and disable visitors to navigate and access our festival. This type of support guide is a new best practice model within the Sector.
19. As part of our sustainable festival plan, we collected 420kg of waste in our 'festival recycling' bins, ensured all our generators were HVO powered (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil the Renewable Diesel Alternative) and we introduced an Environmental Levy for our traders, following learning from new practice across the Outdoor Arts Sector an Environmental Pledge was developed for all traders to sign up to.
20. We continue our partnership with XTRAX, who deliver SIRF's international showcase which supports and promotes our festival across the Sector. The showcase also provides opportunities for programmers and artists to pitch new ideas and network. Delegates represented 15 countries, with 159 registered delegates. 98% of delegates said the showcase helped them to make new contacts and network with UK and international colleagues. 95% of delegates rated the quality of the content as good or excellent. We also hosted a Without Walls Artistic Directorate conference across 2 days which included networking sessions and discussions which are impacting the outdoor arts sector.

### **Festival of Thrift**

21. We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Festival of Thrift which moved from Kirkleatham, Redcar & Cleveland, to John Whitehead Park, Billingham in 2023.
22. Festival of Thrift is in its 11<sup>th</sup> Year and is a nationally renowned festival which encourages and celebrates sustainable living. This large-scale festival not only highlights and attracts new visitors to the area, but it is an important part of connecting our community with the Council's ambitious Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy.
23. Ahead of the planned two-day event in September, the festival team have delivered an extensive community programme of related activities across our towns.
24. The festival could not be delivered over two days as planned due to high winds and the event was cancelled on its second day. Despite this, visitor numbers on the first day were encouraging (estimated at 15,000 across the day) and the team received some excellent customer feedback:

*"We had an Absolutely brilliant time, so much to see, pity the Sunday was cancelled because we wanted to do it so much again.: This was our first visit to a Thrift, but it defiantly won't be our last... well done to all the street performers, stall holders and organisers, we live in Billingham, and it was wonderful to see so many people have a great time..."*

*"Definitely prefer it in Billingham, it felt so spacious even though there were tons of people (which is amazing for the event!) We had a lovely couple of hours and my daughter commented that it was a bit like another festival we go to, with the range of food stalls. You're always going to get naysayers, but honestly, it was lovely to see a once bouncing town doing well again. The town centre stalls were fab, a real focus on thrift."*

25. An evaluation report is expected later in the year which will include information on delivery, travel, visitor satisfaction and economic impact. Ahead of the report, early indications in relation to travel and sustainability, show a positive increase in public transport and walking to site, including:

55% came by car in 2023, compared 90% in 2022.  
26% walked to site in 2023, compared to 5.5% in 2022.  
7.5% came by bus in 2023, compared to 2.5% in 2022.  
4% came to Thrift by train in 2023, an option that wasn't available in Kirkleatham.

26. A Park & Ride service was also piloted which operated from Stockton Town Centre to Billingham. The service was popular, with 273 tickets sold and Council teams are working with the Festival of Thrift to expand this service in 2024.

### **Stockton Sparkles**

27. Stockton Sparkles is the remaining large-scale event in the 2023 calendar. The event runs for a period of weeks in the lead up to Christmas, commencing with a spectacular light switch-on event late November, which includes a free Victorian Fair.
28. Our Christmas Market was extremely successful in 2022, with high satisfaction levels from both traders and visitors. Overall direct economic impact for 2022 was £392,686 with a total average spend per head of £34.83. Our 2023 market is over-subscribed for the second year, and we have a reserved list of traders. We are planning to deliver a similar model this year, with 22 traders on Stockton High Street, a music programme, craft workshops and street theatre activities. The Sparkles Lantern Parade will take place on the last day of the Christmas Market and will include school children and community groups.
29. 'Santa on Wheels' returns for the third consecutive year. This event is remains extremely popular with families and communities across the Borough. It is a four-day event, and the Santa Bus route includes all wards.

### **Other Events in 2023**

30. As mentioned earlier in the report, the Halloween Spooky Walk event at Preston Park was one of the events that was severely impacted by inclement weather. Heavy rains and high river levels created unsafe ground conditions and the event could not be delivered safely. This is a popular family event which has had consistently high tickets sales, especially for the early year's slots which tend to sell out in weeks. The re-development works at Preston Park will mean that this event cannot be delivered at this location in 2024 and Officers are currently looking at alternative sites within the Borough.
31. We continue to support over 20 community and local events, and these include a range of well-established events such as BIFF, Thornaby Show, Billingham Carnival and Garden Show, EID Festival, Yarm Fair and for later in the year, Remembrance Sunday events and Christmas focus celebrations. The Council's Events Team have also supported several memorial events, including Battle of Stockton, Centenary of the Stockton-on-Tees Cenotaph and a memorial dedication led by Stockton International Brigade.
32. We have had another bumper year of street party requests and community style big lunch events, in celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III. These community events and celebrations are very important, and the Council has developed a robust and streamlined process to help our communities to deliver, without undue bureaucratic systems and process.
33. 75 streets parties were delivered, which included 54 road closures and we supported 2 community big lunch events, (Yarm and Ropner Park). The Council's own large scale Coronation Big Lunch included a free fair, live streaming of the Coronation ceremony and a

live music programme which was very successful and attracted over 5,000 visitors into Stockton High Street.

34. The Council's Events Team provides technical support and advice for the numerous communities and externally led events, which includes help with production of event safety plans, risk assessments, road closures and food safety. Further training and support from local and community event deliverers will be available for the 2024 event season.
35. Moving into 2024, the Council is committed to retaining its leadership role and further developing Stockton's reputation as a creative and dynamic events Borough. We recognised that a creative arts and events programme has many benefits to both the community and economy, and can attract high levels of satisfaction, improve well-being, increase 'direct' spend in the area and generally promote the Borough as a great place for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

### **Memorial lighting calendar 2024**

36. The use of coloured lights in Stockton Town centre and on selected buildings and structures continues to provide the Council with an opportunity to acknowledge and support a range of good causes and important anniversaries. This memorial lighting programme is very popular and generates significant social media activity. The 2023 memorial lighting calendar has been delivered.
37. This report invites Cabinet to agree the programme for 2024, as listed in **Appendix A**. The list incorporates campaigns that might encompass a range of individually narrow issues/interests. The dates nominated in each case are those which are believed to be the subject of a meaningful campaign by others, such that when the lights are switched on the general public may have some understanding of the significance of the event/colour.
38. Where a campaign lasts for a period of days or weeks, the normal procedure will be to mark the start of that campaign by turning our lights on for the first day/night. However, where a campaign promoter wishes to use an alternative day within the period to align with specific activity designed to raise the profile of the campaign, we may change the date on which we turn our lights on to fit with the organisers' promotions. The calendar listed at Appendix A therefore includes suggested dates for each event and may be subject to minor changes.

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

39. The events programme is diverse and designed to reflect the interests of different communities. Every effort is made to make our events physically and financially accessible, they are presented in public spaces and are almost always free to watch or participate in.
40. Many of our events are specifically designed, in whole or in part, to raise awareness of the needs or characteristics of specific groups, including those with protected characteristics.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

41. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

42. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

43. All events presented by the Council or approved for Council land are subject to a full risk assessment and where appropriate are reviewed by Stockton's Independent Safety Advisory Group.

### **COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES**

44. The events programme and memorial lighting contributes to a number of Council Plan priorities, including the economic objectives and those relating to community cohesion and wellbeing. Our events are crucial to our ambition to create a place that is clean, vibrant and attractive.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

45. Many opportunities to participate in or enjoy our events are targeted at our looked after children. There are very few ticketed events, but tickets for this year's Halloween Spooky Walk were offered to our care leavers.

### **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

46. There is frequent consultation with Councillors over events before, during and after the events are staged. There has been no consultation with Councillors in relation to this report as its primary function is to report on the outcome of events already staged.
47. There has been consultation with the Cabinet portfolio holder for Health, Culture & Leisure in the development of the draft memorial lighting calendar.

**Name of Contact Officer: Reuben Kench**

**Post Title: Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture**

**Telephone No. 01642 527039**

**Email Address: reuben.kench@stockton.gov.uk**

Education related? No

Background Papers

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Property

## APPENDIX A

## DRAFT MEMORIAL LIGHTING SCHEME 2024/25

DATE	EVENT	LIGHTING COLOUR	CAMPAIGNS
Saturday 27 January	Holocaust Memorial Day	Purple	National
Thursday 1 February	LGBT+ History Month	Multi	Catch All
Sunday 4 February	World Cancer Day	Orange	Catch All
Friday 8 March	International Women's Day	White/Purple/ Green	National
Saturday 23 March	National Day of Reflection	Yellow	National
Saturday 23 March	Earth Hour (8.30pm-9.30pm)	Switched off	National
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Cleveland Scouts 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Blue/Yellow	Open Request
Tuesday 2 April	Autism Acceptance Day	Gold	Autism Friendly Town Centre
Sunday 21 April	My Way (London Marathon) Teesside Samaritans	Green	Open Request
Tuesday 23 April	St George's Day	Red/White	Saint Day
Monday 13 May	National Dementia Action Week	Purple	National & SBC Campaign
Saturday 1 June	National Volunteering Week	Red/Purple	National
Monday 10 June	National Carers Week	Blue	National
Tuesday 18 June	National Drowning Prevention Week	Red/White/ Blue	Open Request
Saturday 29 June	Armed Forces Day	Red/White/ Blue	National
Wednesday 4 September	World Sexual Health Awareness Day	Orange/Blue	Catch All
Monday 9 September	Fairtrade Fortnight	Blue/Green	National
Tuesday 1 October	Stoptober (Stop Smoking Campaign)	Red	National
Wednesday 9 October	Baby Loss Awareness Week	Pink/Blue	Catch All
Thursday 10 October	World Mental Health Day	Purple	Catch All
September <i>date TBC</i>	National Recovery Week	Purple	Open Request
October <i>date TBC</i>	National Care Leavers Week	Blue	National & SBC Campaign
October <i>date TBC</i>	Show Racism the Red Card	Red	National & SBC Campaign



Monday 11 November	Remembrance Day	Red	National
Thursday 14 November	World Diabetes Day	Blue	National
Monday 25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	Orange	Catch All

This page is intentionally left blank

## AGENDA ITEM

### REPORT TO CABINET

14/12/2023

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

#### Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care – Councillor Ann McCoy

#### MAKING IT REAL BOARD

#### SUMMARY

Adults and Health will form a Making It Real Board made up of People with Lived Experience who have, are or will in the future, access our services. The local authority was successful in a funding bid to help build Making It Real. As part of the Powering our Future programme, the Community Mission is focussed on empowering our communities to become more independent and utilise their insights and experiences to inform future service delivery. A fundamental part of this work is to gain knowledge from our communities, including people with Lived Experience by fully engaging them in our transformation journey, putting communities at the heart of everything we do.

#### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)/DECISION(S)

This proposal has been discussed at SMT (Adults, Health and Wellbeing) and at CMT; it now requires review and endorsement from Cabinet.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Review and endorse the proposal for a Making It Real board and timescales for implementation (4.1 to 4.4).
- Agree in principle to develop a policy and supporting processes to enable the payment of expenses and potentially financial remuneration for People with Lived Experience for their time involved with Making It Real (4.5 to 4.7).
- Agree in principle plans for training, development, and communications to support Making It Real and to link in with other initiatives including Powering Our Future and CQC inspection preparation work (5.1 to 5.5).

Appendices cover existing activity that will support Making It Real, and further information about the funding available.

All tasks except where specified will be the responsibility of the Lived Experience Coordinator.

## DETAIL

### BACKGROUND

1. Lived experience is defined as personal knowledge gained through first-hand involvement in everyday events, rather than through representations created by other people. Lived experience is useful to “reality check” what an organisation or a researcher might think when developing or evaluating initiatives. It adds credibility to what we do and is essential if a public body is to remain relevant and be successful.
2. A key part of lived experience, and ambition for the Council, is the development of co-production. NHS England’s co-production Always Events workspace provides a definition; *“Co-production is a way of working that involves people who use health and care services, carers, and communities in equal partnership; and which engages groups of people at the earliest stages of service design, development, and evaluation. Co-production acknowledges that people with ‘lived experience’ of a particular condition are often best placed to advise on what support and services will make a positive difference to their lives. Done well, co-production helps to ground discussions, and to maintain a person-centred perspective.”* (Ref 1).
3. The ambition is to develop a Making It Real board with representation from People with Lived Experience who have, are accessing or may benefit from services delivered by Adults and Health. This group will collaborate directly with senior colleagues on the thinking about, development and evaluation of services within the directorate (co-production). In return, the people involved will have the opportunity to improve services that they, or those close to them may access. They will also have access to development and peer support opportunities.
4. Proposal – Making it Real Board – What, how, why, and when
  - 4.1 People approached will include those accessing our services, from existing and proposed lived experience groups (see Appendix 1) and people who are already assisting the local authority on interview panels or through informal consultancy. If there are gaps in representation these will be recruited for through our social care teams by direct approach by key workers. That way there will be a healthy mixture of people already involved with us, and new voices. We will endeavour to secure authentic, individual voices rather than the voice of organisations.
  - 4.2 It is proposed that the Making It Real board will have approximately 12 members, plus around 3 colleagues including the Lived Experience Coordinator and Quality Assurance & Workforce Development Manager. Other officers will be invited to meetings, when relevant to the topics to be covered. Terms of reference will be co-produced so that fair representation is established from client groups who access services and so all participants understand the remit of Making It Real. The Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care will be invited to be involved with the Making It Real Board, both during its formation phase and when it is established.
  - 4.3 Making It Real meetings need to be scheduled to integrate with existing decision-making bodies to ensure timely discussion of relevant topics, and for feedback to be provided on any suggestions made or questions raised. Frequency of meetings is proposed to be every 2 months. It is proposed that the first meeting takes place in January 2024.
  - 4.4 The local authority was successful in gaining funding from the NHS to support the development of Making It Real (Experience of Care Systems programme). The funding is £15,000 to cover expenses and/or payments to People with Lived Experience, training and development plus some staff and venue costs. The successful proposal was to ensure that the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB) becomes co-led by People with Lived Experience, and then to take learning from that to build the Making It Real board. For further information see Appendix 2.

- 4.5 There needs to be a discussion about whether People with Lived Experience are paid for their time attending Making It Real meetings and undertaking tasks. It is the recommendation of the writer that any financial remuneration is restricted to people who participate in the central Making It Real board, and who participate in interview panels or who co-deliver training and development.
- 4.6 A policy document is being drafted on expenses and remuneration specifically for Making It Real. Further advice will be sought from legal, HR and finance teams to ensure any policy is fit for purpose but has some flexibility considering a variety of circumstances. The document will be reviewed and amended with People with Lived Experience prior to it being finalised.
- 4.7 The HR Team is currently developing a new Volunteering Policy, which will apply to Making It Real. The Lived Experience Coordinator is responsible for reviewing the policy before it is finalised.

## 5. Training, Development and Communications

- 5.1 The Lived Experience Coordinator has been in discussions with the Quality Assurance & Workforce Development Manager about the development of a suite of training and development resources. These would be co-delivered with People with Lived Experience.
- 5.2 The proposal is to develop a half or 1-day training course by April 2024, which would then be scheduled quarterly and be open to colleagues, volunteers and People with Lived Experience involved with the Local Authority.
- 5.3 The training course will include content on preparing for CQC inspection. Short sessions of around 1 hour will be delivered as part of the next Festival of Learning and at team meetings or events. It is proposed that the condensed version would be delivered to all social care teams by the end of July 2024. The first session was delivered during Safeguarding Awareness Week in November 2023.
- 5.4 KYIT and other internal communications channels will be used to share updates on progress.
- 5.5 The Lived Experience coordinator and relevant colleagues will collaborate on external communications relating to lived experience and Powering Our Future. We will maintain clarity by scheduling messages well and by having a consistent voice. The full range of channels will be used including digital and in-person presentations that will involve People with Lived Experience

## **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council is required and has a responsibility, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), to eliminate unlawful discrimination, create equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.2 A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) process has not taken place as the Making It Real Board has not yet commenced recruitment. The Making It Real Board will involve people due to their individual involvement with social care services, or their lived experience beyond that as residents of the Borough. The Making It Real Board is intended from the outset to be representative of people living in the Borough.
- 6.3 A range of recruitment methods will be employed to ensure that the Making It Real Board is open to people living in the Borough on an equal basis. This will include promotion

through Social Care staff, carers and families to ensure that people who may find it difficult to access general communications channels can be reached.

- 6.4 The Director of Adults and Health will review Making It Real board membership on an annual basis, compared to the demographic information held on Adults, Health and Wellbeing clients recorded on Liquid Logic, and wider demographic information on the Borough held by the ONS.

## **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

7. This paper does not have any Corporate Parenting Implications.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Aside from the funding outlined in Appendix 2 (which ends in April 2024), consideration needs to be given to the resources available to cover expenses, meeting costs and potential payments to people involved with the Making It Real Board.
- 8.2 A budget of £15K per annum would cover anticipated expenses, room hire and if agreed, financial remuneration for Making It Real board members, assuming 6 meetings a year for 2 hours, paid at the current National Living Wage.
- 8.3 Where the budget for Making It Real sits will need to be agreed. The proposed activity of the Making It Real Board will cut across Adults, Health and Wellbeing.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Lived Experience Coordinator is working with the HR Team on the new Corporate Volunteering Policy, which will apply to the Making It Real Board members.
- 9.2 Depending on the outcome of discussions regarding the financial remuneration of the Making It Real board members, consideration needs to be given to the creation of contracts to specify their status.
- 9.3 Terms of reference and any documentation above will form a suite of documents that will be agreed with and provided to all Making It Real board members. Consideration must be given to clarity of language and versions will be produced in easy read formats.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 It is essential that Adults and Health finds better ways to evidence the voice of people who access its services, to best ensure a Good or Outstanding CQC inspection, anticipated to take place in 2024.
- 10.2 The mock inspection carried out by Adults and Health with Carol Tozer highlighted the need across the directorate to better evidence the voice of people with lived experience. Forming the Making It Real board will enhance our evidence for CQC.
- 10.3 The Making It Real board will provide a way for Adults and Health to discuss potential service development and mitigate against the risk of the local authority being out-of-touch with the public. It will be a forum to explore and scrutinise wider pieces of public involvement including Powering Our Future initiatives.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

- 11.1 SMT discussed and approved the formation of the Making It Real Board in 10/23.
- 11.2 The Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care will be invited to be involved with the Making It Real Board, both during its formation phase and when it is established.
- 11.3 No other consultation with specific ward officers or councillors has taken place to date as the Making It Real Board is applicable to the whole Borough.

Name of contact officer: Carolyn Nice  
 Post Title: Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing  
 Email address: carolyn.nice@stockton.gov.uk  
 Telephone number 01642 528100

**Appendix 1 – current and proposed activity supporting Making It Real**

Existing Group / Org	Cohort and proposal
<p><b>Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB)</b></p>	<p>Transitions age / adults with learning disabilities, their carers or family members. Will include members of existing lived experience groups at Community Day Services, Halcyon Centre and people who stay at Lanark that have been involved in focus groups.</p> <p>Group run by Stockton Borough Council but with the ambition for it to be co-led by People with Lived Experience.</p> <p>See section below relating to funding gained to develop this group.</p>
<p><b>Dementia Hub Involvement Group</b></p>	<p>Older people who use the Livewell Hub plus from the Halcyon Centre Committee. Crossover with the Age UK social groups that run in Thornaby and Yarm plus the dementia friendly drop-in at Hampton By Hilton.</p> <p>Propose that this group is expanded and rebranded to bring in other older people and have meetings rotate location across the borough. Expand topics to enable discussions to feed into Making It Real.</p> <p>Note that the Age UK groups are funded through the Better Care fund by SBC. Terms and conditions of that funding need to be taken into consideration.</p>
<p><b>Mental Health Lived Experience Group</b></p>	<p>Adults who have in the past or are currently accessing mental health services, either local authority, NHS, or both. Already helping the local authority, links with the IS&amp;D team. This group is facilitated by Starfish and Red Balloons. Regular meetings that are well-attended (approx. 40 participants).</p> <p>Propose SBC sets up an associate sub-group for local authority business, or requests space on existing meeting agendas as appropriate. The writer’s preference would be to have the latter approach.</p>

	<p>Note that this group is currently awaiting the outcome of an external funding bid. The group used to be funded by TEWV but is not at present. Consideration needs to be given to how SBC may support the group if it is to engage on a regular basis with Adult Services. Agenda items for this group are set 6-months in advance – Housing is on the agenda for Jan 2024, Social Care is on the agenda for March 2024.</p>
<p><b>Carers Service Groups including young carers</b></p> <p><b>Age UK Carers Support Group</b></p>	<p>Carers of adults, some of whom are young people. Led by the Carers Service; primarily offers peer support and opportunities for respite and time away from caring responsibilities. Crossover with the groups above.</p> <p>Age UK also have a small carers group which meets monthly in Stockton. Most members are involved with the local authority through the Livewell Hub.</p>
<p><b>Wellbeing Wednesday / Stockton Youth Group</b></p>	<p>Run by Hart Gables charity (LGBTQ+). Wellbeing Wednesday is a peer support group for adults, the Stockton Youth Group is for 11- to 16-year-olds.</p> <p>Propose linking in with the charity to explore representation on the Making It Real board. Link in with Stockton Pride partner organisations to discuss approaches.</p>
<p><b>Links Parent Support Group and 30+ social group (plus others) – “My Life My Community”</b></p>	<p>Run by Daisy Chain, a charity based in Stockton but active throughout the Northeast region providing support to people with autism or neurodivergent and their families / carers.</p> <p>New Stockton group “My Life My Community” due to start in 2023.</p> <p>Propose to involve Daisy Chain in the formation of any Making It Real sub-group for autism / neurodivergence.</p>
<p><b>Youth Voice Project</b></p>	<p>Run by The Corner House, this project aims to support local young people to be involved with the NCS Youth Voice programme.</p> <p>Propose linking in with Youth Voice and involving some of the cohort age 17+ to be involved in Making It Real.</p> <p>Link to the cohort from Vision 25 below.</p>
<p><b>Vision 25</b></p>	<p>Vision 25 is an independent charity that delivers opportunities for young people age 17+ with disabilities.</p> <p>Propose that an approach is made to collaborate on a Making It Real sub-group to involve young people with disabilities, potentially a development of any existing steering group.</p> <p>People who access Vision 25 could be invited to join the LDPB, but there are others who would not be represented.</p>
<p><b>Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAS) Forum</b></p>	<p>Brings together those with lived experience and organisations (across the statutory and VCSE sector) who support the boroughs RAS communities.</p> <p>Propose to link in with this project to discuss the opportunities for a Making It Real sub-group or similar.</p>



<p><b>Durham University (integration research project)</b></p>	<p>Via this project, 5 peer researchers will interview refugees who have current or former residents of the borough to hear their views on their experience of settling into Stockton-on-Tees. The Council is working collaboratively with Durham University and Refugee Futures.</p>
<p><b>Community Spaces</b></p>	<p>Some feedback was gained from People with Lived Experience as part of the evaluation of the Warm Spaces programme (now renamed Community Spaces). Community Spaces venues and the groups that meet there may be a resource Making It Real can tap into, particularly to reach some groups that are not well represented above that access Adult Social Care.</p> <p>In total there are 59 Community Spaces venues, so at the very least involving them in promoting Making It Real should enable us to reach new people.</p>
<p><b>Catalyst Over 50s Forum</b></p>	<p>Open to all residents aged 50 and over. Next meeting is on 5<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p>Proposed to approach the group at this meeting with an offer to nominate a participant for the Making It Real board.</p>
<p><b>Stockton Borough Council consultations, surveys and social media campaigns</b></p>	<p>Where relevant to Adults and Health, the Lived Experience Coordinator will ensure that learning from this work will be fed through for further development. If individuals volunteer for further involvement because of consultation work, ensure that their details are captured, and they are communicated with appropriately. Mechanism to be developed to hold contact details that is compliant with best practice and the law.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Experience of Care: Support for Integrated Care Systems funding

- A2.1 Stockton Borough Council has been successful in gaining funding from the NHS to re-establish the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB) and to take learning from that to develop Making It Real.
- A2.2 The funding is £15,000 and must be used by the end of March 2024. The funding will be used to cover expenses for People with Lived Experience, including any training or development costs, IT, or other resources, and potentially some financial payments (pending agreement). The funding also includes some sums for staff time in terms of facilitation and support for People with Lived Experience.
- A2.3 It is proposed that the LDPB recruits People with Lived Experience between October and December 2023, with the ambition that they are active as equal members by March 2024 at the latest.
- A2.4 The Lived Experience Coordinator will produce project updates monthly and an evaluation report in March 2024. This will inform developments in Making It Real, which will take place simultaneously.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS, REFERENCES AND LINKS

Ref 1 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/always-events/>

Dave James, Head of Adult Social Care for CQC, September 2023, on the link between Making It Real and CQC inspections:

<https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/Blog/The-Care-Quality-Commissions-commitment-to-personalised-care/>

CQC Assessment Framework for Local Authorities

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/local-systems/local-authorities/assessment-framework>

Making It Real in Doncaster report

[Your Care and Support: Doncaster 2023 - Adults, Health and Wellbeing Local Account - City of Doncaster Council](#)

[NIHR Payment guidance for members of the public considering involvement in research Working with our Patient and Public Voice Partners Reimbursing expenses and paying involvement payments NHSE](#)

[Co-production Collective Payments Policy](#)

## **CABINET INFORMATION ITEM ONLY**

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**14 DECEMBER 2023**

**REPORT OF SENIOR  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET INFORMATION ITEM**

**Portfolio: Regeneration and Housing – Lead Cabinet Member – Cllr Nigel Cooke**

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GOVERNING BODY FOR THE LEARNING AND SKILLS SERVICE**

##### **SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on the work of the Learning and Skills Service in supporting residents, employers and community partners with learning opportunities and employment initiatives during the 22/23 academic year. This report also highlights the outcome of the full Ofsted inspection which took place in June 2023. The report also demonstrates the ongoing success of the Governing Body as an advisory committee empowered by Cabinet to provide challenge, support and strategic oversight.

**Recommended that the report be noted.**

##### **DETAIL**

###### **Governance and management of the Service**

1. The Governing Body was first established in October 2016 and since that time has supported the Service by utilising its skillset, experience and knowledge across different sectors to provide challenge and insight to ensure the Service continues to meet the needs and priorities of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
2. The Service is fully funded by external grants allocated by funding bodies including Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). These grant allocations contribute to the overall Council financial position and are regularly reviewed through close governance and performance monitoring.
3. The value of the contribution from the Governing Body along with the management arrangements for the Service have been validated by independent advisors, Ofsted inspectors, and external quality standard assessors.
4. Governors play an active role in quality assurance and improvement. In order to ensure that the Governing Body continues to remain strongly positioned, its membership is regularly reviewed. The current membership of the Governing Body is as follows:

Position	Full name	Role
Chair of Governors	Councillor Nigel Cooke	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Link Governor for Equality and Diversity)
Member	Chris Renahan	Assistant Director - Inclusive Growth and Development for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council SBC Senior Management Team Representative
Member	Craig Taylor	Adult Learning and Skills Manager for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Staff Representative
Member	Julie Marsden	Economic Development Manager for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Economic Growth and Regeneration Representative (Link governor for safeguarding)
Member	Kevin Cooper	Learner Representative
Member	Jon Carling	Chief Executive for Catalyst Voluntary and Community Sector Representative
Member	Lynsey Robinson	Director, Digital City, Teesside University Employer Representative for Digital Sector

### Ofsted Inspection Outcome

5. In June 2023, a full Ofsted inspection took place which confirmed the Service continued to be recognised as a 'Good' learning provider in line with the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.
6. To achieve this rating, the Service must be able to evidence the high quality of education it provides, the positive impact it makes to the lives of learners and apprentices, and ensure that safeguarding measures are effective.
7. Ofsted were very positive about the clarity and purpose of governance arrangements. They stated "governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of development for the service" and that "members of the governance board effectively use their expertise and contacts with key stakeholders such as TVCA to help shape the strategic direction of the service and inform the content of its curriculum, particularly in response to the skills needed for economic growth in the region."
8. It was recognised that "leaders and managers have designed an ambitious curriculum that addresses two of the main strategic priorities of the local authority and TVCA. These are the need to develop the skills required for economic growth, particularly those sectors of the economy where there are labour shortages, and to provide residents with learning

opportunities to build their mental and physical resilience so they can return to work, counter social isolation and integrate into the community.”

9. It was evidenced that “teachers demonstrate a mastery of their craft” and that leaders “plan and design the curriculum effectively”. As a result “a high proportion of adult learners complete and achieve their qualifications” and “adult learners, and those apprentices who complete their programmes, secure positive destinations into employment and further education.”
10. However, during the inspection it was recognised that apprenticeship provision requires improvement. Inspectors noted that whilst “leaders and managers have identified and begun to implement actions that they need to take to improve apprenticeship provision...aspects of teaching and assessment are still not of a high enough quality.”
11. The Service, its leaders and governors now intend to fulfil the 23/24 Quality Improvement Plan which is tailored to address and exceed these recommendations made by Ofsted. The Service has already made great progress in improving apprenticeship performance with achievement rates for 22/23 increasing from 50% to 72.2%. This is now higher than the current national benchmark by 20.8%

#### Performance of the Learning and Skills Service

12. There were 3663 adult learning enrolments and 66 apprenticeships during the 22/23 academic year.
13. The achievement rate for Adult Learning programmes is 90.7%, of which, the Adult Skills achievement rate is 87.6%. This is above the national benchmark by 1.4%.
14. The Service is also keen to recognise not only the tangible achievements of learners such as those achieving recognised qualifications, but also the ‘softer skills’ which learners develop to support them in their wider lives. The feedback table below demonstrates that the vast majority of learners were able to improve their skills, increase their confidence, and have a greater understanding of their own health and well-being which ultimately help them to achieve or move closer to their aspirations.

Statement	Positive Responses
I feel more confident in my own ability	97%
I am more open to new ideas and experiences	97%
My well-being has improved	95%
I am more aware of my own strengths and area for development	96%
I have clearer goals and ambitions for the future	92%
I feel more able to take part in my own community	92%
I feel more confident to access services on-line	81%

15. The impact of the Service is also demonstrated with the positive destinations attained by learners and apprentices following completion of their programmes. 78.1% of adult learners progress to either higher level learning or an employment outcome. 86% of apprentices also enter a positive destination, with 84% of those achieving an employment outcome demonstrating that the knowledge, skills and behaviours they have developed has facilitated their retention in the workplace.
16. The Service continues to strategically target its funding to support those in greatest need and help tackle inequalities in the borough. As a result, 46.8% of learners engage from a disadvantaged area and 14.8% of learners are identified as having no prior attainment / qualifications.
17. However, it became apparent in the wake of the cost of living crisis that those in need of support were not necessarily from what has traditionally been recognised as a disadvantaged area. The increased cost of living has broadened those previous boundaries with the Service witnessing increased demand from residents at risk of hardship and poor wellbeing.

#### Supporting the Cost of Living Response

18. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council coordinated a response which included the Learning and Skills Service to help address the arising cost of living crisis.
19. The Service has worked closely with internal and external partners across Stockton-on-Tees to deliver a series of responsive and flexible programmes, often in recognised 'Warm Spaces' by utilising its specialist Learning for Inclusion funding, ringfenced to local authority adult learning providers.
20. These short, sharp, tailored programmes have often been co-designed with partners following engagement with various community partnership forums and have focussed on those specific community needs. These partners have included the SBC Fairer Stockton-on Tees team, Family Hubs, schools, social prescribers and VCSE organisations.
21. Programmes which have been delivered include 'Skills to Pay the Bills', designed to support people in managing their budgets in the light of rising food and energy costs. A 'Cook The Costs' course was implemented as a collaborative council effort which utilised wider corporate funding to provide family hub users with energy saving one-pot cookers whilst the Service taught individuals how to use this equipment to prepare cheap yet nutritious meals to support families on limited budgets.
22. It is anticipated that this demand will continue and the Service remains strongly positioned to utilise its Learning for Inclusion funding to support our communities in line with the "Powering Our Future" programme where we will continue to put communities at the heart of everything we do and utilise partnerships to support a place-based approach.

**Name of Contact Officer:** Marc Cole  
**Post Title:** Interim Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth  
**Telephone No:** 01642 527029  
**Email Address:** marc.cole@stockton.gov.uk

## AGENDA ITEM

## REPORT TO CABINET

14<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## REPORT OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

### CABINET DECISION

#### Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Lisa Evans

#### LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS ON SCHOOL/ACADEMY GOVERNING BODIES

##### SUMMARY

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school/academy governors, approved as Minute CAB 27/13 of the Cabinet (13 June 2013), Cabinet is invited to consider the nominations to school/academy Governing Bodies listed in the **Appendix** to this report.

##### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the expiry of current Governors terms of office and a number of resignations, vacancies exist on the Governing Bodies detailed in the **Appendix** to this report. Under powers vested in them by paragraph 79 of the 1996 Education Act; Section 19 of the 2002 Education Act and Section 38 of the 2011 Education Act, the Local Authority has a duty to appoint representatives to serve as Governors on the Governing Bodies of all Schools maintained by them.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The appointments are made to the vacant Governorships in line with agreed procedures subject to a Personal Disclosure and DBS clearance.

##### DETAIL

1. In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school/academy governors, approved as Minute CAB27/13 of the Cabinet (13 June 2013), Cabinet is invited to consider the nominations to school/academy Governing Bodies listed in the **Appendix** to this report.

##### COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

2. None.

##### CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

3. None

##### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. None

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. None

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

6. This Local Authority Representative appointment process is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS**

7. All Schools and all political parties.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8. None.

**Name of Contact Officer: Vanessa Housley**  
**Post Title: Senior Advisor**  
**Telephone No. 01642 527656**  
**Email Address: [vanessa.housley@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.housley@stockton.gov.uk)**



**Vacancies for LA Governors on School Governing Bodies**  
**For Consideration at Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>VACANCY</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>NAME OF NOMINEE</b>
Fairfield Primary School	Maurice Perry – Resignation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good knowledge and understanding of the school</li> <li>• Professional expertise useful to the governing body</li> </ul>	Lucy Duncan (School Nomination) Previously a co-opted governor
Myton Park Primary School	Gillian Corr - Resignation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Links</li> </ul>	
Mandale Mill Primary School	Luke Frost – Removed for Non-attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Links</li> </ul>	
The Glebe Primary School	Councillor Tony Riordan – Re-appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to the Local Community</li> <li>• Good knowledge and understanding of the school</li> </ul>	Councillor Tony Riordan (School Nomination)

This page is intentionally left blank