

Date: Tuesday 9 January 2024 at 10.00 am

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

Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (Chair)
Cllr Ross Patterson (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Pauline Beall
Cllr Carol Clark
Cllr Lynn Hall
Cllr Sufi Mubeen
Cllr Marilyn Surtees

Cllr Marc Besford
Cllr Richard Eglington
Cllr Niall Innes
Cllr Tony Riordan
Cllr Laura Tunney

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Evacuation Procedure | (Pages 7 - 8) |
| 2 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest | |
| 4 | Minutes | |
| | To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 November 2023. | (Pages 9 - 12) |
| 5 | Winter Planning Update | (Pages 13 - 26) |
| 6 | Financial Update and Medium Term Financial Plan | (Pages 27 - 40) |
| 7 | Forward Plan of Key Decisions | (Pages 41 - 48) |
| 8 | Chairs' Updates | (Pages 49 - 60) |
| 9 | Chair's Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme | (Pages 61 - 62) |

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 Manager, Judy Trainer on email Judy.Trainer@stockton.gov.uk

KEY - Declarable interests are:-

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

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	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.
Contracts	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.
Land and property	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.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	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.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

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

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

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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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.

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Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday 7 November 2023.

Present: Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (Chair), Cllr Ross Patterson (Vice-Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Shakeel Hussain (sub for Cllr Laura Tunney), Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Marilyn Surtees

Officers: Clare Harper, Ian Coxon (FD&R), Jonathan Nertney, Judy Trainer, Gary Woods, Rebecca Saunders-Thompson (CS)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllrs Marc Besford, Richard Eglington and Laura Tunney

1 **Evacuation Procedure**

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3 **Minutes**

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 **Financial Update and Medium-Term Financial Plan (2023/24 Quarter 1)**

The Select Committee received an update on the Council's financial performance and position at the end of the first quarter of the 2023/24 financial year.

The first quarter showed a projected overall overspend of £3.7m. The biggest pressures related to the pay award and Children's Services. The position would continue to be closely monitored and managed throughout the remainder of the financial year, however, if the pressures occurred as expected, earmarked reserves would need to be utilised to avoid using general fund balances.

The report also highlighted the significant financial challenges presented by the current inflationary environment, the Council's commitment to commence a transformation programme and an update on the Capital Programme.

Key issues discussed was as follows:

- Members highlighted that due to the timing of the Committee, the report was out of date and asked for an update in relation to Quarter 2. Members were advised that the financial position at the end of second quarter was under review and a report would be submitted to Cabinet in December followed by consideration by Executive Scrutiny Committee in January. This further report would provide an update on the financial position including the impact of the pay settlement and an update the transformation programme. The

Chair of Executive Scrutiny Committee had asked that the scheduling of Executive Scrutiny Committee be reviewed for next year to ensure that there were no delays in receiving the MTFP updates due to the timing of Cabinet and Executive Scrutiny Committee

- Grant funding of £1,804.6k for Disabled Facilities for 2023/24 had been included in the programme
- The Capital Programme had been revised to reflect the match funding element for Yarm LUF (£1952k) which included additional funding of £323.6k from external contributions and Revenue Contribution to Capital Outturn
- The performance against the planned savings built into the budget in February 2023 had been factored into the projected outturn set out in the report
- Employee savings due to staff turnover were forecast to be £2.2m in total. This was £300,000 less than the budgeted estimate of £2.5m
- Interest accrued due to higher interest rates had been factored into projections
- DfE announced the Schools Capital Maintenance Funding allocation for 2023/24 and £1,162k had been added to the programme

Further information was requested in respect of:

- Current agency levels in children's services, including the length of employment and quality assurance arrangements
- Details of the changes in the funding allocation for Reshaping Town Centres
- The reason for the programme revision of £170,000 to the City Region Sustainable Transport line in the Capital Programme

AGREED

- (1) That the update to the Medium-Term Financial Plan and the current level of General Fund balances be noted.
- (2) That the revised capital programme be noted.
- (3) That responses to the queries set out above be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

5 Council Plan Update

The Committee considered a report on the priorities included in the Council Plan which set out progress on all areas of this year's priorities.

Key issues discussed were as follows:

Our People

- The appointment of a new Assistant Director post for children and care and care leavers as a result of the reorganisation of the Senior Leadership Team in Children's Services was noted. Concerns were expressed that Members were not being kept up to date with the changes in a timely way and that consideration needed to be given to how best to brief the wider membership

on changes that were being implemented as part of the Transformation Programme. The justification for using external consultants for this recruitment was also requested

Our Economy

- Details were requested on how the Council was planning to build on the success of the August summer jobs event

Our Places

- An update was requested on Thornaby Town deal including the progress of securing the Golden Eagle site
- Clarification of spending on road and pavement repairs in conjunction with the figures provided in the MTFP report

Our Council

- Members reported resident issues with the My Council system and asked for a report back on planned improvements to the service to improve customer experience

The Committee referred to the comprehensive performance management information that had previously been submitted to Members and Executive Scrutiny Committee and discussed how this should in future be presented for Member scrutiny.

AGREED that the report be noted and responses to the queries set out above be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

6 Forward Plan of Key Decisions

AGREED that the Forward Plan be noted.

7 Select Committee Chairs' Updates

Members were provided with updates from the Chairs of each Select Committee. Updates and discussion included:

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee -

Members reiterated concerns around the clarity of bus stop location in Stockton High Street.

With regard to the previous review of Day Opportunities for Adults, Members expressed their disappointment that training for bus drivers had still not been provided.

Children and Young People Select Committee -

It was confirmed that the scrutiny of educational attainment would examine attendance issues.

Crime and Disorder Select Committee –

As part of the Committee’s current review of Outdoor Play Provision, it was highlighted that where residents paid a management fee towards the maintenance of children’s play areas, some were objecting to other children using the play areas. The Chair confirmed that she had asked for a mapping exercise to be carried out of all children’s play areas including maintenance arrangements.

People Select Committee -

Members noted the update from the People Select Committee Chair.

Place Select Committee -

Members referred to the flooding problems exacerbated by autumn leaves. Although this was not due to be dealt with in the progress update on Highways Asset Management, concerns would be fed back to officers.

AGREED that the Chairs’ updates be noted.

8 Chair's Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

The Chair advised the Committee that the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) had recently published a copy of the Council’s Scrutiny End of Term Report as an example of good practice. Their article highlighted how Stockton-on-Tees had reflected the four principles of effective scrutiny in the work conducted, provided an insight into a wide array of community issues and established clear links between what the committees considered and the impact of their work.

The Chair also asked that the CfGS publication on Appreciative Inquiry Scrutiny be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

AGREED that the work programme be noted.

Chair.....

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 JANUARY 2024

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

WINTER PLANNING UPDATE

Summary

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

Recommended that the report be noted.

Detail

Winter Planning

1. Winter 2022/3 presented significant challenges to communities and the health and wellbeing system with cost-of-living pressures, ongoing COVID-19 circulation, flu and other respiratory infections.
2. The exact picture for the remainder of this Winter is not yet known but work continues, to monitor and mitigate the impacts as well as prevent escalation where possible. The Tees Valley Local A&E Delivery Board (LAEDB) has oversight of NHS planning and coordination with partners, feeding into regional (Northeast and North Cumbria) arrangements and has Local Authority representation. A winter planning event took place on 12th October 2023 across the ICB NENC footprint, to consider pressures from last Winter and collectively plan for this Winter based on the learning. Ongoing risk of respiratory infections including emerging variants, vaccination and impact of strikes were key considerations. Infection prevention and control continues to be crucial in preventing and mitigating communicable disease.
3. Adult Social Care Winter planning took place in April/May 2023 utilising key learning from previous years. High impact schemes agreed and implemented include: increased social care workforce; increased capacity for community equipment delivery; same day care provision for hospital discharge and community settings; and a clear network of escalation and communication across multiple organisations.

4. Cleveland Local Resilience Forum (LRF) also held a Winter planning meeting on 18th October 2023 to consider how the LRF supports wider system resilience. The LRF is instigating Project Viper – a system for identifying and ensuring better access to information about those at risk, who will need immediate assistance in the event of a major incident (including adverse weather events) e.g. those on oxygen at home, those with significant mobility needs. Stockton-on-Tees will be participating in this initiative.
5. The borough's Major Incident Plan was updated ahead of the Winter period to ensure that an appropriate response can be put in place in the event of a major incident due to adverse weather. This has also allowed for the introduction of a new notification and communications program known as RAYVN, which will allow better shared awareness amongst Council Officers and Members in the event of an incident within their wards.
6. In order to keep the borough moving throughout the Winter period, our comprehensive Winter maintenance plan is in place. This includes the response to cold weather and the deployment of gritters to ensure our priority highways are kept accessible and as safe as possible. Alongside this we have dedicated resource available at all hours as part of our snow and flood planning with specialised equipment which can be deployed when required.
7. Through our links to the national weather warning systems and communications resources through the Department of Health and Social Care, our usual arrangements are in place to communicate key messages to our communities when we are warned of adverse weather events. For example, advice on keeping warm and checking on vulnerable neighbours in the event of sudden cold snaps.
8. In addition to the LRF and local NHS-lead Winter planning infrastructure, there is a local multi-agency Health Protection Collaborative which reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Collaborative maintains oversight of key health protection issues on behalf of the Board, facilitates joint working and brings updates to the Board for assurance. The Collaborative is chaired by the Director of Public Health and covers key issues such as infectious disease control, screening and immunisations and public health key messaging on protecting the local population's health and wellbeing in adverse weather events. It also provides local public health support and advice into the major incident planning process.

Infectious Disease Surveillance

9. The main national monitoring system for COVID-19 population prevalence through the ONS was stopped earlier this year. Recognising the ongoing need of broader surveillance than hospital data, a smaller version of the survey has been reinstated from October 2023 to ensure ongoing population surveillance.
10. According to the latest England data for COVID-19 infections, the percentage of people with COVID-19 is low with a 7 day PCR positivity of 7.5% up to the 27/11/2023, although it is important to note that testing rates are low. Hospital admissions increased by 10% (for week ending 1st December 2023) compared to the previous week and were highest in the 85yrs+ age group. However, they remained significantly below those seen in Spring 2023 and December 2022. Admissions for week ending 01/12/2023 were 2,064 compared to 3,936 in the same week in 2022. COVID-19 ICU admissions and deaths are also increasing but remain significantly lower than the same week last year. Trends in Stockton-

on-Tees are similar to national trends, however COVID-19 cases have started to increase from the start of December (see **APPENDIX 1**).

11. A new COVID-19 strain (BA2.86) was detected mid-August. It has been identified in several countries within a short time, suggesting rapid transmission. It has been classified as a variant of concern (VOC) due to its large number of mutations, with consequent potential to escape existing immunity.
12. UKHSA confirmed that BA.2.86 is causing an early increase of cases, hospital admissions and deaths across England. Data is still evolving but there is no evidence to suggest that BA.2.86 is more likely to make people seriously ill than other circulating variants, while vaccination is likely to provide continued protection – hence the national booster vaccination programme was brought forward this September.
13. As expected for Autumn, Influenza infections remain low overall, but have risen in recent weeks. Higher influenza rates are most common between December and February. There has been a higher rate of Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) affecting mostly under 5s and norovirus affecting mostly over 65s in recent weeks.

COVID-19 / flu and vaccinations

14. The Tees Valley Vaccination Board continues to have oversight of the flu and COVID-19 vaccination programmes and reports into the regional ICB (Integrated Care Board) immunisation board. Locally, public health continues to monitor population vaccination coverage and works with the ICB to identify and plan targeted vaccination clinics for areas with lower vaccination coverage and higher risk groups.
15. To protect vulnerable groups at greater risk, the national decision was taken to start vaccination for flu and COVID-19 on 11th September 2023, starting with care homes and over 75 year olds. **APPENDIX 2** sets out eligible groups. In Stockton-on-Tees, 71% of those aged 65 and over have been vaccinated against COVID-19, compared with 68% in England. In Stockton-on-Tees, vaccination coverage within care home residents is 77.8% for COVID-19 and 76.5% for flu (up to 19/11/23). Vaccines are being evolved constantly in response to these viruses.
16. From 18th September 2023, the NHS started to invite people for their COVID-19 vaccination in priority order of risk and those eligible will be able to book an appointment through the National Booking Service website or by calling 119. The borough is well covered for COVID-19 vaccinations across the Primary Care Networks (PCNs – groups of GP practices) and the local GP Federation (Hartlepool and Stockton Health).
17. Community pharmacies also offer flu and COVID-19 vaccinations to those who are eligible. Flu vaccinations can also be purchased from community pharmacies by population groups who are not eligible for a free flu jab through the NHS. COVID-19 vaccinations are not available for purchase. (Please find a list of community pharmacies who have signed up to offer COVID-19 and Flu vaccines in **APPENDIX 3**). COVID-19 and flu vaccinations can be administered together, where this is available.
18. Roll-out of the COVID-19 booster has happened at pace; by 8th October 2023, 14,600 out of 85,000 eligible residents had had a COVID-19 booster. This increased to 37,216 by 26th November 2023 (45.9% of eligible residents) with substantial variation across the borough. As in previous COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, uptake is lowest in the most deprived areas with some having less than half the uptake (e.g. 27.4% uptake in Newtown

compared to 63.1% in Billingham West). Public health is working with the Tees Valley vaccination leads and GP Federation colleagues to deliver some bespoke clinics in areas of lowest uptake. Three (out of four) bespoke clinics have been delivered so far and have been successful in promoting vaccination in hard to reach groups including those with pre-existing health conditions, and those experiencing homelessness.

19. **APPENDIX 4** sets 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. As of 12th November 2023, 34.6% of 2 year olds and 34.2% of 3 year olds received their flu vaccination. Average uptake of flu vaccine across the borough for all eligible individuals is 45.1% up to 26th November 2023.
20. National communications messaging to promote flu and COVID-19 vaccinations has been disseminated widely, supported by local joint working between SBC and the NHS. SBC is also supporting messaging on COVID-19 and flu vaccines through our community wellbeing champions network. Funding has also been provided by the ICB to support addressing vaccine inequalities and local insights work has been commissioned to look at this.
21. Occupational health flu and COVID-19 vaccination programmes have started in NHS trusts and primary care. Free flu vaccinations for SBC employees are again provided this year by the Council's Occupational Health team with the aim to vaccinate 800 staff starting in October 2023. To reflect the changes in eligibility in the national flu programme, all SBC staff are eligible, but vaccination of frontline health and social care workers are prioritised. As of 12th November 2023, 28.9% of health and social care workers had received a flu vaccination and 25.8% of frontline health and social care workers had received a COVID-19 booster vaccination.

Health Protection work with key settings

22. People most at risk in Winter and more vulnerable from cold weather include:
 - people aged 65 and older
 - babies and children under the age of 5
 - people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
 - people who have a long-term health condition
 - people with a disability
 - pregnant women
 - people who have a mental health condition
23. Work is continuing with the care sector through provider forums and monthly newsletters, as established in the height of the pandemic. This provides the opportunity to disseminate key messages and resources, 'temperature check' with providers on impact of Winter illness and provide support as required.
24. The Social Care Protection Group continues to oversee key updates and resources for the coming Winter months, including public health key messages on infectious illnesses, the COVID-19 / flu vaccination programmes, and the increased risks to health for older populations from cold weather plus interventions to mitigate these risks. Any urgent updates are also shared e.g. regarding the immunisation programmes. There are also plans to work further with care home managers on perceptions and uptake of key

vaccinations among staff and residents including flu, COVID-19 and pneumococcal infections.

Local health protection response

25. There is no indication of a shift in national policy in managing COVID-19. Therefore, general health protection principles and measures will apply into the Autumn and Winter. Should there be a new variant that warrants considering a step-up of response, SBC public health would liaise closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) on this and any further action needed. In the meantime, we continue to monitor the position, liaise with UKHSA and offer support and advice particularly to our care sector as required.
26. Dissemination of consistent and clear messages on keeping well in Winter remains important and includes:
 - Good hand and respiratory hygiene
 - Avoid passing on infections – Stay at home if you are unwell
 - Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations – Get vaccinated
 - Keeping warm and getting help with heating
 - Getting advice if unwell (pharmacy, 111, GP)
 - Looking out for others

Adult social care support

27. Adult Social Care (ASC) service activity is processed through the First Contact team, sitting alongside the integrated single point of access (iSPA) team and wider community health teams, following a recent move to Billingham Health Centre. They provide a community hub of surveillance, decision making and coordination across care and health activity.
28. Regular meetings within ASC operational teams, brokerage and senior management are in place to identify and mitigate any areas of growing pressure within services. The frequency of this surveillance is adapted to reflect pressures within the system.
29. Business Unit Plans and Business Continuity Plan are in place across all of ASC to ensure continued service delivery throughout any increased activity / demand and adverse weather conditions. Operational teams have robust triage and review processes in place to ensure any persons in crisis are easily visible and get the services they require. Risk management policies are also in place and implemented for any referrals that cannot be allocated to a worker due to capacity.
30. Registered care homes and care at home providers continue to attend the care provider forums for key messages and support throughout the year. Resource was provided to the care market via the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund to support workforce retention across the care sector.
31. ASC in partnership with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust have implemented new pathways to provide additional capacity for key priorities for Winter planning as outlined by North East North Cumbria Urgent and Emergency Care Board, including falls, reducing ambulance handovers and community services response into homes before ambulance arrival.

32. Virtual Frailty Wards (Hospital at Home) are live in Stockton-on-Tees. The current system has been in development over the last year and has capacity to support more people in their own home, negating the need to be taken to hospital, when safe.
33. A range of day opportunities are available to support service users and their families with 215 clients being supported as at 11th December 2023. The majority of these are for individuals with learning disabilities, with support also being provided for people with physical / personal care support needs, memory and cognition needs and mental health needs. Support is also available for people needing help with access and mobility, social support and isolation and sensory needs. Services remain available over the Christmas period in response to the wishes of the clients.

Supporting our communities

34. SBC public health arranged a Winter health conference on 19th September at the Employment and Training Hub, aiming to empower the VCSE sector and community groups with information, networks and resources to support the community this Winter. The event provided a platform for sharing information, experiences, good practice and building relationships, with presentations from a wide range of speakers with over 50 attendees from a wide range of communities and organisations.
35. As Members will be aware, in addition to the activities detailed above the Council (working with its partners across the VCSE sector) has a range of ongoing activities which will support the borough's residents, specifically those who are experiencing hardship due to the current cost of living challenge. These include:

Information and advice delivered through a range of initiatives including:

- A cost of Living Booklet ('Here to Help') which provides an extensive range of information on both Council and partner services
(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/3738/Cost-of-Living-Support/pdf/Cost_of_Living_booklet_2023-24_final_accessible.pdf?m=638327918630970000)
- A central 'Here to Help' one-stop shop of information on the Council's website
- Regular features in Stockton News promoting cost of living support services (see **APPENDIX 5**)
- A Winter Welling Being support leaflet:



hlc2159_Winter
Wellbeing final access

The above leaflet is support by a bespoke [webpage](#), both have been developed to support our residents through Winter

- 'Here to Help drop-in' events (commenced Sept. 2023 and will run through to March 2024, see **APPENDIX 6**). The Here to Help events are being undertaken across the

7 Community Partnership areas, bringing together internal and external colleagues to support our residents on a range of issues.

A recent event was covered by BBC Tees (can be heard at 2:17 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0gb6cf8>).

Some of the events which have taken place to date include:

- Egglecliffe Community Centre, Durham Lane, Egglecliffe, TS16 0EH - Friday 15 September 2023
- ARC - Stockton Arts Centre, Dovecot Street, Stockton, TS18 1LL - Tuesday 10 October 2023
- Norton Methodist Church, Norton Road, Norton, TS20 2QQ - Sunday 19 November 2023 12pm to 2pm
- Victoria Park Community Hall, Peel Street, Thornaby, TS17 6HL - Tuesday 5 December 2023 - 10am to 1pm

Three further events are planned across the borough - the next one is at Billingham Library, Kingsway, Billingham, TS23 2LN on Monday 15 January 2024 at 11am to 2pm. Further details can be found [here](#).

Food support:

- The Introduction of 'The Bread and Butter Thing' - 5 mobile food hubs across the borough, each providing affordable food for people on low incomes, while also reducing waste and providing support to our communities. Three hubs are currently in operation, with the remainder to be opened late 2023 / early 2024.

<https://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/how-armys-worth-volunteers-supporting-28238870>

- The Food Power Network also continues to be in place, providing a coordination function for the efforts around food provision and food poverty through a post in Catalyst, working closely with SBC and wider partners.



Stockton.pdf

Community Spaces (previously known as Warm Spaces)

- A network of more than 60 Warm Spaces venues was established in October 2022 with outreach support from key organisations and activities to combat social isolation and positively impact outcomes for individuals and families. A number of these venues remained over the Summer and continue to operate.
- An [interactive directory and map](#) of venues across the borough is on the Council's website.
- The ongoing development phase of [Community Spaces - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#) is aiming to deliver a year-round offer as venues are more than warm spaces (venues which provide communities with wider support, whilst also addressing social isolation). Further funds (£60k) have also been secured from Public Health to continue to support these organisations become sustainable in the long-term.

- The Warm Homes Healthy People programme in Stockton funded through public health offers support with boiler repairs, emergency heating, energy saving as well as debt and benefits advice. <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/Warm-Homes-Healthy-People>

Consultation and Engagement

36. In addition to the work set out above, the work to address inequality in vaccine uptake is done through working with our community wellbeing champions; behavioural insights work is being carried out working with our young people, their families / carers and professionals who work with them e.g. schools. The report also outlines our ongoing work with the VCSE and partners on staying safe and well in Winter and accessing cost of living support.

Next Steps

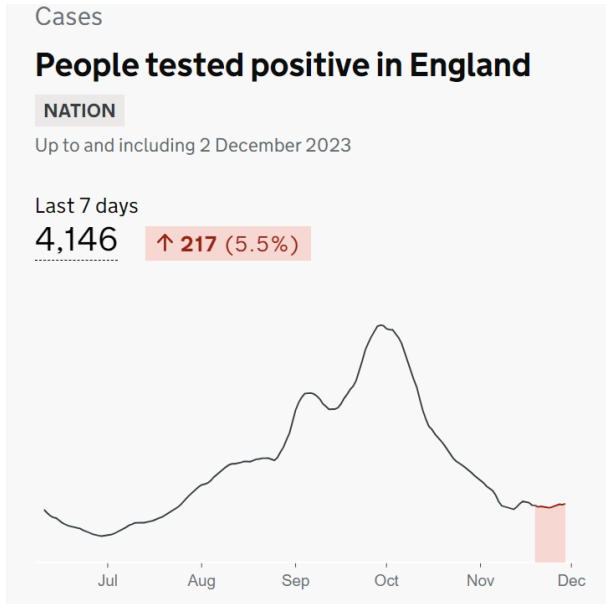
37. Beyond continuing the work described in this briefing, key updates or proposed changes in approach (e.g. in response to a new threat to population health) will be brought to the Corporate Management Team and on through to key Committees / Cabinet as needed.

Name of Contact Officer: Carolyn Nice
Post Title: Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Telephone No. 01642 527054
Email Address: carolyn.nice@stockton.gov.uk

APPENDICES

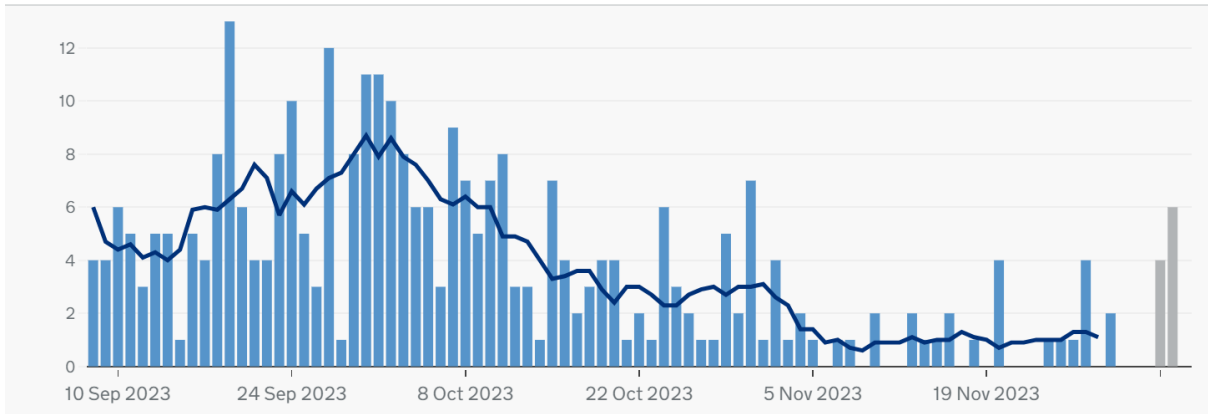
APPENDIX 1

COVID-19 update (8 December 2023)



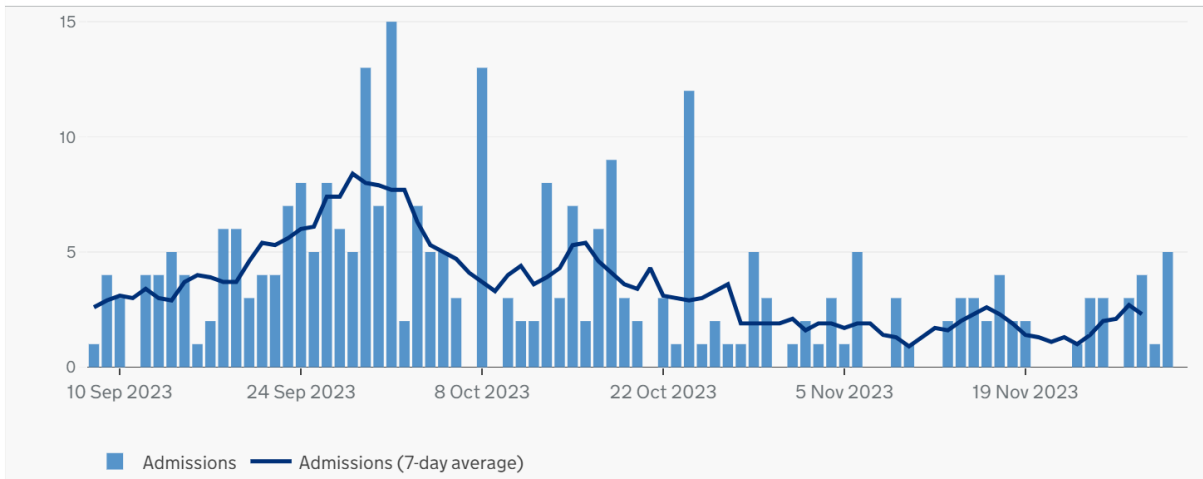
Cases of COVID-19, Stockton-on-Tees

Cases in Stockton-on-Tees



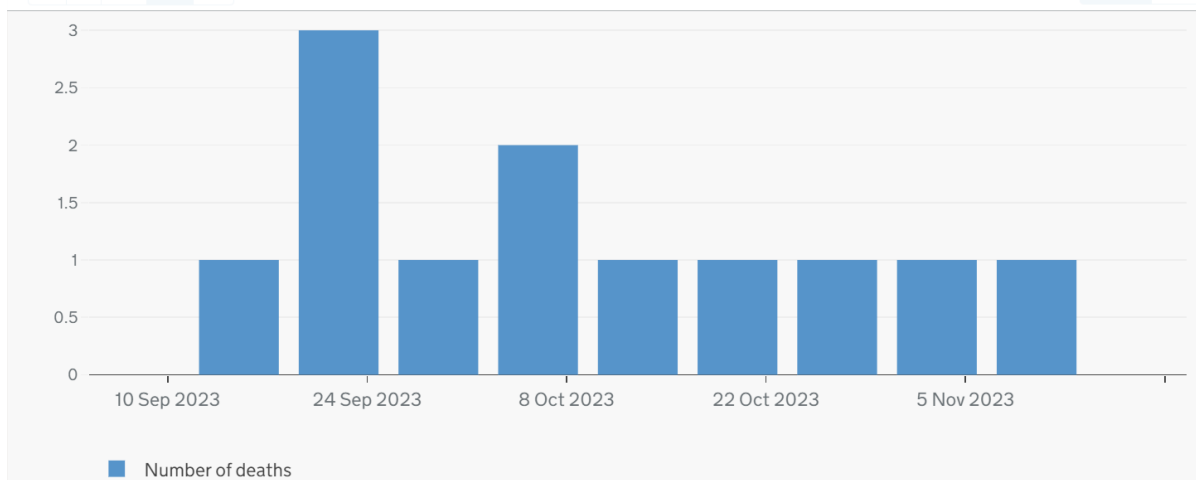
Hospitalisations with COVID-19, Stockton-on-Tees

Healthcare in North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust



Deaths with COVID-19 on death certificate, Stockton-on-Tees

Deaths in Stockton-on-Tees



APPENDIX 2

COVID-19 vaccination eligible groups

- Residents in a care home for older adults
- All adults aged 65 years and over
- Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group
- Frontline health and social care workers
- Persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression
- Persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers and staff working in care homes for older adults

APPENDIX 3

Community pharmacies offering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations

Ward	Participating Pharmacy
Billingham	The Pharmacy, Abbey Health Centre Harry Hill, Kenilworth Road
Yarm	Cohens Chemist Whitworth Chemist
Ingleby Barwick	Coulby Newham Pharmacy at Ingleby Barwick Community Hall
Eaglescliffe	Eaglescliffe Pharmacy Pharmacy Express
Mandale and Victoria	Pharmacy Express
Roseworth, Hardwick and Salters Lane	Pharmacy World
Stockton Town Centre, Newtown, Grangefield	Knights Pharmacy 365 Well Pharmacy Synergise Pharmacy
Fairfield, Hartburn, Bishopsgarth and Elm Tree	Fairfield Pharmacy

APPENDIX 4

Flu vaccination eligible groups

- those aged 65 years and over
- those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023
- primary school aged children (from Reception to Year 6)
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals

- frontline workers in a social care setting without an employer-led occupational health scheme

All frontline health care workers, including both clinical and non-clinical staff who have contact with patients, should be offered a flu vaccine as part of the organisations' policy for the prevention of the transmission of flu to help protect both staff and those that they care for.

APPENDIX 5: Stockton News (example of a recent article)

Cost of Living Support

With the price of energy, food and other bills rising, many people are finding it hard to keep up with the cost of living.

Here we've listed just some of the support available for you to help with your household finances. For more information about support and advice available, visit www.stockton.gov.uk/cost-of-living-hub

Check your benefit entitlement

The government's Help for Households website gives information on a range of financial support, from Universal Credit to Carer's Allowance. Its online calculator gives you a breakdown of benefits you are entitled to based on your personal circumstances, like tax support, and information on how to apply. Benefits advice is also available from the Council and Stockton and District Advice and Information Service (SDAIS).

To check your entitlement, visit helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/income-support

Energy efficiency schemes

There are schemes available for eligible residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes which may also help to reduce energy bills.

The government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) is providing households with up to £6,000 towards the cost and installation of a low carbon heating system such as heat pumps.

To find out if you are eligible and to find an authorised BUS installer visit the gov.uk website, email BUS.enquiry@ofgem.gov.uk or call 0330 053 2006.

The Home Upgrade Grant provides eligible households with fully funded energy saving measures such as double glazing, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, draft proofing and low carbon heat systems.

To register your interest for this scheme visit www.teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/net-zero/home-upgrade-grant-hug

Tees Credit Union

Tees Credit Union is a community-based financial co-operative. It provides convenient and easy access to basic financial services such as loans, savings accounts, debt solutions and much more.

As bills get higher, the Tees Credit Union is here to help you to make the most out of your finances. The best way to find out how they can help is to call in to their shop on Stockton high street or visit their website at www.teescreditunion.co.uk



Warm Spaces

Warm Spaces are free, non-judgemental public places where people can go to get warm, save money on their heating costs, avoid social isolation, and receive vital support and advice while staying as well as possible.

The Council's A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees team is working with partner organisations to build a directory of Warm Spaces. Over 40 places have already signed up to welcome people into a warm space.

Visit www.stockton.gov.uk/warm-spaces where you can find a list of all the venues, the opening times and what facilities are on offer.

Warm Homes Healthy People

Warm Homes Healthy People offers emergency heating, boiler services, debt advice and energy efficiency measures. You may be eligible if you are:

- Over 65
- In receipt of disability benefits
- Have a long-term illness made worse by the cold
- Living with a child under 5 who has a long-term illness made worse by the cold
- Living with dementia

To qualify for free boiler servicing or repair you must be the homeowner and be claiming a qualifying benefit as well as one of the other categories above.

For further information please call the Warm Homes Healthy People team on 01642 528215 or visit www.stockton.gov.uk/warm-homes-healthy-people to apply online.



Our People


APPENDIX 6: Here to Help events

- Are being held across the 7 Community Partnership areas between Sept. 23 – March 24, bringing together internal/external colleagues to support our residents on a range of issues.
- A recent event was covered by BBC Tees (can be heard at 2:17 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0gb6cf8>)

Got a lot on your mind? We're here to help – drop in with any of life's worries for advice and support tailored to you.




Here to Help drop-in

Coming together to create A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees for all



The Cost of Living
Mental Health
New Job
Money
Universal Credit
Caring duties
Health
Self-care
Loneliness

Tuesday 10 October, 12pm to 3pm
ARC - Stockton Arts Centre
Dovecot Street, Stockton, TS18 1LL
Join us on World Mental Health Day for support and free wellbeing activities.



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Agenda Item 6

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY

9 JANUARY 2024

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

FINANCIAL UPDATE & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

SUMMARY

The report provides an update on the on the financial position as at 30th 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 18th 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
Total	222,768	228,204	2,200	5,436	3,236
Pay Offer Pressure		1,500	1,500	1,500	0
Revised Total	222,768	229,704	3,700	6,936	3,236

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.
- 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 1st 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:

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
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 22nd 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 18th 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
Pressures identified			
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
Pressures	13,319	14,045	16,607

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 1st 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.

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:

CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2026	Current Approved Programme £'000	Programme Revisions £'000	Revised Programme £'000
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
Total Approved Capital MTFP	268,970	2,325	271,295

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

Capital Programme September 2023 – Appendix A

CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2026	Current Approved Programme	Programme Revisions	Revised Programme	Expenditure Apr 2017 - September 2023
SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME & CHILDRENS SERVICES				
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
SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME & CHILDRENS SERVICES	47,846,769	(20,378)	47,826,391	21,232,357
REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH				
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
REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH	14,067,363	4,169,790	18,237,153	1,860,410
TOWN CENTRES				
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
TOWN CENTRES	139,525,530	(1,862,032)	137,663,498	22,510,293
TRANSPORTATION				
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
TRANSPORTATION	43,900,700	(189,171)	43,711,529	20,678,600
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE & LEISURE				
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
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE & LEISURE	19,508,009	213,788	19,721,797	6,062,115
ADULTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING				
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
ADULTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING	4,122,113	13,078	4,135,191	1,437,037
Total Approved Capital MTFP	268,970,484	2,325,075	271,295,559	73,780,811

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Statutory Forward Plan

Key Decisions

1 December 2023 - 29 March 2024

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
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Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
<p>0 to 19 Childrens Public Health Programme: Partnership with Harrogate & District Foundation Trust</p> <p>This report sets out the intention for the future commissioning of the 0-19 Public Health programme for children, young people, and their families. It is recommended that this is achieved through the development of a partnership model which delegates 'prescribed health functions' to Harrogate District Trust under a section 75 agreement. As a consequence of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council became statutorily responsible in 2013 for the public health services provided by the school nursing service,</p>	<p>Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Health Leisure and Culture</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health Leisure and Culture</p>	<p>Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Cabinet</p>	<p>16 Nov 2023</p> <p>14 Dec 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>Meetings and emails</p>	<p>carolyn.nice@stokton.gov.uk</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>0 to 19 Childrens Public Health Programme: Partnership with Harrogate & District Foundation Trust</p>	<p>Key Decision</p> <p>A CIA is not required</p>

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
<p>and in 2015 for the health visiting service. In line with these statutory responsibilities, the current contract commissioned by Public Health is delivered by Harrogate District Foundation Trust (HDFT) and will end March 2024. Following an extensive internal process to determine the best commissioning option the report sets out the intentions for the a partnership arrangement with HDFT from April 2024 to continue to deliver the 0 to 19 Children's Programme for families within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.</p> <p>Key</p>									

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy The report to Council to set the Council's budget and Council tax for 2024/25 and approve the Medium Term Financial Plan. Key	Director of Finance, Development & Regeneration and Deputy Chief Executive Director of Finance, Development & Regeneration and Deputy Chief Executive	Leader of the Council Leader of the Council	Cabinet Director of Finance, Development & Regeneration and Deputy Chief Executive	15 Feb 2024 15 Feb 2024	Cabinet and Council	Members briefings and meetings will be held with Councillors	clare.harper@stockton.gov.uk, Sarah.Whaley@stockton.gov.uk N/A	Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy	Key Decision A CIA is not required.
Scrutiny Review of Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste To receive the final report of the Place Select Committee Key	Director of Corporate Services Director of Corporate Services	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport	Cabinet Director of Corporate Services	15 Feb 2024 15 Feb 2024	Cabinet	Cabinet report	Rebecca.Saunders-Thompson@stockton.gov.uk, Sarah.Whaley@stockton.gov.uk N/A	Scrutiny Review of Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste	Key Decision CIA is not required.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
<p>Annual Procurement Plan/ Higher Value Contracts and Social Value Update Report The report seeks approval from Cabinet for the procurement of higher value contracts. The report includes all known contract awards scheduled for 2024/25. The report also includes a Social Value update.</p> <p>Key</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>14 Mar 2024</p>		<p>The report seeks approval from Cabinet for the procurement of higher value contracts. The report includes all known contract awards scheduled for 2024/25. The report also includes a Social Value update.</p>	<p>martin.skipsey@st ockton.gov.uk Martin.skipsey@st ockton.gov.uk</p>	<p>Annual Procurement Plan/ Higher Value Contracts and Social Value Update Report</p>	<p>A CIA is not required</p>

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for representations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consideration	Notes / Comments
<p>Local Plan Five-Year Review Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require a review of local plans at least once every 5 years from their adoption.</p> <p>The Current Stockton on Tees Local Plan was adopted on the 30 January 2019 and thus a review needs to be complete by 31 January 2024.</p> <p>Key</p>					Cabinet and Council	Meetings	simon.grundy@stockton.gov.uk	Local Plan Five-Year Review	A CIA is not required

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Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

Scrutiny Review – Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>The second evidence-gathering session took place in November 2023 which focused on a submission from the Cleveland Local Medical Committee (LMC).</p> <p>The third evidence session was held in December 2023 involving a contribution from Hartlepool & Stockton Health (GP Federation).</p>
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	The Committee will be looking to involve Primary Care Network (PCN) Clinical Directors as part of the next evidence-gathering which will look to seek the views of the Borough's practices around the issue of access.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT): The NTHFT Chief Nurse addressed the Committee in November 2023 to update Members on the Trust's maternity services. Progress on the actions which emerged following concerns raised during the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection in 2022 was relayed, as were developments in relation to the review of community midwifery services which was triggered, to a large degree, by Committee concerns around inconsistencies with home-visit provision.</p> <p>CQC / PAMMS Report Updates: The Committee considered the latest CQC quarterly report (Q2 2023-2024), including PAMMS assessment feedback published during this period, at its meeting in November 2023. The close monitoring of Willow View Care Home was noted by the SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing following concerns raised by the CQC.</p> <p>Public Health: The SBC Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022 was due to be considered by the Committee in December 2023 but was deferred to the January 2024 meeting as a result of officer unavailability.</p> <p>Winter Planning: Following recent consideration by Cabinet in November 2023, an updated report detailing winter planning across the Council, working with partners, was due to be provided to the Committee in December 2023. However, due to staff sickness / unavailability, and because the contents of the report reflected work taking place (and impacting) across the whole Council, the Committee referred this to the Executive Scrutiny Committee for consideration at its next meeting in January 2024.</p>
Requests for more information	None

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

NHS Updates / Consultations	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>New Health Scrutiny Arrangements: The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has recently confirmed that the anticipated new health scrutiny arrangements will come into force in January 2024 – this involves the introduction of the Secretary of State's powers to intervene on NHS reconfigurations, including the abolition of the existing scrutiny 'referral' power. Further details can be found at https://www.cfqs.org.uk/blog-dhsc-confirms-new-health-scrutiny-arrangements-to-start-in-january/.</p> <p>North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT): NTHFT is leading a regional campaign to promote careers in health and social care and will be profiling various little-known-about roles over the coming weeks. Further details can be found at https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/the-healthcare-roles-you-may-not-have-known-about-regional-nhs-campaign-launches/.</p>
Requests for more information	None

Regional Health Committees	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: As part of the agreed rotational arrangements, the chair and support function for the Committee is being undertaken by SBC during 2023-2024.</p> <p>The last meeting took place on 15 December 2023 – items included a winter plan update, future plans for non-surgical oncology, an update on the state of dentistry, and community water fluoridation proposals. The next meeting is scheduled for 15 March 2024, with anticipated items to include both the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) and North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) Quality Accounts, and an update on developments around palliative and end-of-life care.</p> <p>In addition, the Committee has requested an informal briefing on TEWVs use of restraint, a source of previous Member concern – this is likely to be arranged for late-February / early-March 2024.</p> <p>In other matters of interest, the emergence of details of a proposed 'Partnership Agreement' as part of the ongoing development of the 'Group' model between NTHFT and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) led to an informal TVJHSC (remote) meeting being hastily arranged. This took place on 2 November 2023 to allow Members to consider and comment on these developments / proposals – a statement on behalf of the Committee was then submitted back to the 'Group' for consideration by the Joint Partnership Board as part of its final ratification of the 'Partnership Agreement' (which was due to be agreed on 15 November 2023).</p>

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

	<p>Southern Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: No meetings are currently scheduled.</p> <p>North East Regional Health Committee: No meetings are currently scheduled.</p>
Requests for more information	None

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>No updates have been received by the Committee since the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting.</p> <p>Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Opportunities for Adults (TBC) • Care at Home (TBC – early-2024)
Requests for more information	None

Remaining 2023-2024 Scrutiny Reviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Safeguarding

Remaining 2023-2024 Meetings (all 4.00pm unless stated)
<p>Tuesday 23 January 2024</p> <p>Tuesday 20 February 2024</p> <p>Tuesday 19 March 2024</p>

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Children and Young People Select Committee Chair’s Update January 2024

Scrutiny Review – Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>Following tri partite discussions and an informal meeting of the Select Committee on 11 October, work has commenced to conduct this review using an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) model.</p> <p>An AI model is a collaborative process that involves all stakeholders, from top management to frontline employees and, in the case of this review, much stronger involvement with the education sector to create a shared vision and find solutions in a creative and innovative way.</p> <p>An informal meeting of the Committee was held on 11 October where Members were joined (remotely) by Sir Anthony Douglas CBE. Anthony is an experienced and much respected professional in children’s services. He works with organisations internationally about the service developments needed for children with special needs of all types, with a view to improving those services.</p> <p>The November meeting considered a scope and key questions the work which will focus on two key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance - Community Support <p>The December meeting discussed engagement and the Select Committee will also receive a presentation on the new team around the school partnership offer which links with the Committee’s work.</p>
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	The January meeting will consider the engagement plan for this piece of work.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	No reports since last update.
Problems or concerns	None
Requests for more information	None

Children and Young People Select Committee Chair's Update January 2024

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	<p>The Select Committee received progress updates in relation to agreed actions from previously completed reviews of Care Leavers EET and signed off all actions in relation to the review of Child Poverty.</p> <p>Further progress updates are scheduled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care Leavers EET – July 2024• Contextual Safeguarding – July 2024

Remaining 2023-2024 Scrutiny Reviews
Holidays are Fun (HAF) Programme

Remaining 2023-2024 Meetings (all 5.00pm unless stated)
17 January 2024 14 February 2024 13 March 2024

Crime and Disorder Select Committee Chair’s Update – January 2024

Scrutiny Review – Outdoor Play Provision: Quality and Distribution, Maintenance, and Physical Accessibility	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>Following agreement of the scope and plan for this review in October 2023, the first evidence-gathering session took place in November 2023, with Local Authority officers from the Community Services, Environment and Culture directorate providing information on ‘outdoor play’ definitions / terminology, existing provision across the Borough, identified inequalities in geographical spread, maintenance and inspection policies, and the financial pressures associated with the upkeep of these sites.</p> <p>Site visits were undertaken in December 2023 where Members had the opportunity to visit several play areas – this involved ‘destination’, ‘neighbourhood’ and ‘doorstep’ provision, and enabled accompanying officers to highlight various issues and challenges associated with the current offer at these locations.</p> <p>The second evidence-gathering session was held in December 2023 and focused on a contribution from the SBC Inclusive Growth and Development department (Planning / Place Development). Information presented and discussed included local plan policies and how this influences new play / informal sport facility development, the rationale behind developers building new rather than improving existing assets, and how S.106 works and the requirements around this for play provision to new developments.</p>
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	The next evidence session is scheduled for the January 2024 meeting and will involve a contribution from the SBC Town Centres Development service.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>The following updates have been received by the Committee since the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting:</p> <p><u>Bonfires on Public Land</u></p> <p>The third update on progress of outstanding actions in relation to recommendations from the Committee’s previously completed review of Bonfires on Public Land was considered in December 2023. Only one recommendation (<i>to further deter the construction and lighting of unauthorised bonfires, SBC identifies any alternative sites within the Borough where official bonfires may be able to be facilitated in the future</i>) was yet to be signed-off as complete, and the Committee was informed that no alternative sites were obvious, but that the Council would continue to</p>

Crime and Disorder Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

	<p>consider future options. Achievements in relation to the recent bonfire season were also relayed, culminating in reductions in the occurrence of deliberate primary fires and no reported incidents of violence towards staff on bonfire night. Members subsequently agreed that the Action Plan approved by the Committee following the original review could now be signed-off as complete (no further updates required).</p> <p>Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Asset Management (TBC – early-2024) • Fly-Grazed Horses (TBC)
Requests for more information	None

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance

Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	<p>Work Programme 2023-2024: An additional '<i>Other Information Sources / Updates</i>' section had been added to the Committee's work programme document – this reflected some key crime and disorder / community safety issues (with links included providing more detail) which the Committee may be interested in scrutinising further (outside of any ongoing in-depth review work). Members were encouraged to contact either the Chair / Vice-Chair or Scrutiny Officer if they had queries on any of the stated topics.</p>
Requests for more information	None

Remaining 2023-2024 Scrutiny Reviews

- Access to and Impact of Vaping

Remaining 2023-2024 Meetings (all 4.30pm unless stated)

Thursday 25 January 2024 Thursday 22 February 2024	Thursday 21 March 2024
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People Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

Scrutiny Review – Cost of Living Response	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>In November, the Committee received evidence from Officers from the Council's Learning and Skills, Revenues and Benefits, Education and Wellbeing and Economic Development teams. Evidence was also provided by representatives from Catalyst and Stockton Food Power Network. An additional evidence session was held via Teams on 21 November to receive evidence from the LGA and the Chief Executive of Tees Credit Union.</p> <p>In December, the Committee received evidence from the Head of HR and the Assistant Director of Customer Services and Digital Services. Evidence was also provided by representatives from Unite the Union and Stockton & District Advice & Information Service.</p> <p>Site visits were also arranged to visit two distribution sites for 'The Bread and Butter Thing'. The first took place on 27 November at the Victoria Park Community Hall, Peel Street, Thornaby. The second took place on 5 December at the Salvation Army, Palmerston Street, Stockton-on-Tees.</p>
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	January's Committee meeting will be an informal summary of evidence session held via Teams.
On track – yes/no	Yes.

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	No reports received since previous update.
Requests for more information	None.

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	<p>Disability Inclusive Borough - A second progress update was presented to the People Select Committee in December 2023. There were 5 outstanding recommendations (3 categorised as fully achieved, 2 on-track). A further progress update will be provided within 6 months.</p> <p>Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Energy Efficiency and Green Jobs for the Future – March 2024
Requests for more information	None.

People Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

Remaining 2023-2024 Scrutiny Reviews
Disabled Facilities Grants Adult Carers' Service

Remaining 2023-2024 Meetings (all 4pm unless stated)
Monday 8 January 2024 (via Teams) Monday 19 February 2024 Monday 4 March 2024

Place Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

Scrutiny Review – Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste Collections	
Achieved since last meeting	<p>At November's Committee meeting, analysis from WRAP's assessment of alternative collection scenarios was presented.</p> <p>A site visit to J&B Recycling Centre, Hartlepool, took place on 30 November.</p> <p>December's Committee meeting was an informal summary of evidence session held via Teams.</p>
Problems or concerns	None.
Planned next month	The draft final report will be presented to the Committee in January 2024.
On track – yes / no	Yes.

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	No further updates have been received since the previous meeting.
Requests for more information	None.

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	<p>Highways Asset Management (including Potholes and Flooding) - A further progress update on the one outstanding action (categorised as fully achieved) was presented to the Committee in November 2023. The action plan has now been fully achieved.</p> <p>Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burial Provision – January 2024 • Residents Parking Zones – January 2024 • Planning (Development Management) and Adoption of Open Space - March 2024 (TBC)
Requests for more information	None

Crustacean Deaths Collaborative Working Group	
<p>At December's Group meeting, evidence was received from representatives from the North East Fishing Collective. A written response from Dr Gary Caldwell, Newcastle University, to the recently published <i>Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)</i> report was also provided to the Committee for information.</p> <p>The upcoming meeting dates are: 12 January 2024</p>	

Place Select Committee Chair's Update – January 2024

Remaining 2023-2024 Scrutiny Reviews
Roadside Advertising – Draft scope and project plan due to be presented to the Committee in February 2024.

Remaining 2023-2024 Meetings (all 4.00pm unless stated)
Monday 15 January 2024 Tuesday 13 February 2024 Monday 11 March 2024

Executive Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023-2024

In addition to the Standing Items:

- Chair’s Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme
- Select Committee Chairs’ Updates
- Statutory Forward Plan

Date	Item	Attending
4 July	Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24 – Selection of In-Depth Reviews	Jonathan Nertney
	Council Plan 2022-2025 Update	Garry Cummings/ Ian Coxon
5 September	MTFP Update	Garry Cummings
	Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24 – Update	Jonathan Nertney
7 November	MTFP Update	Garry Cummings
	Council Plan Update	Garry Cummings/ Ian Coxon
9 January	MTFP Update	Garry Cummings
	Winter Planning Pressures	Sarah Bowman Abouna
5 March	Final Report of People Select Committee – Scrutiny Review of Cost of Living Response – Executive Summary for Information	Rebecca Saunders-Thompson
	Final Report of Place Select Committee – Scrutiny Review of Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste – Executive Summary for Information	Rebecca Saunders-Thompson

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