

**Date:** Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 6.00 pm

**Venue:** Baptist Tabernacle Auditorium, The Square, Stockton on Tees, TS18 1TE

## **AGENDA**

- 1 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure**
- 2 Apologies for Absence**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Minutes**  
To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 July 2024 (Pages 7 - 12)
- 5 Public Question Time**
- 6 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel** (Pages 13 - 26)
- 7 Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Plan** (Pages 27 - 56)
- 8 Motion to Council - Winter Fuel Allowance** (Pages 57 - 58)
- 9 Members' Question Time** (Pages 59 - 68)
- 10 Forward Plan and Leader's Statement**

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

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

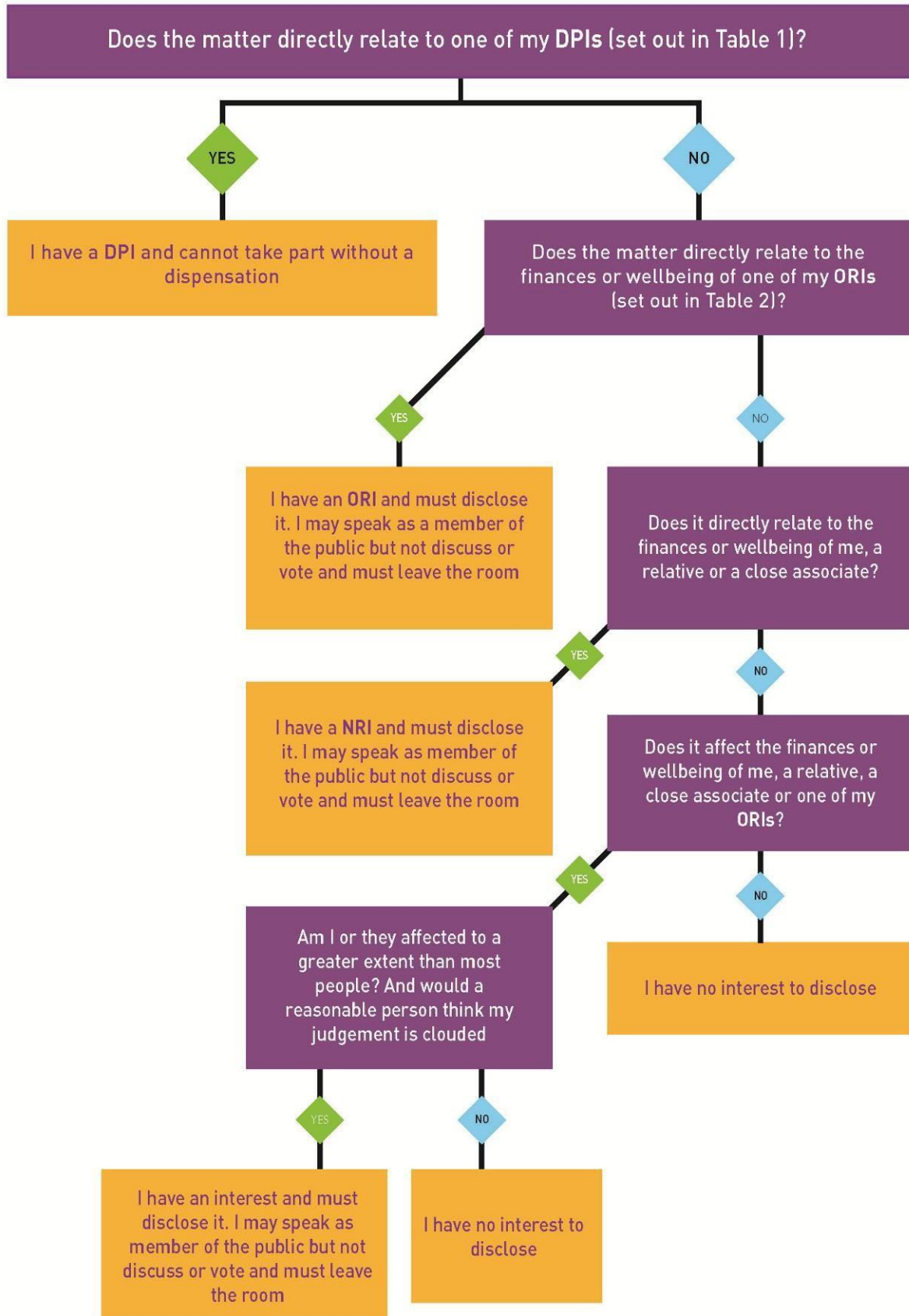
Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please

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

**KEY - Declarable interests are:-**

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

**Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance**



**Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

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

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

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

## Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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## COUNCIL

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 24 July 2024.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr John Gardner ), Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Ray Godwin, , Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Susan Scott, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Katie Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

**Officers:** Julie Butcher, Judy Trainer, Peter Bell, Stuart Levin (CS), Garry Cummings (DCE&F, T&P), Reuben Kench (DoCS,E&C), Carolyn Nice (A,H&W). .

**Also in attendance:** Members of the Public.

**Apologies:** Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Richard Eglinton, Cllr Alex Griffiths, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Sally Ann Watson and Cllr Alan Watson.

### **COU/127/24 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure**

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the arrangements for the meeting.

### **COU/128/24 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **COU/129/24 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 29 May 2024.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **COU/130/24 Public Question Time**

Public Question submitted by Patricia McHale for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“Why have you chosen to provide housing with the levelling up money for Billingham. This was not our priority in consultation?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with:-

“The masterplan for Billingham town centre sets out a mixed-use approach to redevelopment. The redevelopment scheme combines improvements to public realm, new retail floorspace and the redevelopment and reuse of vacant office floorspace along with the delivery of a residential development. In developing proposals for the centre, the findings from consultation is one element of a broader set of considerations and competing priorities that must be balanced up, including market conditions, local need and the change of ownership of the centre.

In the current circumstances there are a limited number of realistic redevelopment options for the West Precinct site. Demand for affordable housing to support residents requiring both general needs housing and specialist housing is increasing across all areas of our borough, so the inclusion of residential development as part of a broader package of interventions to revitalise the town centre was the most effective and deliverable solution for the centre as well as contributing to wider housing need in the Borough.”

Patricia McHale asked the following supplementary question:-

“With 160 extra houses has consideration been given to the impact this will have on GP services, dental services, schools, parking and social care?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with:-

“It is generally accepted that successful town centres going forward are mixed use. Residential, retail, leisure, workplace are all important. The existing town centre has residential space already in it but the space is unfit for occupation so these are the challenges that we need to consider. Any proposal around housing will be subject to the usual planning processes and during those processes the public will have the opportunity to comment on the proposals.”

Public Question submitted by Patricia McHale for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“Is the planned housing for the west precinct social or private?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with:-

“The Council will seek a partner to support delivery for the residential element of the scheme. The specific residential product on the site is as yet undefined and will be influenced by market demand, developer/housing association interest and site viability along with broader considerations in regard to housing need in the Borough. It is anticipated that the site will deliver a range of housing tenures.”

Public Question submitted by Liam McHale for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-



“The levelling up money for Billingham, the 2019 survey confirmed residents prioritise building houses extremely low, what alternatives to housing are counsellors proposing for the money?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (by way of written response in the absence of Liam McHale):-

“The masterplan for Billingham town centre sets out a mixed use approach to redevelopment. The redevelopment scheme combines improvements to public realm, new retail floorspace and the redevelopment and reuse of vacant office floorspace along with the delivery of a residential development.

Alternative options uses for the West Precinct site were considered through the masterplan process but In the current market there are a limited number of realistic redevelopment options for the West Precinct site from a viability and market demand perspective along with consideration of uses that would compete with existing uses in the centre and that may have deterred the current owners from selling the site for a development.”

Public Question submitted by Liam McHale for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

How can the public engage with the Council to register disagreement with building more homes as well as discussing plausible alternatives like initiatives to help local small businesses access units?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (by way of written response in the absence of Liam McHale):-

“A period of engagement with the public, business and stakeholders is planned for early Autumn. Suggestions can be made through that process or regeneration and business support teams can be contacted directly in regard to specific developments or initiatives such as support for new or small businesses in specific areas. Furthermore, the opportunity to object formerly through the planning process also exists at the point a planning application is submitted.”

Public Question submitted by Guy Snead for response by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport (Cllr Clare Besford):-

“Can I have an explanation of the downsides of having Parking Contravention Notices (PCN’s) issued from public submitted evidence?”

Response from the Cabinet Member Environment and Transport (by way of written response in the absence of Guy Snead:-

Issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) as a result of evidence provided by members of the public is a course of action that has been considered several times in recent years as part of our commitment maintaining our enforcement policies and practices under consistent review to ensure the best service delivery to the our community.

This approach was considered recently, but ultimately deemed to be unsuitable for Stockton on Tees Borough Council due to a number of concerns outlined below:

1. There is an increased risk of confrontation.
  - There are concerns for public safety; encouraging the public to gather evidence could lead to direct confrontations between the members of the public and drivers. An individual being photographed or recorded may react aggressively, potentially leading to physical altercations and harm. This situation is often encountered by officers enforcing parking regulations nationally. We do not want the public putting themselves in this position unnecessarily, especially without appropriate training or equipment to protect them.
  - The approach may lead to vigilantism and inappropriate use; It was felt it could engender a sense of vigilantism whereby certain members of the public could feel empowered to enforce the law themselves, in turn escalating conflicts and leading to chaotic situations. There are concerns also that this approach could promote the targeting of individuals within a community and may lack proportionality and fairness.
2. **Balanced Enforcement and Education**
  - The approach could mean a lack of professional discretion; Civic Enforcement Officers are trained to handle parking issues with discretion, considering the wider context and potential need for education over punishment. In many instances the parking problems are as a result of influencing factors such as lack of parking provision, and officers will often take broader action to alleviate parking issues in the longer term as opposed to a short term enforcement action.
  - **Public Confidence:** Our Civic Enforcement Officers aim to maintain a positive relationship with the community they work for. Over-reliance on punitive measures, especially through public involvement, can damage public trust and reduce the willingness of communities to cooperate with the local authority.
3. **Resource Demands**
  - There are the requirements of validation and processing to consider: Validating evidence provided by the public requires significant resources as seen in locations that have piloted similar approaches. Authorities must verify the legitimacy, context, and accuracy of each report. This can be time-consuming and labour intensive, especially set against a backdrop of reducing resources.
  - **Implementing and managing an appropriate system and process:** Implementing a system to handle, review, and respond to the influx of reports from the public necessitates substantial investment in technology and personnel. This can divert resources from other critical areas of community safety and wider services provided to the residents by the authority.

In summary, we want to continue to work closely with our residents in order to respond to concerns they have regarding parking practices in our borough. Residents can report issues for investigation in more ways than ever before including online or via email. At this time however we are not looking at extending his reporting to include public provided evidence of civil parking offences.

### **COU/131/24 Motion submitted by Cllr Niall Innes**

The following motion had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.40, moved by Councillor Niall Innes, seconded by Councillor Tony Riordan:-

"Stockton Council is a Local Authority that pays more £100,000 plus salaries than many others in the country.

On many occasions decisions to recruit senior management have been taken without the consultation or approval of Full Council.

It is therefore proposed that for any New or Replacement Assistant, Intern or Full Director roles must come before full council for approval, with full justification given as to the requirements of this role and salary.

This also applies for any contractors who are put into such positions."

Following a debate, a vote took place and the motion was not carried.

## **COU/132/24 Enhanced Support for Care Experienced Young People**

Council was asked to agree that 'care experience' was recognised as a locally protected characteristic to demonstrate the Council's commitment as a Corporate Parent. This would ensure that the Council's care-experienced young people did not face inequality and that their needs were at the heart of all the Council's decision-making, alongside other groups who formally shared a protected characteristic.

Members were asked to note the report to Cabinet at Appendix 1, this set out a range of measures to support care-experienced young people. The report included a proposal to be considered by the Council for the recognition of 'care experience' as a locally protected characteristic. The rationale for this designation was set out in the Cabinet report.

At this point and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.65 Councillor Steve Nelson requested that a recorded vote be taken on the proposed recommendations; which was supported by at least a quarter of the members present.

Members in favour of the recommendations:-

Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Katie Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Abstentions:-

Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Susan Scott, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Hilary Vickers and Cllr Marcus Vickers.

The recommendations were carried by 28 votes for and 20 abstentions.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report to Cabinet identifying a range of measures to support the Council's care-experienced young people be noted.

2. 'Care Experienced' is formally recognised as a locally protected characteristic within the Borough, ensuring that the needs of the Council's care-experienced young people are prioritised in all Council decision-making processes.

### **COU/133/24 Members' Question Time**

There were no Members Questions.

### **COU/134/24 Forward Plan and Leader's Statement**

The Leader of the Council gave his Forward Plan and Leaders Statement.

Council last met on 29 May. Since then, Cabinet had convened on the 17 June and again on the 18 July. These meetings considered the following main matters:

- Thornaby Town Deal
- Billingham Town Centre and Sports Hub
- Medium-Term Financial Plan Outturn for March 2024
- Xentrall Annual Report for 2023-24
- Central Stockton & North Thornaby Blueprint
- Enhanced Support for our Care Experienced Young People
- The Anti-Poverty Strategy
- The new Defibrillator Policy

Cabinet will meet again on 12 September, where it is anticipated that the following items will be considered:

- An update on the Medium-Term Financial Plan
- Free School Plans
- The Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Feedback from the Local Government Association
- The Race Equality Charter

Looking ahead, the Leader of the Council was excited about the events and activities planned for the Summer within the Borough. The Stockton International Riverside Festival returns to Stockton High Street from Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th August, offering a jam-packed weekend programme. The Community Carnival would also be held on Sunday 4th August. SIRF begins on the 2 August.

After that, the Leader of the Council looked forward to seeing Members at the next Council meeting on 18 September.

## AGENDA ITEM

### REPORT TO COUNCIL

18 SEPTEMBER 2024

### REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

## THE COUNCIL'S INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

### SUMMARY

The report relates to the appointment of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is required by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) ("the Regulations") to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel so that the Panel can provide recommendations to Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme. An Authority is not able to introduce new or revised allowances schemes, without first having had regard to its Independent Panel's recommendations, in that respect. A Panel should therefore be in place and ready to act, even if an authority proposes not to change its existing allowance scheme.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:-

1. The previous members of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, as detailed in paragraph 4, and in **Appendix 1**, be reappointed, with their terms of office expiring on 31 May 2028.
2. The right be reserved to remove any one, or more, of the Panel members at any time, as indicated in paragraph 10.
3. Tony Campbell be appointed as the Chair of the Panel.
4. The Panel's functions, as detailed in the Council's Constitution and **Appendix 2**, be noted
5. The allowances for the Panel's work be as specified at paragraph 11.

## DETAIL

1. There is no specific appointments process prescribed in the Regulations or Guidance, save that the Council should appoint the Panel and consider the issues detailed at paragraphs 8 – 11, below.
2. The Regulations require a Panel of at least three members, however, the Council's Constitution stipulates that its Panel should comprise four members, with a quorum of 3. None of the Panel members must be serving elected Members of the authority in respect of which it makes recommendations, nor a member of a committee or sub-committee of such authority. Panel Members must also not be disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.
3. Guidance associated with the Regulations requires appointing authorities to be satisfied that proposed Panel members would result in the Panel Membership being sufficiently independent and well qualified to discharge the Panel's functions, and representative of the diversity of communities in the Council's area.

### The previous Panel and appointing a new one

4. The terms of office of Stockton's previous Independent Remuneration Panel expired on 31 May 2024. The Panel comprised the following non-elected members:  
  
Tony Campbell  
Kate Hoskin  
Mark White  
Terry Laing
5. Further details of the above non-elected members are attached at **Appendix 1**
6. It is proposed that the previous members of the Panel, described above and in **Appendix 1** be reappointed.

### The Panel's Functions

7. The functions of the Panel are set out at **Appendix 2**. These are the functions prescribed by regulation and detailed in the Council's Constitution.

### The Chair

8. It is recommended that Council appoints a Chair. Tony Campbell was the Panel's previous Chair and has lots of experience in this role. It is recommended that he is appointed as the Chair of the Remuneration Panel.

### Terms of Office

9. It is recommended that the terms of office of the Panel Members be up to 31 May 2028, unless they are removed, resign or otherwise leave office before then. This will enable preparations for a new Panel to be established (or for the incumbent panel to be re-appointed) during the first year of the new Council, after the 2027 elections.

### **Removal of Panel Members**

10. Council has previously reserved the right to remove any one, or more, of the Panel Members at any time. This power should be retained.

### **Panel Allowances**

11. It is proposed that the payments previously agreed for the Panel Members' work be retained. These were:-

Chair - £350 per day, subject to a maximum for each review of £1,750

Other Panel Members - £75 per day, subject to a maximum of £375 for each review; and

All Panel Members – reasonable travel and subsistence expenses.

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

12. No assessment is considered necessary. There are no policy, strategy or service changes involved.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

13. There are no corporate parenting implications arising from this report.

### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

14. There will be costs associated with any proposed review by the Panel. Paragraph 11 refers to the likely expenses involved. Panel recommendations may also lead to a change in Members' allowances. The current Allowance Scheme is at **Appendix 3**
15. Establishing a new Panel will satisfy the Council's responsibilities under the Regulations. A review of Members' allowances can only be undertaken by a properly constituted Independent Panel.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

16. The matters referred to in this report are classed as low risk.

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

17. Decisions relating to this issue are not ward specific and have no impact on individual wards. No consultation with ward Councillors has taken place.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

18. There are no unpublished documents, relied on, to produce this report

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**TONY CAMPBELL**

**PEN PORTRAIT**

Former MANAGING DIRECTOR – CREATIVE GLASS LTD, STOCKTON-ON-TEES. Retired in February 2022.

Founded new design based company in 1992 to operate in a niche market. With no previous experience in glass industry researched and identified a gap, Creative Glass have now filled this gap and gone beyond this to further develop their own markets through innovation and technological advancement, often collaborate and project manage a cluster of specialists to compete for and complete major projects. Very strong brand identity (registered trademark) operates across UK and beyond.

**INVOLVEMENT WITH REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Involved with a range of Regeneration, Creative Industries, Art & Culture initiatives & partnerships across the North East for over 20 years.

Board Member – Onsite Building Trust – Charity looking after various community centres around Teesside. 2014 – present. (voluntary)

Globe Theatre – Member of the CIC during important period of bringing back to life a historic asset of Stockton on Tees.

COHESION GLASS MAKERS NETWORK – Board Member from 2000 (voluntary) organisation closely tied with the National Glass Centre and University of Sunderland, to develop and support glass as a business activity in the north east.

YOUNG ENTERPRISE involved at various stages as mentor and judging panels (voluntary)

**PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

1989-1992 NETA GROUP – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Charged with diversification of groups activities, many of which still form the basis of the company which is now part of Stockton Riverside College.

1983-1989 CROSSLEY BUILDERS' MERCHANTS GROUP – Group Business Development Manager. During a very exciting period the group expanded from initial 22 locations to 125. Commenced as General Manager of flagship branch with 120 staff. Following take-over of competitor moved to coordinate integration of new acquisition.

1977-1983 J.T. DOVE BUILDERS' MERCHANTS – Management Trainee.

**ACADEMIC HISTORY**

1986 Post Graduate DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES – TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

1977 B.A. Social Science (ECONOMICS) – SUNDERLAND POLYTECHNIC

1979 INSTITUTE OF BUILDERS' MERCHANTS DIPLOMA – Regional Prize Winner – Herbert Dove Memorial Prize.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT**

Resident of Stockton since 1977. Actively involved in the economic and cultural development of the area. Have attended almost every SIRF since its inception in 1987. Keen to support democratic processes of the borough.

Interested in art & cultural particularly live music.

## ***Pen Portrait - Kate Hoskin***

### **Summary employment history**

I have had over 20 years of experience working as a Civil Servant for the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. My jobs there were fairly wide ranging but key posts included Head of HR Strategy and Transformation, Head of Workforce Planning and Recruitment, Head of Employee relations and Diversity, and Project Manager for various transformation projects in relation to government livestock policy.

I left the Civil Service in 2012 to become Ops Manager for XLVets Training Services, a small business jointly owned by 50 independent veterinary practices and delivering specialist training to vets and farmers.

Latterly I have taken some time out to care for elderly parents and to look after our smallholding, so these days I have a more diverse and low key portfolio of work! I have invigilated exams at Thirsk School; I work with a friend in her catering business and do various jobs for older people in and around Thirsk.

### **Voluntary positions held**

- I have been a Trustee for the Thirby Recreational Association at various points over the last 15 years, including being Treasurer and Chair
- I run the Thirsk Community Works Food Bank as a volunteer, supported by the paid staff from the charity. I am responsible for obtaining funding, organising other volunteers, and managing delivery of contracts with funders. I received a Hambleton Heroes Award for my foodbank work during the Covid crisis. The foodbank has also recently been nominated for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service.
- I help Community Works with its recruitment, sitting on panels and advising on their recruitment approach
- I am a very active member of my village community. I ran the kids after school group for a number of years. I am the Parish Clerk and am on the organising committee for social events.
- I recently ran a project to plant trees on our village spaces

In my spare time I sing in a choir, manage our small-holding and enjoy doing lots of outdoor activities.

Terry Laing

**Pen Picture**

Unfortunately since the last review I lost my Wife, Sue in February 2022.

My son (Andrew) and his partner (Katy) live in Hove, Brighton that gives me the opportunity to visit several times during the year. I am the proud grandfather to Daniel who is approaching his seventh birthday.

The majority of my working life was spent with three companies:

- Five years with Head Wrightson serving as a commercial apprentice and more latterly as a cost accountant.
- Thirty five years with Cummins Engine Company in a number of high profile accounting roles before retiring and taking up a consultancy role.
- Four years with Air Products on a part-time basis before finalising and “closing the books” for the Billingham division.

I am a vastly experienced accountant with extensive business and accounting knowledge. This covers many aspects of highly successful local and multi national business organisations.

A highly motivated, respected manager able to promote team based working in a low cost, high quality changing business environment.

In the latter years headed up a team that implemented and managed a corporate shared service accounting solution for UK and European subsidiaries.

Served Hartburn as a local councillor for nine years, four years as a cabinet member for Finance and Human Resources. I was also a member of the Police Authority and more latterly the Police and Crime panel. Having served on a multitude of committees I am very knowledgeable regarding the activities of an extremely diverse council service within the borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

I am a keen golfer; treasurer for the seniors section at our local golf club and a well-known local sportsman.

Served as a treasurer and management committee member of Stockton Victim Support. Past chair of Stockton Referees Association and Holy Trinity parent teachers association. Served as Treasurer and a management committee member at a local out of school club.

Having lost our Daughter Helen with meningitis, Sue and I were local ambassadors for a meningitis charity. I have continued with this role since losing Sue. The charity was kindly nominated in their mayoral year by Cllr Ken Dixon and Cllr Maurice Perry as one of their sponsored charities.

MARK WHITE CBE DL

PEN PICTURE

Chair, Thornaby Town Deal Board; Chair, Stockton Strategic Education Board; Chair, Association of Colleges Charitable Trust; Governor, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust; Deputy Lieutenant of County Durham; promoted CBE in the King's birthday honours list 2023 for services to further education; appointed OBE in the Queen's birthday honours list 2016 for services to education particularly in Teesside; former Chair, Education Training Collective (comprising colleges in Billingham, Stockton, Thornaby and Redcar): former Head of Vice-Chancellor's Office and Secretary to Board of Governors of Teesside University; former Chair of Association of Colleges (AoC) Sport; former Chair of Bede 6th Form College, Billingham; former member of Court of University of Bradford; former Chair of mima (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art) Friends; former Governor of North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust; Fellow of Royal Society of Arts (FRSA); honorary life member of Teesside University Students' Union (and awarded Extraordinary Contribution to Student Life Award 2016); awarded Tees Valley BME Network Lifetime Achievement Award 2015; awarded Teesside Community Champion 2017.



**FUNCTIONS – INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

The Independent Remuneration Panel will consider and keep under review certain key aspects of the Members' Allowance Scheme and, as and when appropriate, submit reports (containing recommendations) to the Cabinet and Council, regarding:

the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following should be available:

- (a) special responsibility allowance;
- (b) travelling and subsistence allowance;
- (c) co-optees' allowance; and

the amount of such allowances and as to the amount of basic allowance;

whether dependants' carers' allowance should be payable to members of the authority, and as to the amount of such an allowance;

whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with regulation 10(6); and

whether adjustments to the level of allowance may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed.

This Panel will be made up of 4 Independent Members appointed by the Council from time to time.

The quorum for this Panel is 3.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) ("the Regulations"), the Council's scheme for the payment of allowances, with effect from 1st April, 2019 is as follows: -

### **Basic Allowance**

- 5.1 A basic allowance of £9,300 per annum will be paid to each Member of the Council.
- 5.2 Where the term of office of a Member begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, his entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the basic allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office as member subsists bears to the number of days in that year;

### **Special Responsibility Allowance**

- 5.3 The following Special Responsibility Allowances will be paid to the Members of the Council specified: -

<b><u>Post</u></b>	<b><u>Allowance per annum £</u></b>
Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance	25,000
<sup>13</sup> Deputy Leader	13,750
Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety	11,250
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Transport	11,250
Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health	11,250
Cabinet Member for Arts, Leisure & Culture	11,250
Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	11,250
Cabinet Member for Environment & Housing	11,250
Chair of Executive Scrutiny Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Executive Scrutiny Committee	3,125
Chair of Adult Services and Health Select Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Adult Services and Health Select Committee	3,125
Chair of Children & Young People Select Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Children & Young People Select Committee	3,125
Chair of Crime and Disorder Select Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Crime and Disorder Select Committee	3,125
Chair of People Select Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of People Select Committee	3,125
Chair of Place Select Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Place Select Committee	3,125
Chair of Audit Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Audit Committee	3,125
Chair of Planning Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Planning Committee	3,125
Chair of Licensing Committee	6,250
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	3,125
Largest Minority Group Leader	5,000

- (a) Where a Member does not have throughout the whole of a year any such special responsibilities as entitle him to a Special Responsibility Allowance, his entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the special responsibility allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the

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<sup>13</sup> NB The Deputy Leader will be assigned one of the Cabinet portfolios.

number of days during which he has such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that year.

- (b) No Member must receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance from the Council, including Mayoral Allowances, and where a Member occupies two or more positions qualifying for such an Allowance, then only the higher or highest Special Responsibility Allowance will be paid.

### Mayoral Allowances

5.4 The following allowances will be payable: -

Mayor	15,625
Deputy Mayor	4,910

### Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowance

5.5 A child care and dependent carers' allowance of up to £8.71 per hour (or, in special cases, such larger sum as shall be certified as necessary and reasonable by the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care) (actual expenditure), with a maximum monthly payment to a claimant of £400, will be payable to any Member of the Council who incurs child care and dependent carers' costs, for the duration of an approved duty, plus reasonable travelling time to and from that duty and carers' reasonable travelling expenses at Members' rates.

5.6 An approved duty will consist of any of the following: -

- a meeting of the Cabinet
- a meeting of the Council
- a meeting of a committee of the Council
- a meeting of some other body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations, or
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations.
- a meeting which has **both** been authorised by the Council or a committee of the Council or a joint committee of the Council and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the Council is a member
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in pursuance of any standing order requiring a Member or Members to be present while tender documents are opened
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Council to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with arrangements made by the Council for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
- any other duty approved by the Council in connection with discharging the duties of the Council or its committees.



### Co-Optees Allowances

5.7 The following allowances will be payable to co-optees (persons who are not Members of the Council but who are members of a Committee of the Council, with or without voting rights) – except for co-optee posts for diocesan and parent governor representatives.

All co-optees 650

(One payment only per co-optees)

5.8 Where the appointment of a co-optee begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, his entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the co-optees' allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office as member subsists bears to the number of days in that year.

### Travel and Subsistence Allowances

#### 5.9 Mileage Allowances

Member's motorcycle 21.45p per mile

#### Member's Car

Motor car/tricar up to 999cc 46.9p per mile

Motor car/tricar 1000 cc and above 47.7p per mile

Bicycle/Cycle 23p per mile

**In addition, 3p per mile can be claimed for each passenger carried (up to a maximum of 4) to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable.**

#### 5.10 Meal Allowances

(a) Breakfast allowance (provided the journey starts before 7.00 am) £7.76

(b) Evening meal allowance (provided the journey ends after 8.30 pm) £13.25

#### 5.11 Subsistence Allowance

Overnight or for an annual conference of the Local Government Association (including or not including an annual meeting) or of such other association of bodies as may be approved for the time being for the purpose. This allowance would normally cover the cost of accommodation and all meals within a 24hour period. However, additional reimbursement for meals can be claimed in accordance with the scheme, if these, together with the cost of accommodation exceed £102.84.

£102.84

5.12 Travelling and subsistence allowances may be paid for: -

- a meeting of the Cabinet
- a meeting of the Council
- a meeting of a committee of the Council

- a meeting of some other body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations, or
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the Council makes appointments or nominations.
- a meeting which has **both** been authorised by the Council or a committee of the Council or a joint committee of the Council and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the Council is a member
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in pursuance of any standing order requiring a Member or Members to be present while tender documents are opened
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Council to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- duties undertaken on behalf of the Council in connection with arrangements made by the Council for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
- any other duty approved by the Council in connection with discharging the duties of the Council or its committees.

5.13 Within the context of this section of the Scheme “Member” includes a Co-optee.

#### **General**

5.14 A person may, by notice in writing given to the Proper Officer of the Council, elect to forgo his entitlement or any part of his entitlement to allowances.

5.15 The time limit from the date on which an entitlement to each of the following allowances arises during which a claim for such allowances must be made by the person to whom they are payable is two months: -

- (a) dependants’ carers allowance;
- (b) travelling and subsistence allowance; and
- (c) co-optees’ allowance.

This will not however prevent the Council from making a payment where the allowance is not claimed within the period specified in the scheme should the circumstances justify doing so.

5.16 Where a Member of the Council is also a member of another authority, that Member may not receive allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same duties.

5.17 The Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees Allowances will be paid on a monthly basis.

5.18 Where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the Member concerned: -

- (a) ceases to be a Member of the Council; or
- (b) is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowances in respect of that period,

the Council may require that such part of the allowance as relates to any such period be repaid to the Council.

**All Previous Members’ Allowances Scheme are revoked.**

# Agenda Item 7

## AGENDA ITEM

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

DATE 18 SEPTEMBER  
2024

## REPORT OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

### STOCKTON-ON-TEES YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

#### SUMMARY

Local authority partnerships have a statutory duty to submit a youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services (YJSs). Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnerships responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, in consultation with partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out how YJSs in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out.

#### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth justice plans, in England only, must be signed off by the full Council in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities England Regulations 2000).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation for full Council to sign off Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25.

#### DETAIL

1. The Youth Justice Plan reports on our vision, strategy, governance, leadership and partnership arrangements. It reflects and builds upon our strong performance against key national performance measures. It documents key themes around child first principles, workforce development, diversion, exploitation and working with families.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The Youth Justice Plan was produced after consultation with partners.
3. The Plan documents seven key strategic objective for the forthcoming year. These are:
  - 1) Help children stay out of the criminal justice system.
  - 2) To reduce reoffending.
  - 3) Reduce the use of custody and prioritise effective resettlement.
  - 4) Strengthen our responses to Serious Youth Violence and Child Exploitation.

- 5) To reduce the number of school exclusions.
- 6) To refresh our practice in our work victims and restorative practice.
- 7) To develop a Participation model of practice.

#### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

4. The primary aim of a youth justice plan is to prevent offending and re-offending by children by working with them, their parents and carers. Youth Justice teams support victims of crime and work to contribute to keeping communities safe.

#### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

5. There are no direct corporate parenting implications for the Council arising from the recommendations.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no direct legal implications for the Council arising from the recommendations.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

8. The Youth Justice Plan is overseen by the Youth Justice Board and Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Management Board. Strong partnership arrangements are in place to monitor progress against our strategic objectives.

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

9. None.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10. Stockton-On-Tees Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

**Name of Contact Officer: John Lathaen**  
**Post title: Service Lead, Youth Justice & Youth Support**  
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# Youth Justice Plan Stockton-on-Tees

2024-2025



# Contents

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3...	Introduction, vision and strategy
4...	Local context
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8...	Update on the previous year
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16..	Priorities for the coming year
18..	National priority areas
24..	Appendices and Glossary

## Introduction, Vision, and Strategy



**Welcome to the Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Plan for 2024-25. This Plan sets out our priorities for the forthcoming year and how we will work with others to realise our vision and deliver services that promote positive child outcomes, reduce crime and make communities safer. This plan has been developed and agreed by the youth justice partnership.**

Youth justice services in Stockton-on-Tees have a proud history of delivering effective, high-quality services to help children stay out of the justice system and reduce reoffending when they do. We are supporting more children and their families when worries first arise.

Proven youth crime and the numbers of children in the justice system in 2023-24, have fallen compared to the previous year - 380 offences by 121 children in 2023-24 compared to 454 by 154 children in 2022-23. This is good news for our children and communities.

Youth justice services in Stockton-on-Tees are rated as “*Outstanding*” by independent inspectors and we remain committed to provide high quality, personalised and responsive services.

Improving our understanding of the lived experience of justice-experienced children and enshrining *Child First* principles in our approaches supports our ambitions in this.

In 2023-24, the Youth Justice Team relocated to sit within a new adolescent service in Children’s Services to refocus efforts to deliver improved services to children at risk of criminal exploitation.

Local analysis tells us that justice-experienced children are amongst the most vulnerable to this form of harm. Our analysis also shows a strong relationship between child exploitation and serious youth violence. These themes will be amongst our priorities for 2024-25.

Our new case management database being introduced will improve our ability to analyse and understand outcomes, children’s needs and the lived experience of justice-experienced children.

I am delighted to be taking the helm of the Management Board at this exciting time in the development of our youth justice services and partnership.

**Majella McCarthy, Chair of Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Management Board & Director of Children’s Services**

## Local Context

Stockton-on-Tees is a diverse area of six towns covering mainly urban areas, with some rural villages. It's population is around 200,000 and growing. 8% of the population are from a Black or other minority ethnic group. The population of 10–17-year-olds is over 43,000.

There are areas of great affluence alongside some of the most deprived in England, with some significant differences within the Borough experienced in life and health outcomes. We know that socio-economic factors profoundly influence the lives and opportunities of children and many of the children who come into the justice system are from our most deprived communities.



### Decreasing:

Falls in the number of children in the justice system and the number of proven crimes in 2023-24, compared to the previous year.

The number of children entering the justice system for the first time



### Increasing:

Complexity of children's needs

The number of children arrested for serious youth violence in 2023-24. Most are at risk of, or are experiencing, child exploitation



### Demographics:

Children in the justice system are predominantly male and White British

A substantial proportion of children in the justice system are also known to local children's services



## Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

### Youth Justice Management Board

The Management Board delivers strategic direction and coordinates the provision of local services. There is a clear focus on holding those functions, and the wider youth justice partnership, to account for performance at both an operational and strategic level.

The membership and terms of reference for the Management Board have recently been reviewed and refreshed to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with '*Youth Justice Service Governance and Leadership, December 2021*'. The main objectives of the Board are:

1. To ensure the preparation and implementation of the annual Youth Justice Plan; to consider and act upon feedback from the Youth Justice Board (YJB).
2. To determine how the Youth Justice Team is to be composed and funded, how it is to operate and what functions it is to carry out.
3. To agree measurable objectives linked to key performance indicators as part of the youth justice plan and evaluate service delivery to improve understanding of 'what works' in preventing offending and reoffending, including consideration of thematic inspections.
4. To influence other strategies and programmes from a youth offending perspective.
5. To agree annual funding arrangements and ensure the effective use of resource. To monitor quarterly financial position statements. To seek opportunities to gain additional resources which add value to core funding.
6. To oversee the appointment and designation of the Head of Service.

The Board is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. Board membership is comprised of representatives from the statutory partners: the local authority; police service; probation service and the integrated health board; and from local partners: the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner: the voluntary and community sector: and the courts. The Youth Justice Board is also represented.

The Board meets quarterly. As well as monitoring youth justice outcomes, the Board takes account of emerging trends, policy directives and legislation, research and inspections. Information on compliance with the conditions of Youth Justice Board grant funding, performance reports, quality assurance casework audits and the findings of National Standard audits are presented and discussed by the Board.

More information on the partnership improvements and Board developments in 2024-25 can be found on page 9.

## Location

The Youth Justice Team (YJT) is located in our Adolescent & Exploitation Services in Early Help and Safeguarding within Children's Services.

The new Adolescence & Exploitation Service comprises youth justice, specialist safeguarding child exploitation services including the multi-agency child exploitation hub, and targeted early help to children and their families.

The Youth Justice Head of Service role is delivered by the Service Lead for Adolescent & Exploited services, with line management by the Assistant Director for Early Help and Safeguarding.

## Resources and Value for Money

Resourcing for youth justice services comes from the Youth Justice Board and the local partnership. Youth justice functions are compliant with the minimum staffing requirements set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and a structure chart is presented on page 25.

100% of the youth justice grant is allocated to staffing costs within the YJT, accounting for just under half of the employee costs for practitioners delivering statutory youth justice work in the courts, community and custody; the supervision and management oversight of case managers and other YJ staff, and admin workers who populate the youth justice case management database and extract performance data. The costs of seconded staff are met by their employing agencies.

The Youth Justice Team has a diverse workforce comprising staff on substantive permanent and temporary contracts and community volunteers. In addition, there are 1 member of the team who is employed by another agency and co-located for part of their working week.

We are committed to delivering services that represent **value for money**. A significant amount of time has been spent on understanding the 'value' of services that are delivered, in terms of cost, outcomes and savings created through prevention and 'invest to save' approaches.

We will be delivering a range of services in partnership with others, to avoid duplication and to draw upon the skills and expertise of partners to maximise use of resources and expertise.



## Partnership Arrangements

Youth justice services in Stockton-on-Tees have developed a range of strategic and operational linkages; outlined below:



The range of partners will be further expanded in the coming year as we consolidate arrangements to realise our new child exploitation offer and reduce serious youth violence.

Most statutory youth justice interventions are delivered 'in house' or in partnership with key stakeholders. Our commissioned arrangement for speech, language and communication services with North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust will continue.

Joint working arrangements with the Office of Police Crime and Commissioner (OPCC) funded Liaison and Diversion Service and Custody Navigators to support children in the police station are continuing; these are significant not only to ensure that children are properly supported but also to ensure a presence during those critical 'reachable moments'.

There is close working between the Youth Justice Team and children's social care for those deemed to be a Child in Need, Child in our Care and Care Leavers. Working protocols are in place. The reduction of criminalisation and offending by children in our care are corporate priorities and is well embedded in local decision making by our partners in Police, Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts.

Multi-agency pathways have been developed to support the 'Prevent' and Modern-Day Slavery duties. The Youth Justice Team is also an integral part of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) when a multi-agency approach is required to protect people from serious harm. Information sharing agreements ensure information is available to support holistic assessments and planning for young people. All information is managed sensitively in accordance with Data Protection principles.

## Update on the previous year

### Help children stay out of the criminal justice system

During 2023/24 we reviewed and refreshed our Out of Court Disposal (OCD) policy and process. We also introduced our 'Child First' bespoke OCD panels where we invite professionals working with the child to contribute to the discussion and decision making.

The OPCC provide funding for Triage disposals and interventions to children. Triage continues to be our most widely used OCD. The introduction of our OCD panels and our consistent use of Triage has contributed to a significant improvement in our FTE's rate. The latest YJB performance rate is 125 and this is better than all other local and national comparisons.

Over the last 12 months we have fully established our Turnaround Programme. Since January 2023 we have worked with 75 children and have provided a range of interventions which have included family work, positive activities, and support with ETE.

### Reduce the use of custody and prioritise effective resettlement

Our custody rate has remained high over the last 12 months. It is currently at 0.29 which equates to six children currently serving custodial sentences (in custody/community phase). The driver behind these rates has been serious youth violence, child exploitation and the influence of Organised Crime Groups. We have worked hard to keep our custody rates at a minimum and this was recognised during our YJB National Standards validation visit in January 2024. All reports go through our pre-sentence meeting process, and most were given comprehensive community sentences that we proposed to the court. We currently have three children who have been released on licence.

At the point of sentence, we hold bi-monthly resettlement meetings to ensure support is available on release. All are subject to a range of licence conditions which include where appropriate electronic tags with trial monitoring. Our CAMHS, SALT, ETE and support workers have been involved to ensure each child has consistent and individual support throughout the whole sentence.

### To reduce reoffending

We have continued to review and develop our interventions. Cleveland Police have secured funding for seconded officers to have virtual reality headsets to use in direct work with children. We have renewed and refreshed our knife crime programme and have a range of tools to address violent offending. Our interventions are under continuous review. Where appropriate we have made referrals to the Safer Communities Transitions Project for additional support when 17-year-olds make the transition into adulthood.

We have employed a full-time education, training and employment (ETE) worker to ensure children have intensive support to secure and sustain appropriate ETE opportunities and options. Although funding for our trauma informed pathway ended in 2023, we have had positive discussions with Tees Esk Wear Valley NHS trust to resume this resource in 2024.

### **Develop our partnership response to Serious Youth Violence**

We have continued to develop our response to Serious Youth Violence. We have worked closely with Cleveland CURV and have developed a range of initiatives. The main area of development has been the introduction of Custody Navigators scheme at Middlesbrough Custody suite where Children from Stockton-On-Tees are taken when arrested. This has ensured children have support at the earliest opportunity and trained staff can facilitate a 'teachable' moment. Our Turnaround programme has worked with those children who have been arrested for violent offences but who have not been formally charged. Again, this early intervention response will have benefits of steering children away from becoming involved in serious youth violence. We have previously documented our partnership response in developing an Adolescent and Exploitation Service with additional resources and practices in place to tackle child exploitation and serious youth violence.

### **To develop an Immediate Justice model of delivery in partnership with the PCC and other Cleveland YJS**

The OPCC provided funding so we could develop our Immediate Justice project. We have worked closely with the OPCC and our Community Safety team and developed agreed criteria and pathways for referrals. We have established clear metrics to measure success against outputs and provide monthly performance reports to the OPCC. We went live on the 01/09/2023 and have employed 1.5 members of staff on a short-term basis. The rate of referrals has not been at the expected level since the project started (this is consistent with both Hartlepool and South Tees Youth Justice Teams). We have had 22 referrals from our Community Safety team. We are currently working with the OPCC and Community Safety team so we can widen the criteria in relevant cases.

### **Board development**

Plans to outsource the role of Board Chair have changed and the Director of Children's Services will continue this. In line with our commitment to deliver effective and high-quality services, the Board has embarked on its own development programme which is continuing into 2024-25.

Activity includes: the temporary secondment of an experienced youth justice Head of Service to support the Board; refreshed membership and terms of reference; Board development days and thematic workshops; development of a new performance dashboard; and the

development of an annual workplan to ensure that key priorities are regularly discussed and monitored.

Key success factors include: the Board regularly receives regular quantitative and qualitative data to support its governance functions and enables challenge where needed; Board has a strong understanding of the lived experience of children and families and the *Child First* approach to youth justice; and the Board has a strong understanding of the profile and level of need of children and their families, any disparity in groups from the local population and is able to advocate for access to relevant services.

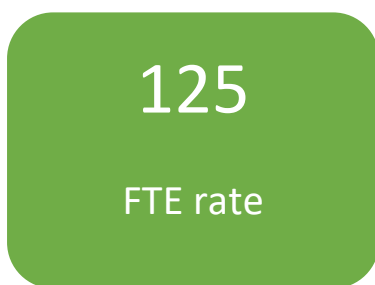
During 2024-25 there will be strategic focus on the themes of **child exploitation** and **serious youth violence**.

### To implement a new Case Management system by March 2024

Considerable work has taken place over the last 12 months with our Systems and Information team. We went through the relevant procurement process and NEC/Pathways were selected as our chosen provider. A project plan documented milestones of data mapping, acceptance, and migration. A training needs analysis was completed, and six members of staff completed the train the trainer course and all staff have received training. We are confident we have built considerable knowledge across the staff team.

We were impressed by the Pathways case management system as it is a modern product with a simple and easy to navigate user interface. It is anticipated we will go live in May / June 2024.

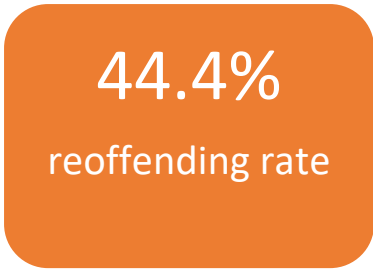
### Performance over the last year.



**The rate of First Time Entrants (FTEs) in Stockton has decreased** in the latest published YJB data from 198 in 2022 per 10,000 to 125 in 2023.

This is a significant reduction in our FTE rate. We are considerably lower than all other comparisons including England & Wales, North-East and our YJS family. The actual numbers of children who have become FTE in this reporting period is 26, down from 40 previously

We have been strong advocates of the Child First approach and divert as many children away from the criminal justice system as possible. The OPCC funding has allowed for the widespread use of Triage and Triage 2. With the introduction of our Out-Of-Court Disposal panel it is anticipated this will assist in our continued efforts to keep our FTEs at a low level.

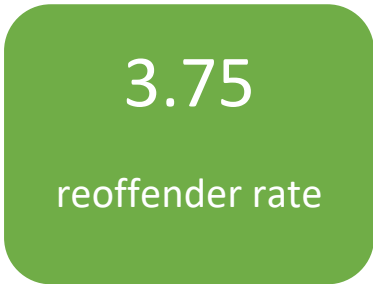


**The latest reoffending rate is 44.4%, which is lower than our PCC area but higher than other comparison groups.**

This is higher than the previous quarter's performance of 36.4% and higher than the previous year of 21.4%.

The current cohort consists of 18 children where eight reoffended

The previous cohort consisted of 17 children but only four reoffended. If you consider our reoffending data average over previous 12 months of 32.3% this is broadly in line with all other comparisons.



**The latest data regarding Reoffences/Reoffender is 3.75.**

This is lower than all other comparisons apart from our PCC area. This is an improvement on the last published data which was 4.75. The current figure is based on eight children committing 30 offences between them.



**Stockton's custody rate is currently above** all national and local comparisons at a rate of 0.29.

The level has remained at 0.29 since the last published data.

The current figure relates to six custodial sentences.

All six custody cases relate to serious violent offending. Stockton-On-Tees have faced challenges in relation to the volume of children charged to Court for serious offences. Most have been given Community sentences and context has been provided in other sections.

## Risks and Issues

Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice partnership continue to function in an ever-evolving landscape with the streamlining of services and pressures on resources. Adolescent and Exploitation Services including youth justice are now co-located which allows for collaborative working, wider discussions, and a multi-skilled workforce to respond to need. Change programmes have inherent risks, and our focus is to continue to embed the recent changes while maintaining an outstanding service.

It is evident we continue to work with a group of children that exhibit higher levels of need and more complex behaviours. The YJB grant allows us to maintain a comprehensive and effective service to the children we work with. We have used the recent increase in grant funding to create an additional youth justice officer role and ETE worker (both initially for 12 months). We need to ensure we have sufficient resources in place to meet demand and expectations. This needs to be kept under constant review. Any reduction in the YJB grant would have serious implications.

The YJT is moving to a new case management system in May 2024, and we hope to minimize any disruption this may cause. The Information and System team have worked closely with our provider NEC to ensure any difficulties are resolved quickly. We also need to start exit planning for both our Turnaround and Immediate Justice Programmes as funding ends March 2025. We need to ensure this causes as little disruption to the children and families we are working with.

The YJT along with many other teams from across Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council will move to a refurbished big open office environment. This will be a different way of working for many staff.

The YJT does not have a centralised place for appointments with children. The team use a variety of venues across the borough including family hubs. We need to identify a space in Stockton town centre where children and families can come for appointments and will accommodate staff and bring together resources to deliver effective services.



## Plans for the forthcoming year

### Child First

The Child Focus<sup>1</sup> approach has 4 tenets, which are summarised as:

#### **As children**

Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.



#### **Building pro-social identity**

Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.

#### **Collaborating with children**

Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

#### **Diverting from stigma**

Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

The Child First approach means that all staff consistently refer to our cohort as children and not young people. The impact of this has been it is more effective when gaining access to appropriate services. We talk to children in a positive way about their strengths and ability for positive change.

We have promoted diversion throughout the team/partners and consequently we have seen a significant reduction in FTE's. We avoid criminalising children unnecessarily. The YJT strives to promote a pro-social identity. We are adopting the new Prevention and Diversion assessment tool at the earliest opportunity as this is more child focused and is cemented on a strengths-based model. We are also in the process of restructuring the format of our Pre-Sentence Reports to be more child friendly/strengths based.

We have continued to build a strong partnership approach to our work so we can continue to develop personalised child focus work. We have speech, language and communication, health and education and training workers in place along with support workers who can work with children to develop inclusion, positive relations, interests, and activities.

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<sup>1</sup> YJB Strategic Plan, 2024-27

We recognise Child First practice is part of an ongoing journey and we have planned to hold a Child First effective practice workshops every six months.

The voice of the child is a key element of the Child First principle. In July 2023 we produced a report for the Management Board which collated 41 responses from Children and parents/carers from our feedback questionnaires. The feedback was extremely positive, and it was apparent children and they parents/carers felt supported by youth justice staff. The children commented on the good work we do on ETE, practical help and intervention work. Many parents remarked the situation was 'better' with our intervention. Although this is constructive feedback, we recognise we need to do more to achieve active participation and collaboration with children.

We are committed to ensuring that young people and their families have a voice; that they have an influence in their individual intervention programmes *and* in broader approaches to service delivery and developments. We aspire to deliver motivational, respectful and strength-based approaches to promote desistance from crime. Participation is one of our strategic objectives for the next year.

### Resources and services

Regular financial reports are presented to the YJ Management Board with recommendations for the board to discuss and agree. The income and projected expenditure represent finance estimates based upon the Youth Justice Team structure, agreed funding and service initiative from a national and local level. As in previous years, staff costs will continue to constitute most of the expenditure. All monies carry forward in reserve are earmarked for planned Youth Justice business, and all future spend of the reserve would be agreed by the board.

There is currently no requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Youth Justice Service to contribute to remand costs, but this may change if the numbers increase.

We use 100% of our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver these services and we believe they produce improved benefits and outcomes, and our performance will be improved in 2024–25 by understanding and working with the diverse communities in Stockton. This will be delivered with a joined-up problem-solving approach, focussing on our response and long-term support, using a consistent approach in working with our most vulnerable, complex, and high-risk teenagers and enhancing our offer for First Time Entrants.

The table on page 26 represents the closing financial position for 2023-24. Expenditure was slightly over budget, due to the pay award that was agreed mid-year, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council have covered that. The budget has seen a slight increase in the YJB grant, due to an uplift in 2024.

The Ministry of Justice Turnaround programme financial profile will be presented as a separate report in the 2023-24 financial year. We have continued to receive payment in kind for Police,

Probation and Health workers. The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner has committed further funding for our Triage programme.

### **Workforce Development**

We updated our workforce development policy in November 2022 to ensure all YJT employees and seconded workers have sufficient skills to enable them to carry out their job effectively. Staff receive monthly supervision and a yearly appraisal along with completing a range of mandatory training. All YJT in 2023-24 staff have received training on Pathways case management system, Hidden Harm (NPACS) and Prevent. The YJT have a monthly Effective Practice session with all staff. The sessions are designed to develop knowledge and skills. In 2023-24 we have completed work on Child First, the victim's journey, new case guidance and the YJB Diversion and Prevention assessment tool. Our CAMHS worker has also undertaken reflective practice sessions with staff.

The YJT currently have 10 Referral Order panel volunteers. Referral Order panel member meetings take place on a quarterly basis and an element of training is provided during these sessions. Panel members are also offered two 1:1 sessions each year. They also have access to Stockton Borough council training.

In the last year we have had several new members of staff joining the team. All have received our two-week induction programme which includes, meetings, training, and shadowing opportunities. Our training plan for 2024-25 covers such areas as transitions to probation, breach case management, harmful sexual behaviour refresher and custody processes.

### **Evidence-based practice and innovation**

Stockton-on-Tees YJT always seek to improve practice to ensure we achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families. Consequently, we continually work towards improving the services we provide and extend our offer based on best and evidence-based practice. We have built upon good practice over many years and desistance theory is embedded into our way of working. We ensure children have consistency of case managers so we can effectively form relationships with the children and families we work with. Our partnership approach/offer is an example of our current good practice. We have Police, Probation, ETE, SALT and CAMHS workers all in place and we are responsive to children's needs. We have continued to invest in a bike project as children's feedback about their experience there has been consistently positive.

### **Evaluation**

We intend to build on feedback gained from the YJB validation visit which concluded *"Outstanding practice is evidenced. Stockton has a high volume of court work and a very experienced team. Where there are issues with court or with police decisions, additionalities such as a court user group or a SPoC might assist in challenging these"*, February 2024.

## Priorities for the coming year

### 1. Help children stay out of the criminal justice system.

#### **We will:**

- Introduce YJB Diversion and Prevention Assessment tool for all OOC cases.
- Continue to promote diversion principles at our OOC panels and use of Outcome 22.
- Provide comprehensive interventions for children identified through the Turnaround and Immediate Justice programmes.
- Continue to deliver Triage services in partnership with the Office Police Crime Commissioner.

### 2. To reduce reoffending.

#### **We will:**

- To consider how we introduce Youth Endowment Fund recommendations of high impact interventions into practice. This to include Social Skills Training and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.
- To be pro-active in making referrals to Safer Communities Transitions Project for 17-year-olds who need additional support.
- To use core grant to make the 12-month ETE worker post permanent as this is having an impact on providing every child with the opportunity to engage in appropriate ETE.
- To provide a comprehensive offer to the youth justice cohort regarding sports and physical activities.

### 3. Reduce the use of custody and prioritise effective resettlement.

#### **We will:**

- Continue to hold a pre-sentence meeting in all possible custody cases to ensure comprehensive Community Sentences are recommended to court.
- Propose where appropriate electronic tags with trial monitoring as this will promote confidence to the Court that children can be managed safely in the community.
- All resettlement cases will be discussed at Management Board meetings to ensure any gaps in provision are known and escalated to Board members whose seniority can make key decisions.
- Ensure early planning is in place for those children leaving custody. This will be monitored by monthly resettlement meetings.

#### 4. Strengthen our responses to Serious Youth Violence and Child Exploitation.

**We will:**

- Work closely with our Adolescent Exploitation social work team to develop positive pathways for children to steer them away from Serious Youth Violence and Child Exploitation.
- The YJ Management Board will, at pace, drive and shape a refreshed multiagency approach to serious youth violence
- Work in partnership with CURV
- Focused Deterrence - To help Children understand the consequences of violent crime.
- To identify children at risk of serious youth violence at the earliest opportunity through our work with Custody Navigators, Turnaround Programme, and Immediate Justice and provide them with support.

#### 5. To Reduce the number of school exclusions.

**We will:**

- To monitor school exclusion across the youth justice cohort.
- Utilise ETE clinic and Fair Access Panel to raise concerns around school attendance and exclusions.

#### 6. To refresh our practice in our work victims and restorative practice.

**We will:**

- Increase capacity and resilience for staff to undertake victim and restorative justice work.
- Increase participation of victims at Referral Order panels
- To review all our process and practice in relation to victims and restorative justice.
- Within 6 months adopt YJB advised to model victim services using framework for devised by Gwent & Caerphilly YOS for example, victim safety and contact forms.

#### 7. To develop a Participation model of practice.

**We will:**

- Create a participation working group.
- Liaise with local partners Bright Minds and Cornerhouse Youth Project to model best practice.
- Gather children's lived experience and new ways to gain feedback to help us improve our youth justice services.
- To hold creative workshops with children to find out how best to support them to build positive identities.



## National priority areas

### Children from groups which are over-represented

It is paramount Stockton-On-Tees YJT are aware of issues of disproportionality and take appropriate action. It is recognised that nationally children from some ethnic minority groups are more likely to be criminalized. Over the last 12 months the Management Board have been provided with quarterly reports which document the ethnicity of the youth justice cohort. The report compares information to the latest census data (2021) on Stockton's population and in terms of ethnicity was 92% White, 4.6% Asian, 3.3% Other. We have not found any disproportionality in terms of ethnicity as the cohort has consisted of 93% White. The YJB information on the Stockton cohort for April – June 2023 on racial disparity reports in terms of reoffending the cohort, 94% were white and 6 Asian/Asian British. Again, this is in line our local demographics. Although the numbers are small, we are committed to continued scrutiny and analysis of data.

The Management Board have also monitored children known to wider services. A report was presented to the Management Board in October 2023. This consisted of an in-depth audit which looked at the characteristics of 62 children. This found 35 were open to Children Services and 27 who are not.

### Prevention

Our prevention offer is from the Targeted Youth and Missing from Home (MFH) Team which sits within the Adolescence and Exploitation service. The team are responsible for direct work with children where there are risks or vulnerability around all aspects of exploitation. They also provide a dedicated response to children who go missing from home.

All engagement with the Targeted Youth team is voluntary and they prioritise face to face contact and direct work, taking full opportunity of any reachable moments presented between them and the child. All direct work is aimed to be individual to each child's needs, innovative and using evidence-based practice tools, which underpins our good practice and quality assurance framework.

Targeted Youth aim to reduce the need for statutory involvement by responding to the early indicator of exploitation, to prevent the need for social care action. Both YJT and Targeted Youth Support have close links with SBC Community Safety team who can identify children who are displaying anti-social behaviour in the community. Targeted Youth Support also deliver Appropriate Adult support, intensive support, reparation work, personal development sessions for children open to the YJT.

## Diversion

Stockton-on-Tees YJT is committed to a diversionary approach in our work. We believe we should avoid unnecessary criminalisation of children and deal with them at the lowest possible level. The YJT are keen to ensure where there is a linked offence children receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation. Our OOC framework has a range of disposals (Restorative Interventions, Outcome 22, Triage and Triage 2) that avoid children having a criminal record so we can, through assessment and intervention help them form/maintain a pro-social identity. In the last 12 months we have had 103 children subject to one of the above and all children have been provided with an intervention. In the last year only 13 out of 116 OOC disposals received either a Youth Caution or Youth Conditional Caution. We have therefore embedded our diversionary principles into practice. This is evidenced by our significant reduction in FTE's.

## Education

Access to opportunities for ETE for the youth justice cohort is fundamental for their prospects. The YJT continue to hold a bimonthly ETE clinic which is attended by colleagues from Careers Services, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Education Improvement Teams. The meetings discuss all NEET children on the YJT caseload with a focus on problem solving, sharing information and escalation. It also includes cases of school aged children where they have been concerns regarding attendance. In the last year it became apparent from this meeting that specialist skills and dedicated time is needed to work with the youth justice cohort. Many have low self-esteem, poor educational attainment, attendance and motivation, SALT and SEND needs. Finding the right pathway with the right support is challenging for staff who also have mainstream cases on their caseload. Consequently, the Management Board agreed for the YJT to employ a ETE worker rather than continue with the previous model of workers across the Careers Team being allocated cases. The YJT have had an ETE worker in place since October 2023. Our current post 16 performance is 80%, a significant increase from 38% when the ETE worker started. The data for Statutory School age young people remains at 100%. It is positive to report that the ETE worker is having an impact. Specifically, work with post 16 children to encourage them to consider appropriate training courses e.g., NACRO and Princess Trust has been successful.

## Restorative approaches and victims

The YJT have a youth justice co-ordinator role and this post has responsibility for Restorative Justice and victims. Most victims are contacted and an offer of involvement in a restorative process is initiated. This offer includes direct mediation, ensuring the voice of the victim is heard, direct/indirect reparation and letters of apology/explanation. We have a high satisfaction rate with the victims who have choose to engage in a restorative process. Our Immediate Justice programme has meant we have had more victims to contact over the last year and we have needed to consider how we build capacity for staff to undertake victim and restorative work.

We have also developed a portfolio of reparation projects, for example family hub and allotment projects. HMI Probation new inspection framework starting in 2025 will inspect victim work and will focus on quality of work. The YJB have recently provided good practice guide from the restorative and victim work undertaken by Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service. Given these two developments our 2024-25 Youth Justice Plan will have a strategic objective of reviewing our practice and approach with our restorative justice and victim work.

### **Serious violence and exploitation**

The link between the exploitation of children and serious organised crime gangs and the connections with the supply of drugs and serious violence is well understood in Stockton, as is the intrafamilial harm whereby family members of children are involved in OCG and serious violence. It was evident the Partnership in Stockton needed to develop a coordinated response to criminal exploitation and youth violence. Stockton has responded to this by strengthening its response and building on its MACE with a dedicated service area with the creation of the Adolescent and Exploitation Service in December 2023.

The Exploitation Team sit in the Adolescent Service and is a Social Work Team that has at its core the safeguarding of children who are going missing and/or being exploited or at risk of exploitation. The team will work with cases that are open to Children's Services using a co-working model, so there will be an allocated Social Worker and an Exploitation Team Social Worker allocated to the child.

The service will work with children from the age of 10-18 years of age who are likely to suffer harm from exploitation, although this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The Service can work with children for as long as necessary or whilst there is consent, with regular Exploitation Team Around the Child (ETAC) reviews taking place between 4-6 weeks (depending on the risk) to assess the effectiveness of the plan.

We work in close partnership with Police (CET and MFH), Health, Community Safety and CCTV surveillance, Police custody navigator, health navigator from hospitals, YJT, Virtual School and the Missing From Home Team who are part of the Exploitation Service.

In bringing together the knowledge, expertise and resources of all partners, the Team can share information swiftly, create a full picture of risk and need and provide a creative and effective response that is always guided by the particular needs and wishes of the individual child, young person, and their family.

This is under pinned by our Core Principles which are: Youth voice and experience: development and transitions in their lives: Intervene early and help prevent further harm: Intervention: Disruption and Information sharing and data analysis.



The team will work with cases that are open to Children's Services using a co-working model, so there will be an allocated Social Worker and an Exploitation Team Social Worker allocated to the young person.

The MACE arrangements provide assessment and risk management responses to those Persons and Locations where exploitation harm is present for children. Persons and Locations of Concern are managed in partnership through the Community Safety led Joint Action Group and Police led MARSOC management of which YJT are partners. As such, the partnership is collectively responsive to support disruption of the contextual risks for children at risk of exploitation harm. In addition, there is the oversight of NRM submissions through the Tees Strategic Exploitation Group (TSEG), as such YJT work in partnership with MACE to ensure appropriate referrals are made, and information is shared to support identification of children at risk of Modern Slavery and Trafficking.

The YJS partnership facilitates the seamless transfer of information on risk and vulnerabilities across a range of forums which include, the strategic Multi-agency Child Exploitation Meetings (MACE), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). We continue to work closely with CURV and the funded custody navigators scheme provides a holistic approach in engaging and intervening with children at the earliest opportunity.

### **Detention in police custody**

We have established arrangements in place for children detained in custody. Youth Support provide Appropriate Adults during office hours 9 -5 and the Emergency Duty Team provide an after-hours service. All staff undertaking AA work have been PACE trained. Staff will work with the Police to facilitate that a parent/carer will attend in the first instance. If this is not possible, we will act as AA and ensure the child understands the process and any interview is conducted fairly. Furthermore, we will provide updates to parents/carers and relevant professionals.

Cleveland Youth Justice Services continue to hold a monthly Children in Custody meeting. This is aligned with a business priority for the YJB to ensure custody is used appropriately. The meeting is attended by the Police, emergency duty and custody teams. We focus on all children who were held for more than 12 hours. Stockton on average has 10 – 12 cases each month which meet these criteria. The meeting looks for assurance that these children have support in place. We have found in most cases the reasons why children are held for over 12 hours is because a 'live' investigation is ongoing, or the child is not fit for interview due to intoxication. We have also had an agreement in place with Aycliffe Secure Home where they will provide a PACE bed if one is available. Over the last 12 months we have had several children who was placed in a PACE bed before attending court the following day.

In partnership with CURV, Hartlepool and South Tees YJT we launched a Custody Navigator scheme in April 2023. The scheme has trained staff available six days a week to support children in custody. Good communication channels are in place, so information is shared across partners in a timely fashion, so children's needs are addressed.

## Remands

In the last year we have reviewed our bail and remand policy, and this has formed part of a recent effective practice sessions with staff. The YJT provide a trained and specialist youth justice officer to attend each day, if required. We have an extensive range of bail packages available to the Court including ISS. Good partnership relationships are in place with Police, CPS, defence solicitors, Children Services, and others. We work closely with Children Services, so appropriate support is provided if children have any accommodation issues. Over the past year we have had three children who have been remanded to custody. These were for serious offences which include Section 18 Wounding and Aggravated Burglary. However, within this period the YJT have provided robust bail packages to the Court which included the use of BSS and ISS. We have had eleven children subject to bail packages where either a remand or extensive bail conditions have been actively pursued by the CPS. The YJB National Standards validation visit on the 31/1/2024 felt our work in this area was outstanding.

## Use of custody

In last year's plan we had proposed how to minimise the use of custody in Stockton-on-Tees. We developed clear mechanisms which included, holding a Pre-Sentence meeting in all possible custody cases to ensure comprehensive Community Sentences were recommended to the court. In appropriate cases we have proposed ISS and the use of electronic monitoring. Our custody rate is currently at 0.29 which is higher than all other comparisons. The figure currently relates to six custodial sentences. All the custodial sentences relate to serious violent offences. In three of the cases, we initially proposed the children should receive a Community Sentence, which the Court agreed to. However, one case was subsequently sent to the Court of Appeal, and they revoked the YRO and imposed a DTO. In the other two cases the children breached their YRO's and the Court resented them to DTO's. In these cases, YRO plannings and back on track meetings were held. We offered considerable flexibility and worked closely with the children and their families to encourage compliance. Both were subject to electronic monitoring and were unable to manage this requirement of their YRO.

Although the custody rate is of concern, we have also produced many other PSR's where custody was being considered and these children were given community sentences. The feedback from the YJB validation visit said Stockton-On-Tees YJT are 'making every effort to steer children away from custody'.

## Constructive resettlement

Over the last 12-month Stockton-on-Tees YJT have continued to focus our attention on resettlement. We have considered the learning from HMI Probation thematic report into resettlement in 2019 and Case Management Guidance – Custody and Resettlement and YJB – How to Make Resettlement Constructive (Sept 2018). We recognised the importance of appropriate accommodation and ETE on release to build a positive identity for the child. Since our last Youth Justice plan, we have had three children released from custody. All returned home to live with family and the YJT ETE worker has provided specialist support to explore suitable options. Our CAHMS worker has also provided seamless support from liaising with

health professional in the custody to arranging appropriate appointments in the community. We have also ensured we have a range of personal development sessions in place, and this can range from cooking to going to the gym. We have also embedded bimonthly resettlement discussions between the Team Manager and Youth Justice Officers for each resettlement case. The meetings are designed to provide an update on the plan and to overcome any potential barriers to effective resettlement.

### **Standards for children in the justice system**

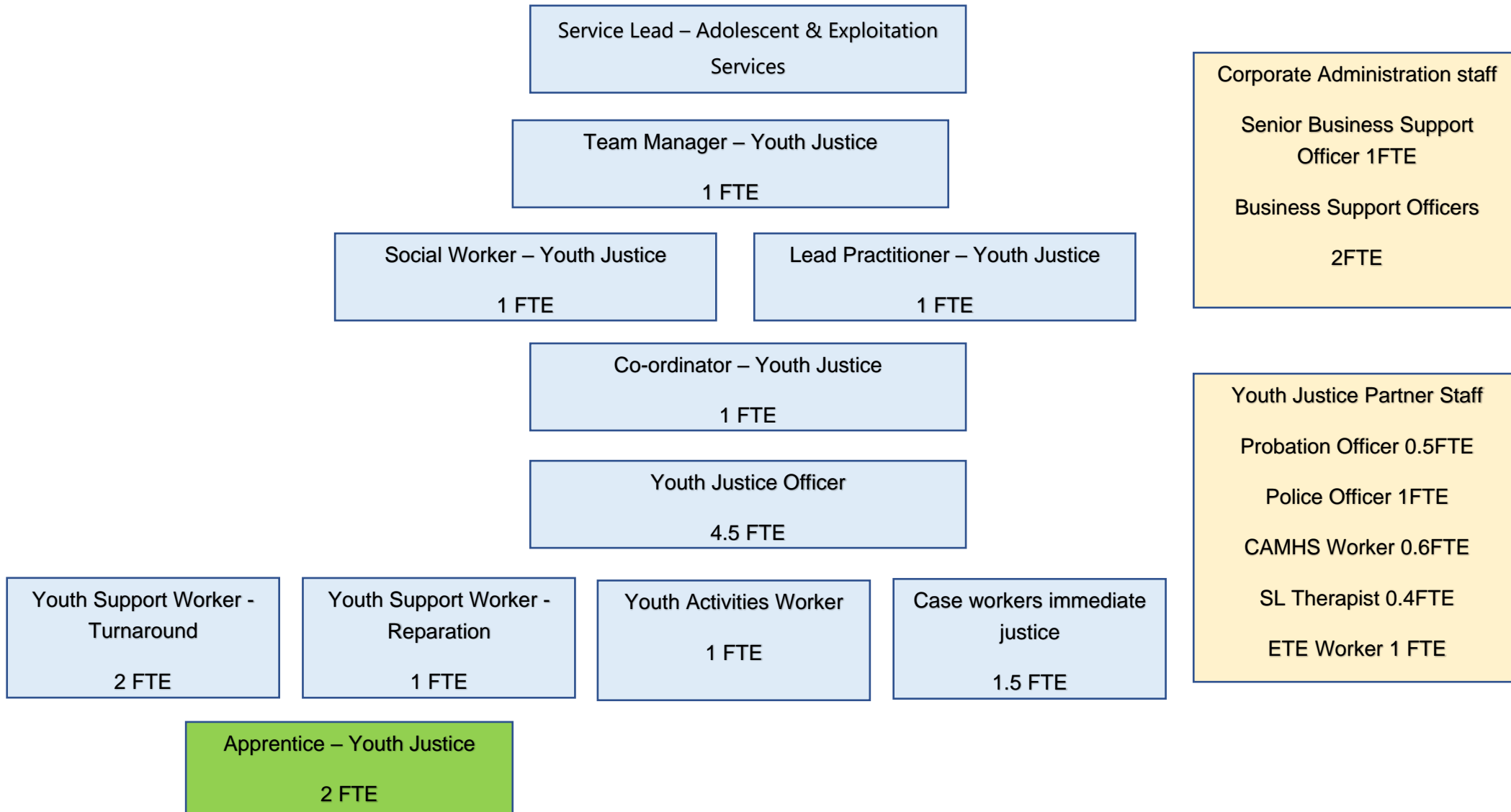
Stockton-on-Tees YJT completed the required National Standards self-assessment on standard two - At Court, last year. We reviewed our Strategy, Reports and Process. We considered a range of documents which included our remand policy and our practice in Court along with auditing 20 cases which were either Pre-Sentence Reports or Referral Orders. The self-assessment determined our Strategy as good and Reports and Process as Outstanding. The YJB selected Stockton-On-Tees YJT for a validation visit on the 31.1.2024. We provided a considerable range of evidence prior to the visit and the YJB reviewed the documentation as well as meeting staff and asking further questions to the management team. The YJB rated our work at Court as Outstanding across Strategy, Reports and Process. They remarked, 'Outstanding practice is evidenced'. The YJB said all possible steps are evidenced to divert children from court. In the last year 16 diversions were made from court. PSRs advocate for individual circumstances & social worker/ responsible person attends at court. Relationship-based practice model is embedded so one person is with the child throughout journey. Clear Child First approach and contact made with child and family pre-court to ease anxieties. Court officers advocate for the child, reminding the court where necessary of EHCP/ SAL issues/ ASD/ LAC, etc. The YJB said in terms of an area of development Stockton need to work with partners to re-establish a court user group.

We have embedded an audit process in the last year. We undertake audits on both OOC, and Statutory work which are aligned with HMI Probation standards and methodology. We have audited 15 cases over a 12-month period along with a further 20 for the National Standards audit. Themes have emerged around reviewing risk of harm and safety and wellbeing ratings and the format of plans for OOC. These issues have been addressed through effective practice meetings.

## Appendix 1A: Staffing Demographics

Youth Justice Team staff demographics		
GENDER	Female	20
	Male	4
	Other	0
ETHNICITY	White	96%
	Asian	04%
	Black	0%
	Mixed	0%
	Other	0%
DISABILITY	YES	0
	NO	24

## Appendix 1B: Youth Justice Team Structure chart



## Appendix 2: Budget Costs and Contributions

Below is a summary of the YJT's financial profile for 2023-24. As in previous years, the majority of expenditure was on staffing costs.

<b>BUDGET 2023/24</b>	<b>budget</b>	<b>outturn 2023/2024</b>	<b>outturn variance</b>
Staff	959,745	975,790	16,045
Premises	42,778	42,778	0
Office Costs	63,221	50,221	-13000
Central recharges	53,000	53,000	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,118,744</b>	<b>1,121,789</b>	<b>3,045</b>
Income	1,118,744	1,121,789	3,045
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Glossary

AssetPlus	A strengths based structured assessment tool based on research and developed by the Youth Justice Board looking at the child or young person's offence, personal circumstances and factors affecting desistance from crime
Child Exploitation	Safeguarding activity which focuses 'beyond the child's home and families', to target those adults who are exploiting (targeting, tricking and coercing) children for their own purposes and needs.
CURV	Cleveland's Unit for Reduction of Violence
ETAC	Exploitation Team Around the child.
ETE	Education, training and employment; work to improve educational and learning outcomes
FTE	First-time entrants to the criminal justice system
HMIP	HM Inspectorate of Probation
Justice System	Involves any or all of the agencies involved in upholding and implementing the law: police, courts, youth justice, probation and custody providers.
MACE	Multi-Agency Child Exploitation
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
OPCC	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Pathways	The new YOT case management system
Restorative Justice	The use of restorative approaches within a justice context. Brings those harmed by crime (victims) and those responsible for the harm (the offender) into communication, with a view to repairing the harm caused
Safety & Wellbeing	Terminology introduced by the YJB / AssetPlus to describe potential adverse outcomes where concerns exist that the young person's safety and well-being may be compromised through their own behaviour, personal circumstances or because of the acts / omissions of others
Safeguarding	Action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YJT	Youth Justice Team



For more information on this Plan, please contact the Youth Justice Team

[youthjusticeadmin@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:youthjusticeadmin@stockton.gov.uk)



## MOTION – WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE

Motion submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan, to be seconded by Cllr Niall Innes:-

“Winter Fuel Allowance

Stockton Borough Council notes the recent decision by the Labour led Government to end universal winter fuel payments for our pensioners and restrict eligibility to only those in receipt of Pension Credits and other benefits.

The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and well-being of our poorest older residents.

The government’s approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent our eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit, leaving many without the support they desperately need.

The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping our older residents of Stockton and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.

Council is deeply concerned that the vast majority of our pensioners who do not meet this threshold will now not receive the payments. Across England and Wales, the number of people eligible for winter fuel payments will fall by ten million (from 11.1million to only 1.2 million).

In Stockton Borough, the number of our pensioners affected by the change in eligibility criteria is 30,234. That means 87% of our pensioners currently eligible for winter fuel payments will no longer be able to claim the payment from this winter onwards. Only those receiving a pension of less than £218.15 a week (or £332.95 a week for couples) are eligible for pension credits. This is significantly lower than the living wage rate.

Stockton Borough Council further notes that the Energy Price Cap is due to rise by 10% in October, which combined by the removal of Winter Fuel Payments will push thousands of our pensioners into fuel poverty.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Leader, Cllr Bob Cook to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit receipt to be immediately reversed.
- Council further requests the Leader, Cllr Bob Cook write to the three Members of Parliament, Matt Vickers MP, Chris McDonald MP and Andy McDonald MP, who represent our pensioners and their families in the Borough asking them to give their formal support to reversing the changes to the Winter Fuel Payment eligibility by writing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- Request all group leaders within Stockton Borough Council sign a joint letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for the new Winter Fuel Payment policy to be reversed.”

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## COUNCIL QUESTIONS

QUESTION
<p>Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike for response by the Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture (Cllr Steve Nelson):-</p> <p>“During the last two winters Stockton Council have supported the use of "Warm Spaces" with financial grants due to the high cost of fuel.</p> <p>With Ofgen announcing an increase of 10% on gas and electric and the withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Allowance for the vast majority of pensioners "Will Stockton Borough Council be providing this facility again this winter?"</p>

**QUESTION**

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr Bob Cook):-

“Can the Leader of the Council inform me of the total amount this Council has spent on Interim staff from January 2023 to date?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Niall Innes for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr Bob Cook):-

“Considering all Councillors receive a generous basic allowance plus special responsibility allowance where applicable, does the Leader of the Council believe it is right Councillors can claim additional expenses that are not in the interest of local residents?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr Bob Cook):-

“A recent press article following a briefing to a journalist, that you were present at, regarding the vision and regeneration for Stockton Town Centre and the Teesdale area, disclosed to members and the council taxpayers in the Borough, that this Council had purchased the previous Debenhams department store on Stockton High Street.

As the Leader of Stockton Borough Council do you think it is appropriate that members should discover about such a significant purchase via the press, and that the decision to do so was not recorded on the Council's register, which is open to the public?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Tony Riordan for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr Bob Cook):-

“Despite this council agreeing on the 24th of January 2024 to request Stockton Hotels Company Ltd to publish their Profit and Loss Accounts and Directors Statements, and further questions raised by myself in this chamber on the 29th of May and the 24th of July regarding the publication, these have still not been published on the Council Website (7th September).

Will the leader agree with me, despite the Council’s wishes and the reassurances he has given to these questions, particularly on the 29th of May, when he said “This work has now been completed, and the additional documentation is available on the council’s website” (which was clearly incorrect) the lack of publication is indefensible and raises questions as to why there appears to be a reluctance to publish the documents?”

**QUESTION**

Member Question submitted by Cllr Sufi Mubeen for response by the Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety (Councillor Norma Stephenson):-

“Can the Leader of the Council, outline in detail, what action has to been taken to address the sex workers plying their trade on the streets of the Ropner and Town Centre wards?”



**QUESTION**

Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr Bob Cook):-

“Can the Cabinet Member advise me how many buildings SBC own or rent in the Borough?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Lynn Hall for response by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport (Cllr Clare Besford):-

“Why did the Cabinet hold the September 'drop- in' session reported in the Leader's Blog, by the Strategic Waste Management Team about waste and recycling behind closed doors?

All Councillors need to be involved in the policy making and implementation as we move to a new waste collection model. How can you achieve this without our input? We were told it was to discuss the key milestones for the service plan and delivery as it will affect our residents or is it yet another policy implemented without consultation.”

**QUESTION**

Member Question submitted by Cllr Lynn Hall for response by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Lisa Evans):-

“Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that Safeguarding training is essential for senior staff as well as front line staff and members and is she assured the systems are robust and fit for purpose?”

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