

Date: Wednesday 22 January 2025 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 20 November 2024. (Pages 7 - 20)
- 5 Public Question Time** (Pages 21 - 26)
- 6 Appointments to Committees, Joint Committees and Outside Body for 202327** (Pages 27 - 30)
- 7 Inclusive Growth Strategy** (Pages 31 - 54)
- 8 Motion to Council - 22 January 2025 - Cllr Paul Weston** (Pages 55 - 56)
- 9 Motion to Council - 22 January 2025 - Cllr Tony Riordan** (Pages 57 - 60)
- 10 Motion to Council - 22 January 2025 - Cllr Niall Innes** (Pages 61 - 62)
- 11 Members' Question Time** (Pages 63 - 68)
- 12 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

KEY - Declarable interests are:-

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

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

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

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

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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COUNCIL

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday 20 November 2024.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr John Gardner), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Nathan Gale, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Katie Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: Mike Greene (CE), Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Jonathan Nertney, Peter Bell (CS), Garry Cummings (DCE&F, T&P), Reuben Kench (DoCS,E&C), Carolyn Nice (A,H&W), Majella McCarthy (ChS).

Also in attendance: Members of the Public.

Apologies: Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Laura Tunney and Cllr Jim Taylor.

COU/144/24 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

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

COU/145/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

COU/146/24 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024.

A correction to the minutes was moved by Cllr Tony Riordan and agreed by Council as follows:-

Members Question Time, page 19, fifth paragraph, after the words £300k for the Hotel include the words:-

“plus a £200k insurance payout,”

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

COU/147/24 Public Question Time

The Worshipful the Mayor informed the meeting that there were no Public Questions.

COU/148/24 Appointments to Committees and Joint Bodies for 2023/27

Consideration was given to a report on appointments to vacancies on Council committees, boards, panels and joint bodies in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group, which was entitled to the seats under political proportionality requirements.

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made:-

Audit and Governance Committee - Cllr Mohammed Mazi
Appointments Panel - Cllr Mohammed Mazi
Corporate Parenting Board - Cllr Jack Miller
Members' Advisory Panel - Cllr Jack Miller
Adults Social Care and Health Select Committee - Cllr Jack Miller
Statutory Licensing Committee - Cllr Jason French
General Licensing - Cllr John Coulson
River Tees Port Health Authority - Cllr Mohammed Mazi
Joint Tees Valley Health Scrutiny - Cllr Jack Miller

COU/149/24 The Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028

Consideration was given to a report that provided Council with the final draft of the Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028.

Cabinet approved the draft Stockton-on-Tees Plan for stakeholder consultation in October 2024 and a period of consultation took place from 18th October until the 4th November 2024. The Plan was also be considered by Executive Scrutiny Committee on 19th November 2024.

The Stockton-on-Tees Plan had been developed to reflect the drivers and priorities for the Council, our partners and most importantly communities.

A high-level analysis of data had been carried out to give a picture of performance and to set a baseline.

The voice of communities had also informed the development of a draft Vision for the Borough:

Stockton-on-Tees is home – a warm and friendly place, where we welcome others and come together as a single community. We are a diverse and inspiring Borough, culturally rich and with confidence in a future that we can all share and be proud of. At the economic heart of Tees Valley, we are a dynamic, safe and healthy place, where everyone can grow and succeed. We work together to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to opportunity. We are Team Stockton-on-Tees.

Five priority areas were proposed as the focus of our activity to turn the vision into reality. These were:

- The best start in life to achieve big ambitions
- Healthy and Resilient Communities
- A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit
- An Inclusive Economy
- A Sustainable Council

Further detail on each of these priorities was attached to the report.

There was wide engagement with communities and Elected Members in developing the draft plan. A formal consultation on the draft plan was used to gather any final views ahead of Council approval. The consultation was live from the 18th October until the 4th November 2024 and no responses were received.

It was noted that the comments made by the Executive Scrutiny Committee held on 19 November 2024 would be noted/actioned by officers.

RESOLVED that the Stockton-on-Tees Plan (as attached at Appendix 1 of the report) be approved.

COU/150/24 Powering Our Future - Prudential Borrowing Requirements

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval for prudential borrowing to enable delivery of transformation projects approved by Cabinet on 17th October 2024. The requirement of £4.3m of prudential borrowing for the acquisition of food and recycling waste receptacles, green waste bins, site preparation costs for a Waste Transfer Station and resurfacing of Wellington Square car park.

The Powering our Future Update report to Cabinet on 17th October 2024 outlined a number of service changes through the Transformation Mission. The report to Cabinet was included as an appendix which provides more detail on each of the proposals.

Upfront investment was required to enable some of these service changes and these are detailed below:-

- a) Green Waste – a one-off capital cost of £1,000,000 to purchase 40,000 green waste bins
- b) Waste Transfer Station – site preparation costs of £1,100,000
- c) New Waste Receptacles - £1,200,000
- d) Car Parking – Resurface Wellington Square - £1,000,000

The total investment required was £4.3m. If the Council were to fund these costs upfront, and negate the need for borrowing, this would effectively increase the in-year financial pressure which would increase the need to utilise earmarked reserves. Alternatively the costs could be funded by prudential borrowing, allowing the cost to be spread over a longer period. This allowed the budget savings to be realised straight away, contributing towards the Council's MTFP. It was therefore recommended that prudential borrowing be used.

The costs of prudential borrowing would be funded by the savings or new income generated from the service changes. This had been factored into the financial implications included within the Cabinet report.

The prudential borrowing repayments and the repayment terms were summarised in a table within the report.

Moved by Councillor Bob Cook, seconded by Councillor Lisa Evans:-

“Approve £4.3m prudential borrowing for the acquisition of food and recycling waste receptacles, green waste bins, site preparation costs for a Waste Transfer Station and resurfacing of Wellington Square car park.”

Moved by Councillor Tony Riordan, seconded by Councillor Niall Innes that the substantive motion be amended as follows:-

“1. Approve the use of £4.3m from the earmarked reserves and unused borrowing approvals in the capital programme, for the acquisition of food and recycling waste receptacles, green waste bins, site preparation costs for a Waste Transfer Station and resurfacing of Wellington Square car park.

2. £3.3m in the earmarked reserves to be utilised for the acquisition of food and recycling waste receptacles, green waste bins and site preparation costs for a Waste Transfer Station. £1m to be utilised from the unused borrowing approvals in the capital programme, Reshaping our Town Centres, for the resurfacing of Wellington Street Car Park”

At this point and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.65 Councillor Niall Innes requested that a recorded vote be taken; which was supported by at least a quarter of the members present:-

Members in favour of the amendment:-

Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

Members against the amendment:-

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

Abstentions:- Cllr Ian Dalgarno and Cllr Mick Moore.

22 for the amendment

26 against the amendment
2 abstentions

The amendment was not carried.

Members then considered the substantive motion.

Cllr Hall requested a recorded vote on the substantive motion which was supported by at least a quarter of the members present.

Members in favour of the substantive motion:-

Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Michelle Bendelow, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Richard Eglington, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Nathan Gale, 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 Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Katie Weston and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Members against the substantive motion:-

Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mohammed Mazi, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Marcus Vickers, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

Abstentions:- None

28 for the substantive motion
22 against the substantive motion
0 abstentions

The substantive motion was carried.

RESOLVED that £4.3m prudential borrowing be approved for the acquisition of food and recycling waste receptacles, green waste bins, site preparation costs for a Waste Transfer Station and resurfacing of Wellington Square car park.

COU/151/24 Members' Question Time

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?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“Details on land and property owned by the Council can be found on the Council’s website, obviously this will change from time to time, officers will send you the link to

the page (Land and property owned by the Council - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council) Whilst some assets will be individual buildings, many will be a collection of buildings under a single asset name, for example, a School.”

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.”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“Thank you Cllr Hall, I am able to advise that Cabinet did not hold the drop-in session behind closed doors. The originally scheduled drop-in session was postponed and an email was sent to all Members on Wednesday 28th August. The rescheduled session took place on 1st October and you were present at that session.

Cllr Hall’s question calls for all parties to be involved in policy making around waste collection. As Cllr Hall is aware, the proposed waste collection model, based on weekly collection of recyclables and fortnightly collection of residual waste, was recommended by the cross-party Place Select Committee review of Domestic Waste and Recycling after a thorough and detailed investigation of the issues and options involved. So members have been involved. We are proud of the fact that work on this complex issue, that affects every household, was developed with members from all political groups and at the Select Committee that made the recommendations and received unanimous support.”

Cllr Lynn Hall asked the following supplementary question:-

“Do you really think green waste figures will be the same next year as they are this year?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“Green waste will be very different next year as we are introducing it as a chargeable service over 36 weeks in-line with the CIFA guidelines.”

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?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

“I would encourage all senior staff, front line staff and members to complete Safeguarding training.

The Adults & Children Safeguarding Partner Organisations across Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees actively support the ‘Think Family’ approach and are committed to the continuous learning and development of all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people: adults, children, young people and families.

From the 1st April 2024, the e-learning that is available to everyone via the Safeguarding Partnerships has been updated. All courses are currently free of charge for staff and volunteers working within the Tees area in Statutory, Voluntary or Not for Profit Organisations. Commissioned Care Providers, Nurseries, Academies, and Independent Schools are not considered as Private / For Profit organisations and can access the e-learning free of charge.

In quarter 1 of 2024, there have been 422 registrations recorded for Safeguarding training from Stockton Council.

The system to facilitate the training is robust and fit for purpose. The Safeguarding Partnerships regularly review the training that is provided.”

Cllr Lynn Hall asked the following supplementary question:-

“Do all those taking the training know who the Lead Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is and is his number readily available? Is confidentiality followed to the letter?”

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:

“Yes.”

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

“Can the leader inform me how many staff the Local Authority employ that deal with internal recruitment processes?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“Firstly, it’s important to clarify that we do not have staff whose sole responsibility is internal recruitment. The task of filling internal vacancies is handled collectively by various members of our team. This includes our HR team within Corporate Services and staff at Xentrall Shared Services, who support both internal and external recruitment activities for multiple councils and educational establishments. Managers across different levels also play a significant role in internal recruitment processes.”

Cllr Niall Innes asked the following supplementary question:-

“Given that there are internal individuals who have oversight of those different things, can the Leader clarify why as detailed in an FOI request received from the Council that since 2021 this Council has spent £15.8m on recruiting agencies? Does the Leader agree that this proves incompetence of this Labour led Council?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“I’m not sure if that figure is right but we do obviously spend money on external recruitment when we are looking for the likes of a Chief Executive or Director of a Service because we obviously want to find the best people available. Most public sector services use the same process. This is the best way of getting the best people for the people of Stockton. We obviously don’t spend any money on internal recruitment apart of officers time within the Council.”

Member Question submitted by Cllr Ted Strike for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“SBC purchased Debenhams without having a survey carried out. Has a surveyed been carried out since the purchase and if so do it show any significant work that needs carrying out, if so how much? If a survey hasn't been carried out will one be carried out in the foreseeable future?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with:-

“The High Street portion of the former Debenhams store (150-152 High Street) was made available for acquisition through auction in 2023, with a limited information pack on the building issued by the seller at the time. Whilst the building was acquired outside of an auction process, the timescales involved in securing the building and approach taken by the seller meant that there wasn’t opportunity to undertake any surveys of the building prior to acquisition, beyond the information offered by the seller at the time. The power, intruder alarm and fire alarm controls for the entire building are located in the front half of the former Debenhams meaning that control of the front portion of the building was critical for any occupation and indeed safe access to the rear portion.

Since acquisition the Council has undertaken measured surveys of the entire building, Mechanical and Electrical Surveys and an Asbestos Survey. Surveys have revealed that there are some historic areas of water ingress that will need to be addressed, with suitable options for mitigation/repair being assessed. The nature of any future work to the building would depend on the future use and as such, there are no significant works identified to be undertaken at this stage. The Council is in advanced negotiations with a potential tenant for the rear portion of the ground floor of the building, with the exact nature and specification of works to enable reuse of the space being assessed as part of the process.”

Cllr Ted Strike asked the following supplementary question:-

“Was the survey carried out by independent surveyors or by Council employees and is there a cost figure for it?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with:-

“I haven’t got the cost of that work with me tonight but I can let Cllr Strike know that and I can’t verify who exactly did the survey but I am assured that it was a proper and reasonably decision that we took to acquire the property.”

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

“What is SBCs definition or understanding of 'traffic calming measures'?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“As set out in Government Guidance Local Transport Note 1/07 Traffic calming is a useful way of controlling drivers' speeds where speeds are either excessive and/or inappropriate for the type and use made of a road. Justification for installing traffic calming is often based on improving safety by reducing accidents. Traffic calming measures have evolved from focusing solely on physical highway engineering solutions to also include changing driver attitudes and perceptions of appropriate speeds. This can be achieved through streetscape modifications that create a sense of place and awareness of street activities, as well as driver education, awareness, and enforcement campaigns.”

Cllr Marcus Vickers asked the following supplementary question:-

“A petition with over 1000 signatures calling for traffic calming measures was delivered to this Council so can I ask when will this Council listen to local residents?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“As a local Councillor it is a great job that you have managed to get so many signatures on that petition and I believe that you have had conversations with officers as to why that petition wasn't accepted. I believe that recent meetings with the Parish Council have been fruitful and as I referenced in my original answer decisions around traffic calming measures are based on concerns and accidents and therefore one of the reasons why we have our Community Participation Budget and our Ward Transport Budget is to enable Councillors invest their own budget to introduce traffic calming measures and I'm pleased that you have been able to find a solution working with the Parish Council.”

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

“Can the Leader of the Council inform me of what community consultation took place to gain residents views on the proposed changes to bin collections?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“In 2023, National Government announced changes to the waste and recycling that Councils must collect. These set out the need to collect weekly food waste and the requirement to offer garden waste collection. These formed the basis of a review of waste and recycling within Stockton Borough, undertaken by the Place Select Committee.

The proposed changes to bin collections in Stockton are based on the recommendations of the Place Select Committee. These were set out in detail in January 2024. The Council provided a full description of what was being proposed through local media and social media. The Gazette covered it extensively and invited the public to comment. The Council covered it as a lead story in the My Council e-newsletter and in the March edition of Stockton News, which is distributed to homes across the Borough. In both our print media and online media we encouraged

residents to comment. Facebook alone reached nearly 4000 readers and there were lots of comments and reactions.

Responses were understandably mixed, but included those who were frustrated by the current low levels of recycling and asked why it had taken so long to achieve what was common in other parts of the Country. There were several people who welcomed the move to weekly collection of recycling because they typically have enough to fill the white bag before the end of the second week and don't need their wheeled 'residual waste' bin collecting every week.

There were also people who felt their wheeled bin would be full after a week and would overflow before it was collected if we moves to fortnightly collection. A number of people complained about the white bags, suggesting that they blow away or their contents is spilled when its windy. Some suggested an additional wheeled bin for recycling would be better. Other people complained about the space taken up by large wheeled bins, especially for those with small front gardens or on terraced streets.

Taking account of the feedback from all sources and the independent analysis of the national team advising Councils on waste and recycling, Cabinet deliberated over the best solution for the different containers. Cabinet also had to factor in costs and the requirements for collection and sorting of waste.

The introduction of a heavier weight in the recycling bags and the retention of weekly collections in back alleys for properties that can't put their bins out in front of their houses, are examples of how the Council has responded to feedback.

Recognising the possibility that residents may be confused or need assistance with the move to a new collection model, the Cabinet agreed to allocate resources for a small team of staff to go door to door to offer advice in the months leading up to the changes.

Ultimately, Stockton Council is implementing these changes to waste and recycling in order to increase recycling rates and save money. The cost for disposing of our rubbish if our recycling levels remain as low as they are, will be millions of pounds, in addition to the cost to the environment. The Council is trying to find the right balance."

Cllr Jack Miller asked the following supplementary question:-

"During our recent successful by-election in Fairfield residents shared our dismay that this Labour led Council failure to deliver services that they work so hard for. Why is this Labour led Council so adverse to listening to the views of its residents? Is it because it doesn't trust residents or they don't trust they will give them the right answer?"

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

"We do listen to residents and we always have done. There are many views on waste collection. We will always try and listen to residents who have got an view on recycling."

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

“On our regular ward walkabouts we inspected a number of roads in Billingham Central which were resurfaced this year using microasphalt as a trial. What was the outcome and will we be using microasphalt resurfacing more in the future?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“Our micro asphalt trial programme was completed during September 2024 and consisted of resurfacing fourteen residential roads. The material is a cold applied mix, and as such roads can be reopened to traffic quickly, it is far more cost effective when compared to other materials and more environmentally friendly.

Initial feedback has been positive, although a couple of lessons learned have emerged during the process. A more detailed review is being conducted, and its highly likely that this material will form part of the annual highway maintenance programme moving forward.”

Cllr Barry Woodhouse asked the following supplementary question:-

“Given the shortfall in the highways budget caused by the previous governments underfunding as outlined by Cllr Ray Godwin in his question on 26 July 2023 estimated £1.6m annually, can you inform the Council of any cost savings?”

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport responded with:-

“There have been cost savings of around about £200k. This has allowed us to resurface more roads across the Borough. In addition there are cost savings that come from actual highway inspections and re-active resurfacing and repairs. I'm hopeful the review will be completed soon and we will be able to announce a resurfacing programme for the next financial year.”

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

“What work is ongoing with our partner agencies to target the illegal use of off-road bikes?”

The Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety responded with:-

“The use of illegal off-road motorbikes within our communities is understandable a great concern for many residents in Stockton on Tees. Not only for the inherit risk through dangerous riding but also the perception and fear of crime and ASB in causes to many residents.

As all Members are aware, the responsibility of directly tackling these types of issues sit with Cleveland Police who have a range of powers to do just that. That said, we are also fully aware of our partnership obligations to support Cleveland Police in their efforts under Operation Endurance. So far this year around 40 bikes have been seized across Stockton on Tees by Cleveland Police, thanks to the efforts of their officers, partners and reporting by our communities.

We provide a significant amount of information and intelligence, obtained through our Civic Enforcement Officers on patrol and our network of CCTV cameras around the borough. Information on riders, locations which bikes are stored and how bikes are sold for example is shared on a daily basis which allows enforcement action to be taken. We are also using our own powers in relation to Trading Standards to disrupt the illegal sale of off-road bikes and also ensuring the sale of fuel, especially underage sales, is investigated and rigorously dealt with.

We adopt a problem solving approach with our partners in the Safer Stockton Partnership supporting with measures such as education in schools through to additional measures in our communities such gates and barriers in our parks and open spaces. We have also adopted more innovative solutions to tackle this issue such as the use of drones to assist in the gathering of intelligence. These measures recently led to the seizure of two off-road bikes in the Thornaby area as part of Operation Endurance.

I would encourage all Members to make sure we continue to share information and intelligence with Cleveland Police to ensure all this great work can continue. Together we can reduce the issues caused by off-road bikes, but it requires a collective effort from everyone impacted by this blight.”

Cllr Paul Rowling asked the following supplementary question:-

“Will the Cabinet Member agree with me for too long residents across this Borough and across this country have had to live with these bikes and will she pledge to this Council to work closely with Thirteen, MP’s, the PCC Matt Storey to speak to government and ask them to bring forward as quickly as possible the new police powers promised to deal with off-road bikes in the governments 2024 manifesto?”

The Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety responded with:-

“We already work with Thirteen as they attend briefing meetings with the police and the Council and they do already have their own ASB team. They investigate any properties where there is ASB and there is a threat of eviction. I will agree with you and I have already spoken to the Home Secretary and the PCC and he is pushing the government as hard as possible so hopefully we will see some progress in the very near future.”

COU/152/24 Forward Plan and Leader’s Statement

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

Council last met on 18 September. Since then Cabinet had met on 17 October and again on 14 November when and considered the following matters:

- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Annual Complaints Report
- Powering Our Future
- The Stockton-on-Tees Plan 2024-2028
- 'Going for Gold Family Fun Day'
- Memorandum of Understanding between Stockton on Tees Borough Council and Teesside University

- Procurement Plan / Higher Value Contracts
- Civil Penalty Policy
- Local Accounts for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
- Care & Health Winter Planning Update Oct 2024

Looking forward, the Cabinet was scheduled to meet on 12 December and then on 16 January. Some of the topics that may be coming forward to Cabinet included:

- MTFP Update
- Learning and Skills Governing Body Annual Report
- Sycamores Re-development
- Procurement Plan / Higher Value Contracts
- SIRF and Events Look Back
- Gambling Policy
- School Investment Strategy

The next Council meeting would be on 22 January 2025. Until then, the Leader of the Council wished all Members all the very best for the upcoming festive season. Stockton Sparkles event would start on 28 November the launch from 5pm with an evening full of live music and entertainment, hot food and drinks, and the moment everyone has been waiting for, the Christmas light switch-on.

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COUNCIL – 22 JANUARY 2025 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

QUESTION
<p>Public Question submitted by Andrew Dennis for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-</p> <p>“What decision-making processes led to SBC’s supporting the successful Garden Village bid at Wynyard Park, SBC’s role in the delivering that bid and co-ordinating the Wynyard Masterplan delivery.”</p>

QUESTION

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

“In July 2023, Cllr Riordan met with the council's monitoring officer to discuss planning service failures. An Inquiry was agreed. What was the brief and outcome of that Inquiry?”

QUESTION

Public Question submitted by Ryan Davis for response by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Lisa Evans):-

“As a care-experienced individual, can you confirm that every elected member fully understands their role as a corporate parent and is truly committed to going above and beyond for children in care?”

QUESTION

Public Question submitted by Ryan Davis for response by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Cllr Lisa Evans):-

“The council has made progress for care leavers recently, What’s next to transform services, cut NEET stats, and ensure every care-experienced young person thrives and are fully support?”

QUESTION

Public Question submitted by Nathan Sizer for response by the Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety (Cllr Norma Stephenson):-

“What is being done about all the fly tipping that’s happening in the back alleys of Newtown.? I’m constantly reporting it, surely it would be cheaper in the long run to invest and have cameras installed to catch the culprits and start issuing fines. People round here are sick of it and it’s attracting vermin such as rats as well as making the town look filthy and run down?”

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AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 JANUARY 2025

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE
BODY FOR 2023/27**

SUMMARY

This report presents appointments to vacancies on Council committees in accordance with the wishes of relevant political groups, entitled to the vacant seats, under political proportionality requirements. The report also highlights vacancies on two joint bodies which are also subject to proportionality requirements. In addition a member has stepped down from an outside body and this may be filled by any councillor. The attached **appendix** provides full details.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to approve/consider the appointments, detailed in the **appendix**.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Seats must be allocated to political groups as prescribed by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

Consultation has taken place with political group leaders.

Jonathan Nertney
Head of Democratic Services
jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk
Tel number 01642 526312

Background Papers	None
Education Related Item	No
Ward(s) and Ward Councillors	All
Property Implications	None

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Committees, Boards and Joint Committees

Committee	Remove	Add
Health and Wellbeing Board (Conservative Seat)	Cllr David Reynard	Cllr Sufi Mubeen
Place Select Committee (Conservative Seat)	Cllr Andrew Sherris	Cllr David Reynard
Joint Bodies		
River Tees Port Health Authority (Labour Seat)	Cllr Paul Rowling	TBA
Tees Valley Combined Authority – Audit and Governance Committee (Conservative Seat)	Cllr David Reynard	Cllr Mohammed Mazi
Outside Body		
Hartlepool Power Station (May be filled by any Councillor)	Cllr Paul Rowling	TBC

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AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 JANUARY 2025

REPORT OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with the revised Inclusive Growth Strategy 2025-2028 as one of the Council's key policy documents as outlined in the Stockton-on Tees Plan 2024-2028.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)/DECISION(S)

This Strategy marks a new direction for Inclusive Growth. It sets out a Vision for the future, developed in partnership with internal and external stakeholders and will directly link to the Fairer Stockton Framework, which aims to narrow inequalities gaps across the Borough.

The Strategy has been developed to reflect the importance of a long-term approach that encourages both sustained economic growth across the Borough and a more equitable distribution of the wealth that we generate.

Our aspirations for the local area are visionary and forward looking and once approved, the Inclusive Growth Strategy will serve as a guiding framework to work proactively with investors, developers and other stakeholders to create the right conditions for successful inclusive growth.

Whilst this is the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy, we will work collaboratively with our partners, including the business community, to deliver our priorities for success. This will include our Business Ambassadors, who are working with us proactively as advocates for our people and our place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended to Council that:

1. The Inclusive Growth Strategy (attached at **Appendix 1**) be approved.

DETAIL

1. Inclusive Growth refers to broad-based growth that enables the widest range of people and places to contribute to economic success, and to benefit from it too. Its purpose is to achieve more prosperity alongside greater equity in opportunities and outcomes and enabling as many people as possible to contribute and benefit from growth – essentially promoting economic growth that benefits the Borough's residents.
2. The Strategy is centred on ten strategic 'levers'. These are the themes that will govern our work on inclusive growth and will ensure that we as a Council take a comprehensive approach that focuses equally on economic growth and inclusivity. The themes are wide-ranging and include developing new economic roles for Stockton-on-Tees and ensuring we become a place recognised for good work, fair pay and responsible business ownership.

3. The ten levers reinforce the ambition of other Council strategies including the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees framework, the overarching 2024-28 Council Plan, and the emerging Powering Our Future Strategy. We will also work with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to complement their emphasis on inclusive growth and inequalities contained within the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan.
4. The ten levers are proposed as the focus of our activity to turn our Vision into reality. These are:
 1. Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Employment & Business Base
 2. Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Skills & Enterprise Base
 3. Helping our Businesses to Grow Faster and to Better Innovate
 4. Developing New Economic Roles and Functions within Stockton-on-Tees
 5. Changing the Image and Investor Perceptions of Stockton-on-Tees
 6. Ensuring All Our Target Communities Can Access Economic Opportunity
 7. Making Stockton-on-Tees a Recognised Place of Good Work & Fair Pay
 8. Making Stockton-on-Tees a Recognised Place of Responsible Business & Local Ownership
 9. Ensuring More Wealth is Retained in Stockton-on-Tees and Circulates Locally
 10. Putting More Economic Assets and Power into the Hands of our Local Communities

Further detail on each of these levers can be found in **Appendix 1**.

5. This Strategy was developed alongside key stakeholders, including engagement across all Council departments, external stakeholders and the business community. The outcomes this informed the priority actions under each of the ten levers.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

6. The Inclusive growth strategy has drawn from a wide range of data and intelligence and an Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. But overall, it represents the voice of the businesses in the Borough and residents engaging with the Employment and Training Hub. We've gathered intelligence from:
 - Engagement with our Business Ambassador Group
 - Engagement with member organisations NECC and FSB
 - Feedback from 1-1's with businesses
 - Feedback from residents, actively seeking employment
 - Our Business Survey.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

This report does not contain corporate parenting implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Inclusive Growth Strategy is aligned with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report. Financial implications will be considered through any proposed action to deliver and approval sought at that point.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Any and all legal implications will be identified through careful action planning throughout the delivery of the Strategy noting, in particular, that growing pressures on communities and public services will require effective management of the Council's resources, and that, any decisions made pursuant to the Strategy are also made in accordance with the law to minimise any risk of legal challenge.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Inclusive Growth Strategy provides the vision for the future of the borough. The greatest risk associated with the Strategy is that the development has not been sufficiently robust and that the wrong priorities have been identified. This risk has been mitigated by a detailed development process included considerable consultation with our business, partners and internally with Members and officers.

WARDS AFFECTED AND CONSULTATION WITH WARD/COUNCILLORS

All Stockton-on-Tees wards affected.

Engagement has been carried out with Regeneration and Housing - Lead Cabinet Member Councillor Nigel Cooke.

Community impact will be measured around interventions within communities as part of the Strategy.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

All relevant background papers are included within **Appendix 1**.

Name of Contact Officer: Tracey Carter

Post Title: Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

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Inclusive Growth Strategy

2025-2028



Foreword

This Inclusive Growth Strategy is a long-term approach that encourages both sustained economic growth across the Borough and a more equitable distribution of the wealth that we generate.

The Strategy is centred on ten strategic 'levers'. These are the themes that will govern our work on inclusive growth and will ensure that we as a Council take a comprehensive approach that focuses equally on economic growth and inclusivity. The themes are wide-ranging and include developing new economic roles for Stockton-on-Tees and ensuring we become a place recognised for good work, fair pay and responsible business ownership.

The ten levers reinforce the ambition of other Council strategies including the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees framework, the overarching 2024-28 Stockton-on-Tees Plan, and the emerging Powering Our Future Strategy. We will also work with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to complement their emphasis on inclusive growth and inequalities contained within the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan.

Our aspirations for the local area are visionary and forward looking and we will work proactively with investors, developers and other stakeholders to create the right conditions for successful inclusive growth. Whilst this is the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy, we will work collaboratively with our partners, including the business community, to deliver our priorities for success. This will include our Business Ambassadors, who are working with us proactively as advocates for our people and our place.

The Strategy also includes a series of priority actions to ensure there are practical measures in place to realise our goals. Some of the measures I am most excited about are the delivery of our Care and Health Innovation Zone, the establishment of a Stockton-on-Tees¹ Good Employment Charter and our efforts to establish a B-Corp cluster in the Borough.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is committed to helping broaden the distribution of economic wealth and addressing some of the profound inequalities we face in our Borough and recognise this needs to be a long-term commitment. We will need our other stakeholders, not least our local business community, to join us on this journey and make a similar long-term commitment.

This strategy, and the actions that flow from it, will enable us to join a group of best-in-class authorities who take inclusive growth very seriously. We will now be able to better engage with and learn from these other leading authorities.

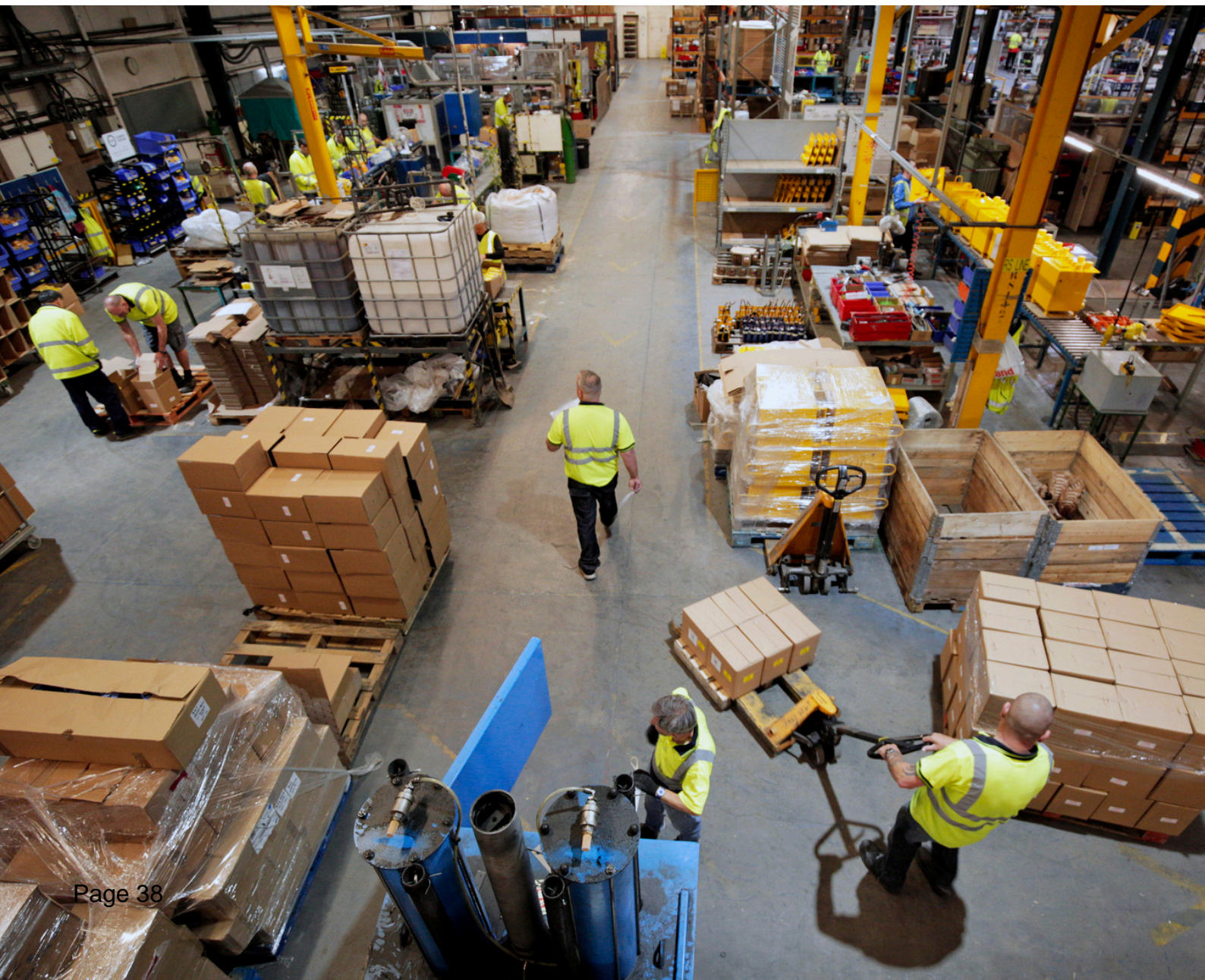


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Cooke'.

Councillor Nigel Cooke
Cabinet Member for
Regeneration and
Housing

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3. Setting the Scene – Our Inclusivity Challenge	5
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1. Introducing the Inclusive Growth Strategy

Inclusive Growth refers to broad-based growth that enables the widest range of people and places to contribute to economic success, and to benefit from it too. There is a dual focus on securing economic growth and ensuring that all wealth that is generated is broadly distributed.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and our partners are firmly behind this concept. We want to be continually building the size and scale of our economic base, and we want the benefits of this growth to reach more fully across the whole labour market spectrum and across all our communities.

This strategy seeks to develop a virtuous circle where we keep growing our economic base and the proceeds of this growth get more and more equitably distributed. Specifically, the purpose of this strategy is to:

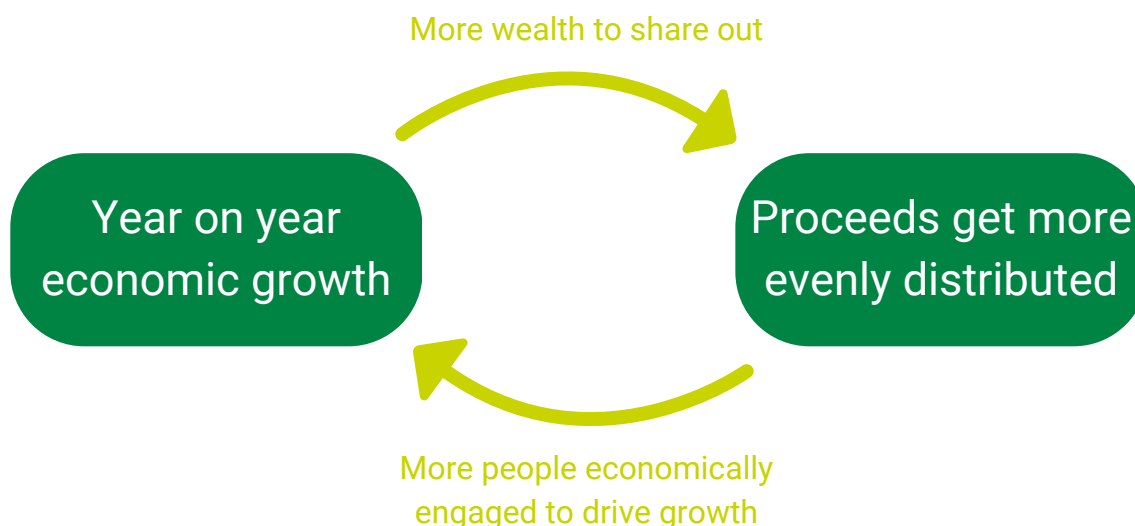
- Ensure we have the appropriate strategic framework in place to guide our own efforts on inclusive growth and to help us to shape the work of our other stakeholders.
- Identify a series of priority actions that will make a difference and trigger change.
- Establish a series of indicators to measure our progress in delivering inclusive growth.

The Strategy covers a three-year period between 2025 and 2028. Whilst elements of the Strategy will remain valid throughout the whole of this period other elements, such as the list of priority actions, will require periodic review and update.

The Strategy is one of the Council's core strategies and will directly link to the Fairer Stockton Framework, which aims to narrow inequalities gaps across the Borough. Access to better quality and higher value employment is identified as a key priority within that Framework and this Strategy will have a strong focus on increasing skills and training to support people into work.

Various other authorities have developed a strong reputation for their approach to inclusive growth, including Preston, Salford and various London boroughs. This strategy is designed to elevate Stockton-on-Tees into this leading group and ensure that we also become known for our commitment and innovation within the field of inclusive growth.

The Virtuous Circle





2. Setting the Scene: Our Growth Challenge

Stockton-on-Tees is located at the heart of the Tees Valley region and at the centre of one of the most significant, and highly productive, integrated industrial economies in the world.

We host some 94,000 jobs¹ including the self-employed and generate Gross Value Added (GVA) of some £3.9 billion per annum² according to the latest available data. The Borough accounts for nearly a third of all jobs within the Tees Valley economy. GVA per hour worked data is a key UK measure of labour productivity. GVA per hour worked stands at £39.8 in Stockton-on-Tees³, above the average for the whole of the UK (£37.8) and a significant 35% above the average for the other four Tees Valley authorities of £29.1. This high rate of labour productivity reflects the sectoral structure of the Stockton-on-Tees economy.

Our jobs are split across a range of public and private sector employers. We host just under 5,500 VAT registered businesses with 87% of these employing less than 10 people⁴. Stockton-on-Tees has 20 private sector businesses employing over 250 staff. The size structure of the local economy is typical of the UK which is heavily orientated towards smaller firms.

Stockton-on-Tees has excellent connectivity with the rest of the UK. The Borough is in close proximity to the national road network via the A1(M), A19 and A66. Rail connectivity is provided by both the Tees Valley/TransPennine line (with direct services through to Manchester) and the Durham Coast line (with direct services to Newcastle). These links provide easy access to London Kings Cross.

The Borough has a strong track record of attracting inward investment – recent examples include Amazon and Alfanar’s Lighthouse Green Fuels Project. We have also benefitted from re-investment from existing major businesses – most notably the recent £400 million investment from Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies at their Billingham campus.

Our target employment sectors for growth are Manufacturing, Health/Life Sciences/Social Care, Energy/ Environmental Technologies, Digital & Creative, Culture & Tourism and Chemicals/ Process Industries. These are the sectors where we believe we have most growth potential and where we will prioritise support.



We are well served by employment sites and growth locations. We anticipate that the majority of future employment growth will occur at:

- The central axis of Stockton Town Centre, North Shore, Teesdale Business Park and the Tees Marshalling Yards in Thornaby
- The Billingham, Billingham Riverside and North Tees area including Belasis Business Park
- Wynyard Business Park
- Sites in the south of the Borough (Durham Lane Industrial Estate, Preston Farm Industrial Estate, Teesside International Airport & Teesside Industrial Estate)

Despite the numerous positives outlined above, our jobs density (the ratio of jobs to working age population) stands at 0.78 and is somewhat below the GB average of 0.87⁵. We need another 10,000 jobs locally to match the GB jobs density average. Recent employment levels have been largely static and we have not made any significant progress in boosting jobs density in recent years.

On average some 31,000 Stockton-on-Tees residents leave the Borough each day for work purposes⁶. That said, there is a broadly equivalent inflow of workers each day from other boroughs.

 **1/3** of the Tees Valley economy

Stockton-on-Tees accounts for 1/3 of the Tees Valley economy, with an employment base of 94,000 jobs

 **+10,000** jobs in Stockton-on-Tees

We need an extra 10,000 jobs to meet the GB average employment density



We need to boost the number of jobs hosted within our area and take our employment levels well beyond the 100,000 mark.

Our economic growth push will come from a continued effort at securing new inward investment. Underpinning this effort will be the development of our major sites and premises, a focus on boosting external perceptions and work to further improve our strategic connectivity. Enhanced rail connectivity will be a major facilitator of future economic growth.

Growth will also be delivered by helping existing firms grow and innovate. Whilst official data is hard to source, our industrial configuration suggests that we already have a healthy proportion of firms that are engaged in either process or product innovation. We are committed to creating the conditions where more and more of our existing firms can expand and innovate.

We also need to retain and attract more higher level skills and more entrepreneurs into Stockton-on-Tees. Those with higher skills and an entrepreneurial streak are often wealth generators, and we need a housing and quality of life offer throughout Stockton-on-Tees that will attract more of these cohorts and reverse selective out-migration. As it stands, 35.6% of our residents are educated to degree level which is below both the North East average (39.6%) and national average (47.3%)⁷.

Our Target Growth Sectors:

Manufacturing - Health/Life Sciences/Social Care - Energy/Environmental Technologies - Digital & Creative - Culture & Tourism - Chemicals/Process Industries

Our Main Growth Locations:

Central Axis (Stockton Town Centre + Teesdale Business Park + Tees Marshalling Yards in Thornaby) - Portrack Lane - Billingham, Billingham Riverside and North Tees area - Wynyard Business Park - Key Sites in the south of the Borough (Durham Lane, Preston Farm, Teesside International Airport & Teesside Industrial Estate).



3. Setting the Scene: Our Inclusivity Challenge

Stockton-on-Tees has a resident population of some 197,000, 121,000 of whom are of a working age⁸.

The Borough provides circa one-third of the Tees Valley labour force and we can boast a relatively high volume of executive skills. Some 8.5% of residents are Managers, Directors and Senior Officials⁹ (higher than the NE average) and 35.6% are educated to degree level or above.

The presence of executive skills reflects the high quality of life offer in certain parts of the Borough which has helped attract higher earning families for a number of decades.

 **35.6%**

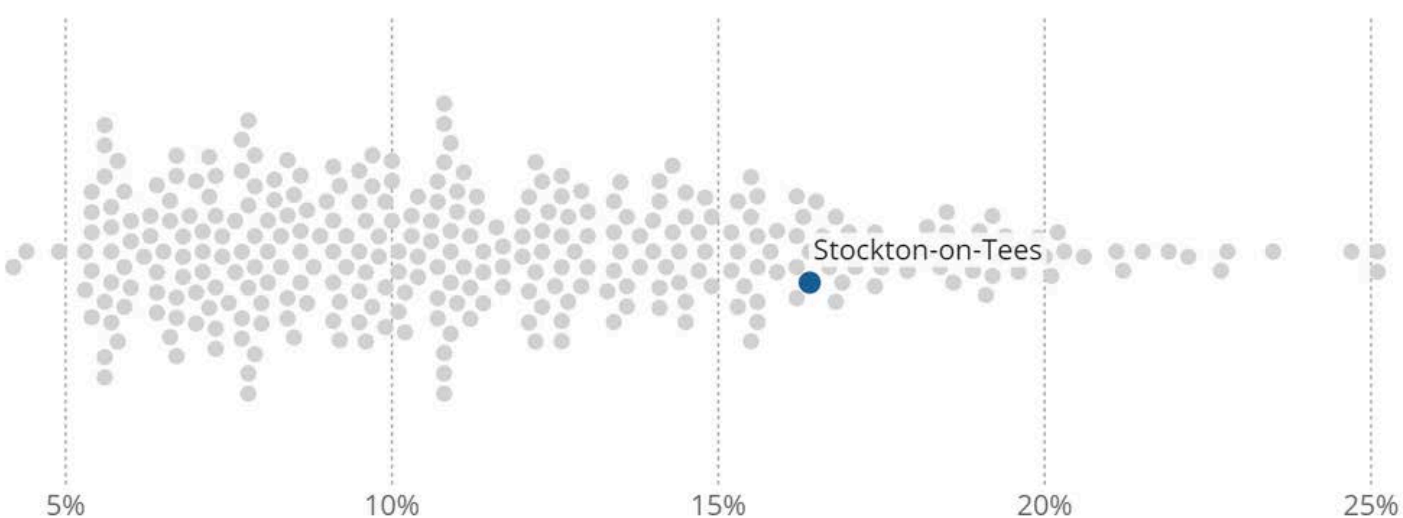
 **1/3**

of residents are educated to degree level, also above average for the NE region.

of the Tees Valley labour force is in Stockton-on-Tees, including an above average share of Managers, Directors and Senior Officials.

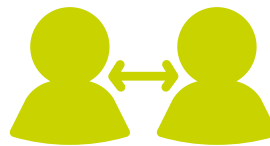
Despite these labour market assets, there are pronounced issues of inactivity and low wages in certain communities within the Borough. 16.4% of the population was 'income-deprived' in 2019¹⁰ – this measures the proportion of people in an area who are either out of work or on low earnings. Of the 316 local authorities in England, Stockton-on-Tees is ranked the 50th most income-deprived – so in the top 15 percent.

The overall rate of economic inactivity amongst our working age residents is 27% – over five percentage points above the GB average of 21.4%¹¹. We are committed to reducing the rate of economic inactivity. This equates to 32,600 people and we are committed to reducing the rate of economic inactivity.



English local authorities by percentage of people in income deprivation, 2019

Data on average earnings in Stockton-on-Tees reveals a significant £4,200 gap between 'mean' and 'median' earnings¹². This is an often-used measure of an earnings gap.



£4,200

gap between annual mean earnings and annual median earnings. This is often used as a measure of the earnings gap.

If the median (i.e. mid-point average) can be raised then the gap will be reduced. Bringing up the earnings of the lowest paid will be the main mechanism for increasing median earnings.

The earnings disparities in Stockton-on-Tees reflect the divergent occupational and skills profile of different communities within the Borough's labour force:

- Whilst we have an above average share of managers and directors, we also have an above average share of care/leisure staff (14.4% of all residents in work) and staff in 'elementary occupations' (11.7% of all residents in work)⁹.
- Whilst we have an above average share of residents educated to degree level, we also have a stubbornly high share of residents with either no qualifications (6.8%) or with low qualifications⁷.

The communities where issues of inactivity, lower skills and low wages are most noticeable are in the nine wards of Billingham East, Billingham South, Hardwick & Salters Lane, Mandale & Victoria, Newtown, Norton South, Roseworth, Stainsby Hill and Stockton Town Centre.

Issues of low skills and low wages are also evident in certain labour market groups, including young people, the over 50s, those with disabilities and those with long term health conditions. Tackling poor health is vital in boosting employment rates. Some 9,700 (30%) of those who are inactive want a job¹¹ – a number which is broadly equivalent to the 10,000 additional jobs we will need to create to match the GB employment density.





We need to work intensively with these communities (both spatially and thematically defined) to boost their rates of participation and average earnings. Specific issues we need to work on include:

- Tackling low pay. Too many jobs in Stockton-on-Tees are locked in at the national minimum wage. Improved pay for those earning the least will make a huge difference in us building a more inclusive economy.
- Encouraging our business community to be more socially responsible alongside our continued push for them to be more environmentally responsible. The decisions of business owners, particularly around boosting staff pay, are one of the most important variables in building inclusive economies. We also need our business community to step up in terms of offering increased work experience, work tasters and work placements.
- Broadening business ownership. Any efforts to broaden the ownership base within Stockton-on-Tees should help us in our inclusivity challenge, as more and more residents get both improved access to company profits and a greater say in company decisions.

Our ability to recirculate more wealth locally will also boost inclusivity. Spending local directly supports small and independent traders and enables them to offer better pay and conditions to workers.

If we achieve all of the above then Stockton-on-Tees will be a fundamentally more inclusive economy with significantly reduced inequalities.

Our Target Areas for boosting the economic activity of residents:

Billingham East - Billingham South - Hardwick & Salters Lane - Mandale & Victoria – Newtown - Norton South – Roseworth - Stainsby Hill - Stockton Town Centre.

Our Target Labour Market Groups for boosting economic activity:

Young people - The over 50s - Those with disabilities - Those with long term health conditions - Those without qualifications – Care leavers

4. Our Strategic Response: Ten Key Levers

This Inclusive Growth Strategy has the twin goals of delivering sustained economic growth and substantially reducing the income and wealth inequalities that exist in Stockton-on-Tees.

We have identified ten main 'levers' that we will need to pursue if we are to meet this vision. All ten are essential and will need to be pursued with equal vigour and in tandem with one another.

We will deliver and sustain economic growth via:

1. Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Employment & Business Base

Attracting investment and creating jobs has and will continue to be a focus of the Council and is a key priority for the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA). We will be working closely with land-owners, developers and intermediaries to bring forward development that is of a high-quality, and to provide the infrastructure upgrades that further enhances the connectivity of Stockton-on-Tees into regional and national markets.

2. Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Skills & Enterprise Base

New cohorts of wealth generators are required in Stockton-on-Tees if we are to sustain economic growth. This means making sure we have the housing, quality-of-life, cultural and heritage offer to retain and attract higher earning families and those with higher skills. Developing good quality housing and ongoing place-making initiatives are essential. We also need to develop our Further Education and Higher Education offer in order that we attract more students into the Borough, a number of who are likely to be retained long term.

3. Helping our Businesses to Grow Faster and to Better Innovate

Continuing to support our local businesses to sustain and grow remains a key priority. This will include our work in shaping the business support infrastructure and funding landscape, assessing ongoing needs via business diagnostics, ensuring available premises and providing support for innovation. We also need to ensure that the necessary training provision is available locally to help our businesses address skills gaps and tackle recruitment difficulties and to support more start-ups.

4. Developing New Economic Roles and Functions within Stockton-on-Tees

It is essential that we continue to invest in regenerating and repurposing Stockton's town centres and developing new strategic development sites. With a target of 10,000 additional jobs we will need to create new economic roles and functions. This will include the flagship Care and Health Innovation Zone and also expanding the Belasis Business Park and wider Billingham/Billingham Riverside area as a location of excellence in life sciences, biotechnology and chemicals.

5. Changing the Image and Investor Perceptions of Stockton-on-Tees

In such a competitive world, the image and profile of Stockton-on-Tees needs continual management and investment. Raising the profile of the investment opportunities available locally through brand development, inward investment materials and strong brand ambassadors are all key. This will require a comprehensive Team-Stockton approach involving the Council, other anchor institutions and our residential and business community.

We will deliver and embed a fairer distribution of wealth via:

6. Ensuring All Our Target Communities Can Access Economic Opportunity

We want more residents to be in work by inspiring and enabling them to access the job opportunities available and being created by local businesses, and to feel confident in starting their own ventures. There are multiple barriers they face, including ill health, and we will work intensively in the main nine target Wards listed earlier in this strategy and amongst our priority labour market groups (also listed earlier). We also want to encourage young people to be aspirational in their career choices and for more of them to be making the right choice, first time.

7. Making Stockton-on-Tees a Recognised Place of Good Work & Fair Pay

There is a move across the UK to deliver better rewards for the low paid and to embed the principles of good work in local areas. Stockton-on-Tees needs to be firmly part of this movement. We require a far higher proportion of our businesses and anchor institutions to go beyond the statutory minimum wage and to reward hard work with fairer pay. We will develop a Stockton-on-Tees Employment Charter to help embed these principles throughout our economy.

8. Making Stockton-on-Tees a Recognised Place of Responsible Business & Local Ownership

Alongside the vital efforts to push our business community to be environmentally responsible, we also want our private sector partners to be more socially responsible. This will involve us establishing a deep and wide-ranging community of businesses who are striving for broader ownership structures, fair pay and a more substantive contribution to delivering local social impact. With this in mind, we will be implementing an initiative to spread the B-Corp movement throughout Stockton-on-Tees.

9. Ensuring More Wealth is Retained in Stockton-on-Tees and Circulates Locally

As a large procurer of goods and services the Council will be developing our approach to make it easier for local businesses to access trading opportunities and to develop further how we can grow and measure the social value impact of what we spend locally. We will develop the supply chain infrastructure locally so that large businesses/anchor institutions can find what they are looking for with ease. These measures will help us retain more of our spending on local suppliers. As part of our emerging 'Partnerships Powering Our Future' we will ensure all local anchor institutions also deepen their commitment to local procurement.

10. Putting More Economic Assets and Power into the Hands of our Local Communities

Wealth inequalities will, in part, be tackled by us supporting the growth and sustainability of a range of different business models - including social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals – to win and deliver contracts. These business models are also examples of how workers, service users and local communities can have a real say and benefit from the wealth that is created in Stockton-on-Tees. As part of this drive, we will also explore the potential of more Community Land Trusts to put economic assets into the hands of communities. This Lever is fully aligned with the 'Communities Powering our Future Mission' within the Council's emerging Powering Our Future Strategy.

Strategy at a Glance



We will deliver and sustain Economic Growth



We will deliver and embed a Fairer Distribution of Wealth



5. Our Priorities for Action

The following pages provide a schedule of our main priority actions under each of the ten levers. As set out in previous sections of this strategy, it is essential that actions are progressed comprehensively under all ten levers in parallel. The schedule is not intended as an exhaustive list and other actions will emerge and be taken forward alongside this list. The list itself will be the subject of frequent review and update.

Levers	Priority Actions
<p>Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Employment & Business Base</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council to ensure the Borough has a strong portfolio of available land and premises for employment growth. 2. Council to lobby for improved strategic transport connectivity into Stockton-on-Tees, for example through developing enhanced rail links. 3. Ensure that all major business locations in Stockton-on-Tees benefit from first class digital connectivity.
<p>Rapidly Growing and Broadening the Stockton Skills & Enterprise Base</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council and partners to develop new and expanded FE/HE educational assets in Stockton-on-Tees, including for example supporting local ambitions for a new Medical School in Tees Valley. 2. Council to use its powers/role to ensure more aspirational housing is developed in Stockton-on-Tees that will attract and retain higher value skills in the local area. 3. Partners to continue with Town Centre place-making initiatives to further enhance the quality of life offer in Stockton-on-Tees – in order to attract and retain higher value skills and entrepreneurs.
<p>Helping our Businesses to Grow Faster and to Better Innovate</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted engagement from Council staff with existing strategic and key businesses - to help them develop, grow and consolidate their bases within Stockton-on-Tees. 2. Develop a Business Knowledge Hub to support a high volume of businesses with non-financial support, engage them in new markets and provide bespoke support. 3. Continue with the Care Academy and broaden skills gap work in relation to green skills and the low carbon/energy sectors, digital and health to bring forward the necessary training provision to fill skills gaps.
<p>Developing New Economic Roles and Functions within Stockton-on-Tees</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council and partners to deliver the Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone proposal, creating a nationally significant cluster of employment. 2. Continue to redefine and redevelop Stockton Town Centre for a variety of employment and related uses. 3. Develop a new regeneration blueprint for Billingham Riverside and Chemical Complex, Seal Sands and North Tees sites, that are ideally positioned for servicing the North Sea and offshore industries. This will help achieve our ambition of becoming the world's first net zero industrial cluster by 2040.
<p>Changing the Image and Investor Perceptions of Stockton-on-Tees</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to fund the successful Invest in Stockton initiative and explore new ways of brand dissemination. 2. Council to identify and support a cohort of brand ambassadors who will help promote Stockton-on-Tees throughout the UK and further afield. 3. Engage with business to adopt the Council's new Place Branding, focussing on campaigns aimed at changing perceptions.

Levers	Priority Actions
<p>Ensuring All Our Target Communities Can Access Economic Opportunity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Broaden the reach of the extremely successful Employment & Training Hub by continuing the Hub on Tour to engage and support residents and businesses within the community. 2. Develop and deliver a programme of support for business start-ups in the Borough to support potential entrepreneurs and business start-ups to develop the insight, skills, and confidence they need to start and grow a successful business. 3. Continue the facilitation of targeted recruitment, apprenticeships and training initiatives aligned with the needs of new and existing sectors, through the Employment & Training Hub and the wider work of Stockton Council's Learning and Skills Service/Adult Skills Programmes.
<p>Making Stockton a Recognised Place of Good Work & Fair Pay</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under Council leadership, establish a Stockton-on-Tees Good Employment Charter. 2. Stockton-on-Tees Council to become an active member of the UK Inclusive Growth Network. 3. Launch a Stockton Good Employment Awards scheme that rewards socially responsible business leadership, possibly working with Tees Valley partners.
<p>Making Stockton-on-Tees a Recognised Place of Responsible Business & Local Ownership</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch a place-based initiative to increase the number of businesses delivering responsible business practices and working with initiatives such as BCorp to establish a cluster of environmentally and socially sustainable businesses. 2. Council to facilitate wider local understanding and application of employee ownership models/trusts. 3. Encouraging Stockton-on-Tees businesses to consider their role in providing social value opportunities for local residents, and to maximise their social value and CSR contribution.
<p>Ensuring More Wealth is Retained in Stockton-on-Tees and Circulates Locally</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council to work with local anchor institutions through our existing partnerships to expand and deepen commitment to local procurement and add social value. 2. Council to become active member of the UK Co-operative Councils Innovation Network. 3. Work with TVCA and other partners on the development of an online Supply Chain Directory that will improve knowledge of, and access to, local traders.
<p>Putting More Economic Assets and Power into the Hands of our Local Communities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council and partners to build local community leadership skills – generating a new cadre of community/neighbourhood leaders capable of stimulating local change. 2. Council will advance opportunities to create community land trusts – in order to put more economic assets under the direct stewardship of local communities. 3. Continue to support and grow Catalyst Stockton-on-Tees in order to facilitate a vibrant and growing voluntary, community & social enterprise sector (VCSE) in Stockton-on-Tees.

6. Measuring Our Progress

We have identified a series of six metrics that we want to track to measure our progress in implementing this Inclusive Growth Strategy. If all ten levers of this strategy are implemented in tandem then we should begin to see positive movement on these metrics:

Jobs¹

Total jobs includes employees, self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces.

AMBITION

94,000

+10,000

jobs to reach GB employment density

Job Density⁵

Density figures represent the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64.

AMBITION

0.78

+0.09

to meet GB figures

Higher Skill Levels⁷

Percent of residents with Level 4 qualifications or above: degree, higher degree, NVQ level 4 to 5, BTEC Higher level.

AMBITION

35.6%

+11.7% points

increase to meet England average



Income Deprivation¹⁰

Percent of residents classed as income-deprived. Measures the proportion of people who are either claiming income support or on low earnings.

AMBITION

16.4%

-5.5% points

decrease to meet England average

Economic Inactivity¹¹

Measures the proportion of residents aged 16-64 who are economically inactive.

AMBITION

23.5%

-2.3% points

decrease to meet England average

Earnings Gap¹²

Difference between annual mean average earnings (£37K) and average median earnings (£32.8K). Measure often used to measure earnings inequalities.

AMBITION

£4,200

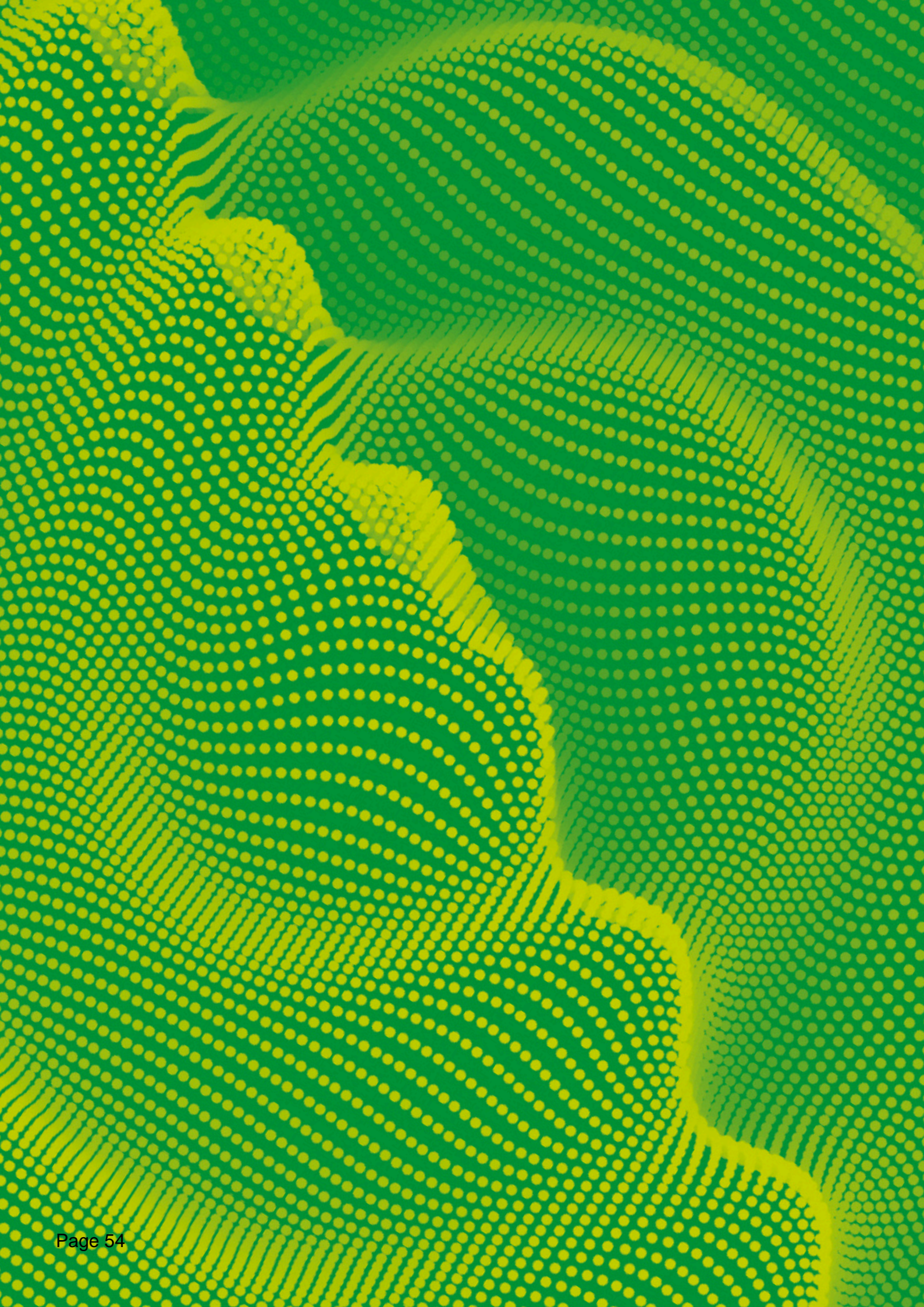
-£2,100

reduction required to halve the gap



Data sources

1. Total jobs number includes employees, self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces. Taken from ONS Job Density data and relates to 2022.
2. GVA data relates to 2015 and is taken from the 2017 ONS release Regional GVA by local authority in the UK.
3. GVA per hour worked data taken from the 2021 ONS Subregional Productivity dataset.
4. Company size structure data taken from UK Business Counts for 2023 via the Inter Departmental Business Register from ONS.
5. Job density figure represents the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64. Taken from ONS Job Density data and relates to 2022.
6. Travel to work data taken from Census 2011 Location of Usual Residence and Place of Work. Census 2021 data on this topic unreliable due to COVID travel to work restrictions.
7. Qualifications data taken from ONS Annual Population Survey and is for the calendar year Jan 2023-Dec 2023.
8. Population data taken from ONS Population Estimates and relates to 2021.
9. Occupational Structure data is taken from the ONS Annual Population Survey and relates to 2023.
10. Income deprivation data is based on data from the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
11. Economic inactivity data is taken from the ONS Annual Population Survey and relates to the period April 2023 to March 2024.
12. Earnings data taken from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (resident analysis) and relates to 2023.



COUNCIL – 22 JANUARY 2025
CLLR PAUL WESTON MOTION TO COUNCIL

MOTION

Motion submitted by Cllr Paul Weston, to be seconded by Cllr Katie Weston:-

“This council notes that:

- The new government has pledged “the biggest overhaul to buses in a generation” to “put local communities in the driving seat” by supporting them to place buses under public control and announcing £1 Billion for better buses,
- The Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham has provided a model for placing buses under public control, stating -

"Greater Manchester is on course to complete the re-regulation of buses on time and on budget early in the New Year, becoming the first city-region outside London to put them fully back under public control after four decades of deregulation.

"Our policy aim throughout has been to create a low-fare, high-patronage system similar to the one that has brought higher growth and productivity to London. This will remain the mission of the Bee Network.

"On 5/1/25, we will proceed with our plan to introduce a new simpler, flatter fare structure based around a £2 single fare and, on 23/3/25, a contactless London-style payment system with a daily and weekly cap setting a maximum for what people pay when travelling on our buses and trams.

"Because of the decisions we have taken, and the progress we have made, GM is in a different position to other areas across England when it comes to bus funding and bus fares. We are beginning to benefit from similar financial advantages as those long enjoyed by London."

- The Mayor of Liverpool City Region have also taken the decision to franchise local bus services to ensure they take back control of these vital public services that make the difference for people who have no other choices to travel to access education, healthcare and employment opportunities.
- The Mayors of the West Midlands, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and the North East are also in the process of preparing to make similar decisions.
- The Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority can exercise such powers under the Bus Services Act and by doing so would make a real difference to the residents of this Borough and others in the Tees Valley.

Therefore, we call on Stockton council to write to The Mayor of the Tees Valley, Ben Houchen and the Tees Valley Combined Authority to –

- Bring back under public control the disastrously deregulated bus system.
- Reinstate a reliable and regular bus service to outlying areas such as, but not only, The Clarences and Stillington
- Fund a maximum £2 bus fare across the Tees Valley”

MOTION

[Greater Manchester will keep £2 cap on single bus fares, says Andy Burnham | Politics News | Sky News](#)

Ref bus services Act 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-services-act-2017-new-powers-and-opportunities>

Liverpool City Region Final Decision from October 2023

Minutes:

[Minutes Template](#)

Papers:

[Taking Forward Bus Reform in the Liverpool City Region.pdf](#)

[South Yorkshire buses: Mayor announces public consultation on franchising - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-61111111)
[westyorks-ca.gov.uk/all-news-and-blogs/new-proposals-set-out-to-keep-bus-fares-low-in-west-yorkshire/](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/all-news-and-blogs/new-proposals-set-out-to-keep-bus-fares-low-in-west-yorkshire/)

[Mayor sets out plans for West Midlands bus fares if huge change goes ahead - CoventryLive](#)

COUNCIL – 22 JANUARY 2025
CLLR TONY RIORDAN MOTION TO COUNCIL

MOTION

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

“Council notes that:

At the meeting of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council held on 25 January 2023,

Members agreed the following motion:-

“Fair Compensation for WASPI Women

- *In the 1995 Pensions Act, the Government increased State Pension age for women from 60 to 65, with a further increase to 66 in the 2011 Pensions Act.*

- *The change was not properly communicated to 3.8m women born in the 1950s until 2012, giving some only one year’s notice of a six year increase in their anticipated retirement age. Many of the affected women are in our own authority area and a total of 65,000 in the North East. Source: Copy of CBP-07405 Constituency Estimates, House of Commons Library.*

- *The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) has found that the Department for Work and Pensions was guilty of maladministration in its handling of the State Pension Age increase for women born in the 1950s.*

- *The All Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality for Women has concluded that “The impact of DWP maladministration on 1950s-born women has been as devastating as it is widespread. The APPG believes that the case for category 6 injustice is overwhelming and clear. Women have had their emotional, physical, and mental circumstances totally obliterated by a lack of reasonable notice.”*

- *Research commissioned by campaign group WASPI has found that by the end of 2022, more than 220,000 1950s born women will have died waiting for justice since the WASPI campaign began in 2015.*

- *WASPI’s figures show that over the course of the two year COVID pandemic, 1 in 10 women who died was affected by these uncommunicated changes and lost both their state pension income and the opportunity to make alternative retirement plans.*

- *Despite the Ombudsman’s findings and the rapid death rate of those affected, the government is choosing to wait for further reports before taking any action.*

Council believes this injustice has not only had a profound effect on the individuals involved but on the wider community in Stockton and on local government, not least because:

- *Women who would have looked after older relatives or partners are unable to afford to*

MOTION

do so, with a knock-on impact on local social care

- *Women who would have retired and engaged in caring responsibilities for grandchildren*

are having to continue working, increasing the childcare burden on the state locally

- *Women who have been left in poverty are struggling to meet their housing costs, with a knock-on impact on local housing stock*

- *There is a broader impact on voluntary services of all kinds locally, which are missing out on able, active volunteers who would otherwise have been able to retire from full-time work as planned*

- *Our local economy is negatively affected by the reduced spending power and disposable income the uncommunicated State Pension Age changes has brought about among women born in the 1950s*

Council supports:

- *The conclusion of the All Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality that women born in the 1950s have suffered a gross injustice, affecting their emotional, physical and mental circumstances in addition to causing financial hardship.*

- *A swift resolution to this ongoing injustice before more and more women die waiting for compensation.*

- *The WASPI campaign asks for an immediate one-off compensation payment of between £11,666 and £20,000 to those affected, with the most going to women who were given the shortest notice of the longest increase in their state pension age.*

Council asks:

- *The Leader of the Council to write to local Members of Parliament, and to the Secretary*

of State for Work and Pensions to outline the effects of the injustice to 1950s women on the communities in Stockton Borough and to seek their support for an immediate compensation package.”

- *Council further notes that the Current Labour Government have rejected the Ombudsman’s recommendations and is refusing to pay the compensation suggested.*

Council believes that:

- *The Labour Government have committed a shameful betrayal and let down WASPI Women by failing to honour the compensation package suggested as part of the Ombudsman Report.*

MOTION

- The decision further adds to the numerous 'u-turns' undertaken by this Government such as the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance for Vulnerable Pensioners, and continued Tax Rises on working people and pensioners.

- The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Liz Kendall committed to supporting the WASPI campaign and has now refused fair compensation.

- The Chair of WASPI Angela Madden has responded saying:

"The Government has made an unprecedented political choice to ignore the clear recommendations of an independent watchdog which ordered ministers urgently to compensate WASPI".

- At a time when many pensioners are struggling with soaring costs and energy prices, this decision will further impact pensioners.

Council resolves:

- To request that the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive write separately to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to outline the Council's dismay at this decision and calls on the Government to provide the fair compensation owed.

- That the Leader of the Council engages with local women impacted by this decision and community representatives and meets with them alongside other Group Leaders to discuss what support Council can do to support them in their campaign.

**COUNCIL – 22 JANUARY 2025
CLLR INNES MOTION TO COUNCIL**

MOTION

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

Council notes that:

Recent reports into the grooming/child rape gang scandal that has rocked communities across the UK are deeply concerning.

The lack of formal review into this scandal fails to ensure justice for the victims and punishment for the perpetrators.

Neighbouring Middlesbrough has been named as One of 50 Towns Where Child Exploitation Gangs Have Operated.

There is public desire to see this matter properly investigated with a recent survey suggesting 76% of Britons support an inquiry.

Council believes that:

- We have a duty to protect innocent and vulnerable youngsters from exploitation.
- This is a scandal that should be rooted out entirely and investigated by the full might of the British state.
- This matter transcends party politics and is something we should be united in not only condemning but ensuring a full inquiry is undertaken.
- The safeguarding minister Jess Phillips' decision to block a public inquiry into the Oldham grooming gangs is inexplicable.
- The full force of the law is used to ensure those at the heart of these 'gangs' are brought to justice, and a review undertaken into the failings of authorities to protect victims.

Council resolves:

- To request that the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive write separately to the Prime Minister & Home Secretary to outline the Council's desire for the Government to enact a full public inquiry in to Grooming Gangs.
- That the Leader of the Council engages with local stakeholders and meets with them alongside other Group Leaders to discuss what this Council can do to robustly support and protect young people of this borough most at risk."

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**COUNCIL – 22 JANUARY 2025
MEMBER QUESTIONS**

QUESTION

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

“Ingleby Barwick Community Partnership held their Tenth market anniversary in September, sadly our Christmas market in December looks like this will be the last one.

Since SBC changed the rules on street trading in March this year which left us with a choice of charging an entrance fee or paying £100 for each market.

Paying the tax would make our market not worthwhile holding from a financial point of view so we chose to put on a charge, and although at our first market we gave out vouchers to the value of the entrance fee, and a committee member donated hundreds of 10pence pieces to pay a 10p entry fee at our other markets footfall has fallen by between 30/40%.

When I raised this last year I said this would have a negative impact on our market, officers and councillors said it was only £5 per stall, well this is presuming we have 20 stalls, which is not the case and if we were to increase our stall fee I am sure a number would stop attending.

At our Light switch on in November we only have a coffee van and a stall selling hot food but we had to pay £100. Surely this is not what was envisaged when the changes were made, negatively affecting community events.

If the rules are not changed then our market will no longer be held.

Will the council

1. Exempt Community events from this Street Trading Temporary Event Tax if not
2. Change the current rules to allow a small number of stalls to attend events free of charge, i.e. 2, 3,4 or 5. At least this way small events such as Christmas Light switch ons would be exempt?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Jack Miller for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“Can the Leader inform me what the Council is doing to tackle the potholes blighting our roads?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Marcus Vickers for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“What is happening with the £10m allocated for Billingham Town Centre back in February 2021, before levelling up funding was available?”

QUESTION

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

“I was very pleased to see lots of positive comments on social media regarding the new Letters to Heaven post box at the Crematorium.

Are there plans to keep this as a permanent feature?”

QUESTION

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

“From employment and educational opportunities to home ownership, evidence shows that care leavers face substantial barriers in comparison to other young people. As a Corporate Parent, Councillors have a duty to do all that is possible to break down these barriers. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has always aimed to be a leader in this area. Can the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People update me on what work we are doing, and what ambitions she has for the future?”

QUESTION

Member Question submitted by Cllr Paul Rowling for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (Cllr Nigel Cooke):-

“From providing money to fund council services, to multiple wider economic benefits, the Hampton by Hilton continues to be a success story for our town. Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing update me on both the benefits of the hotel, and the wider economic regeneration work planned around Stockton Town Centre, and over the river in Teesdale?”