Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL
www.stockton.gov.uk

Executive Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date:
Tuesday 21 July 2026 at 2.00 pm

Venue:
Council Chamber, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees TS17 6BJ

Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (Chair)
Cllr Kevin Faulks (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Tony Riordan and Cllr Marilyn Surtees

Agenda

1. Livestreaming

This meeting will be filmed for live and / or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for 12 months. A copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.

If you attend and make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. When admitted to the Council Chamber you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for livestreaming and / or training purposes. If you do not wish to have your image captured, please contact Democratic Services prior to attending the meeting.

If there are any technical difficulties with the livestreaming, the meeting will still proceed.

2. Evacuation Procedure (Pages 7 - 10)

3. Apologies for Absence

4. Declarations of Interest

5. Minutes (Pages 11 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 May 2026.

6. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Outturn March 2026 (Pages 15 - 30)

7. Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Education (Pages 31 - 36)

To receive the Executive Summary of the report of the People Select Committee (for information).

8. Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision (Pages 37 - 38)

To receive the Executive Summary of the report of the Children and Young People Select Committee (for information).

9. Forward Plan (Pages 39 - 62)

10. Chairs' Updates (Pages 63 - 76)

11. Chair's Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 77 - 78)

Ged Morton
Director of Corporate Services
Monday 13 July 2026

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

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

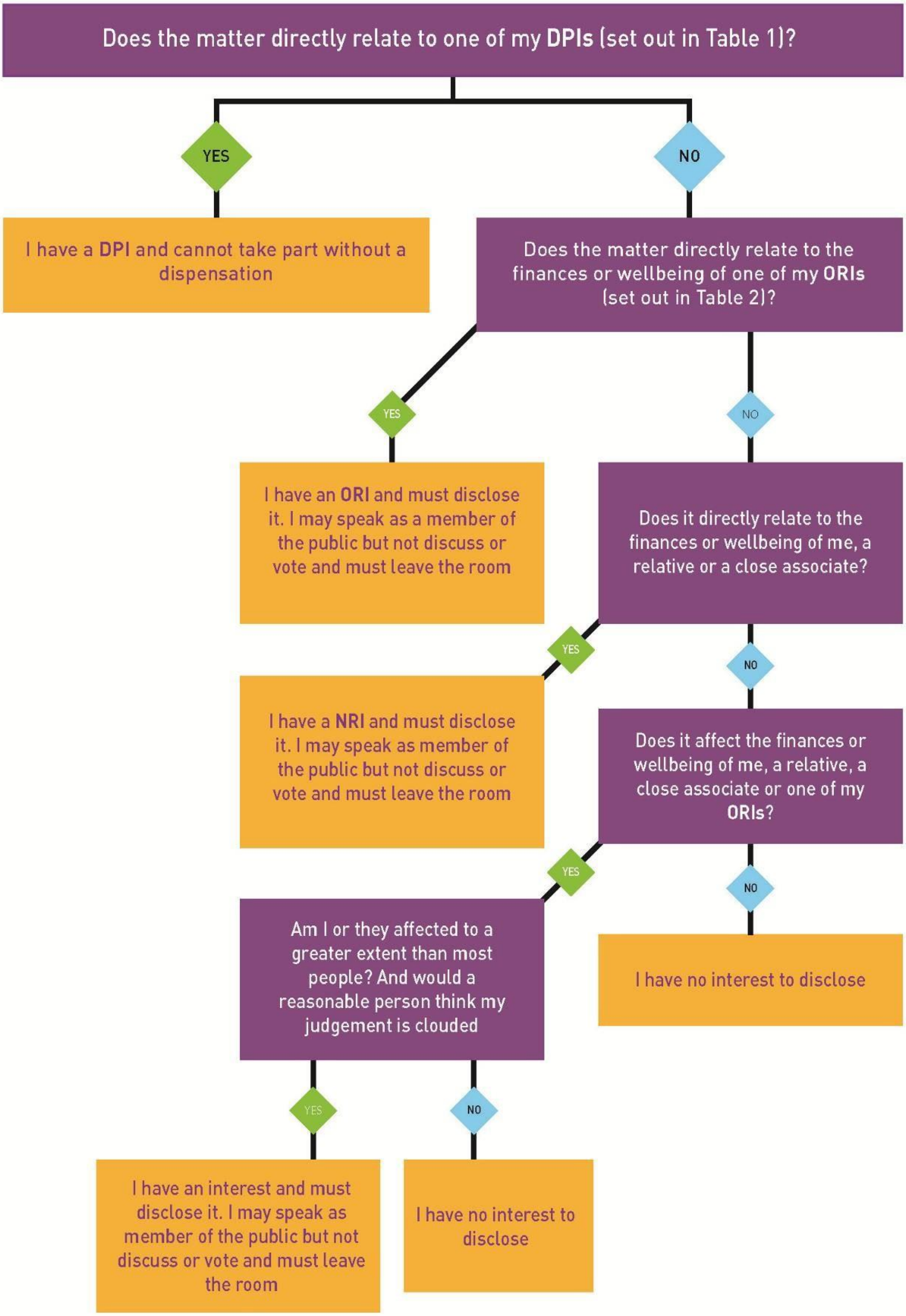
Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please.

Contact: Democratic Services Manager, Judy Trainer on email Judy.Trainer@stockton.gov.uk

Key – Declarable interests are :-

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

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

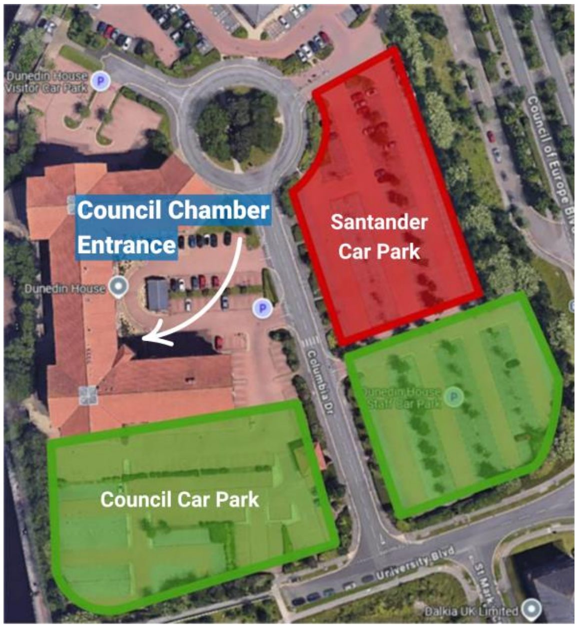
(ii) directed to charitable purposes or

(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

Council Chamber, Dunedin House
Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping

Entry

Entry to the Council Chamber is via the Council Chamber Entrance, indicated on the map below.



In the event of an emergency alarm activation, everyone should immediately start to leave their workspace by the nearest available signed Exit route.

The emergency exits are located via the doors on either side of the raised seating area at the front of the Council Chamber.

Fires, explosions, and bomb threats are among the occurrences that may require the emergency evacuation of Dunedin House. Continuous sounding and flashing of the Fire Alarm is the signal to evacuate the building or upon instruction from a Fire Warden or a Manager.

The Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point is in the overflow car park located across the road from Dunedin House.

The allocated assembly point for the Council Chamber is: D2

Map of the Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point - the overflow car park:

All occupants must respond to the alarm signal by immediately initiating the evacuation procedure.

When the Alarm sounds:

1. **stop all activities immediately**. Even if you believe it is a false alarm or practice drill, you <u>MUST</u> follow procedures to evacuate the building fully.

2. **follow directional EXIT signs** to evacuate via the nearest safe exit in a calm and orderly manner.

    - do not stop to collect your belongings
    - close all doors as you leave

3. **steer clear of hazards**. If evacuation becomes difficult via a chosen route because of smoke, flames or a blockage, re-enter the Chamber (if safe to do so). Continue the evacuation via the nearest safe exit route.

4. **proceed to the Evacuation Assembly Point.** Move away from the building. Once you have exited the building, proceed to the main Evacuation Assembly Point <u>immediately</u> - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.

    - do not assemble directly outside the building or on any main roadway, to ensure access for Emergency Services.

5. **await further instructions.**

   - **do not re-enter the building under any circumstances without an "all clear"** which should only be given by the Incident Control Officer/Chief Fire Warden, Fire Warden or Manager.
   - do not leave the area without permission.
   - ensure all colleagues and visitors are accounted for. Notify a Fire Warden or Manager immediately if you have any concerns

Toilets

Toilets are located immediately outside the Council Chamber, accessed via the door at the back of the Chamber.

Water Cooler

A water cooler is available at the rear of the Council Chamber.

Microphones

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday 19th May 2026.

Present: Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (Chair), Cllr Kevin Faulks (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Tony Riordan and Cllr Marilyn Surtees

Officers: Calum Titley, Judy Trainer, Gary Woods and Michelle Gunn

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Carol Clark

ESC/6/26 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

ESC/7/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

ESC/8/26 Minutes

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting on 22 April 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ESC/9/26 Adult Social Care Front Door Business Case/Options Appraisal

The Committee received an update report outlining plans to redesign the Adult Social Care (ASC) “Front Door” to improve how residents accessed help and support.

The current model created delays for residents by routing them into formal assessment processes when their needs could be met through more timely, proportionate support.

A more responsive model focusing on early, flexible intervention would enable people to receive the right support at the right time, improving outcomes and reducing demand on formal assessment pathways.

The new, integrated approach was proposed to:

- Improve access and response times
- Strengthen prevention and early intervention
- Reduce unnecessary demand on statutory services
- Provide better outcomes for the residents if Stockton-on-Tees

This change was informed by both the CQC inspection (2025) and the LGA Peer Review (2024), which highlighted the need to improve access, reduce hand offs, and strengthen early support.

Key issues highlighted and discussed included:

- The importance of engaging with partners and the voluntary sector in the development of the model was recognised
- There was a need to ensure the workforce was equipped with the appropriate skill set
- The requirement for a broad range of contact options was identified, albeit it was noted that 95% of adults had access to smartphones
- There were no plans to change the contact telephone number; however, Members emphasised the importance of adequate resourcing at the initial point of telephone contact
- The proposed menu of options was positively received
- A phased approach to implementation had already commenced, with early data indicating an increase in issues being resolved at an earlier stage

AGREED that the update be noted.

ESC/10/26 Scrutiny Review of Capital Projects

The Committee considered the Executive Summary of the Place Select Committee's Scrutiny Review of Governance of Capital Projects which had been presented to Cabinet with all recommendations agreed.

Overall, the Committee had concluded that the Council had made significant progress in building a strong and credible governance framework for its capital programme, the systems now in place provided a solid foundation for delivering projects that benefited residents, supported regeneration, and met the strategic ambition of the Borough. Continued focus on governance, communication, risk management and workforce capability would further improve delivery, ensuring that capital projects achieved their intended outcomes and continued to contribute positively to the Borough's growth and development.

AGREED that the Executive Summary be noted.

ESC/11/26 Scrutiny Review of Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

The Committee considered the Executive Summary of the Community Safety Select Committee's Scrutiny Review of Children affected by Domestic Abuse which had been presented to Cabinet with all recommendations agreed.

It was noted that this was a complex topic to review about an issue that was multifaceted. Whilst it was not within the gift of the Committee to prevent this type of abuse occurring, the review had allowed a spotlight to be shone on how aware local services were of this issue, how they responded to any cases they identified, and how they worked together to raise awareness and react to domestic abuse across the Borough. Addressing the causes of domestic abuse was a deep-rooted challenge for society in general, but it remained incumbent on organisations and their staff to be vigilant, appropriately trained, and suitably responsive to this all too prevalent issue.

AGREED that the Executive Summary be noted.

ESC/12/26 Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School

The Committee considered the Executive Summary of the Children and Young People Select Committee's Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School which was due to be presented to Cabinet in June.

Overall, the review highlighted the wide range of reasons a child may not be accessing full time education at school and demonstrated that, while Stockton had strong systems in place for quality assurance, multi-agency working and engagement with families, there were pressures relating to emotional and mental health needs and rising demand linked to SEND. The Committee's recommendations therefore focused on strengthening staffing capacity, consistency and partnership working to reduce time out of education and improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

AGREED that the Executive Summary be noted.

ESC/13/26 Forward Plan

AGREED that the Forward Plan be noted.

ESC/14/26 Chairs' Updates

Members were provided with updates from the Chairs of each Select Committee.

AGREED that the Chairs' Updates be noted.

ESC/15/26 Chair's Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme

Members requested that themes arising from Complaints Monitoring and Ombudsman report be presented at the September Committee meeting.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

Chair: ....

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21 JULY 2026

REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) – OUTTURN MARCH 2026

Summary

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the financial performance and position as at 31 March 2026.

The overall financial position remains broadly consistent with that projected at the end of December 2025, as outlined in the budget report in February 2026, with a minor overall variance of (£72,000) from the previously reported position of £3.937m. The final year-end position reflects an overspend against budget of £3.865m.

During the financial year pressure has continued across the largest, demand driven services, namely Adult's and Children's Social Care, Home to School Transport and support for children with Special Educational Needs. These areas are the focus of ongoing transformation reviews.

In the final quarter of the financial year, there has been a notable improvement in the projected financial position across most budget areas. Improvements against earlier forecasts across directorate budgets have enabled the Council to ring fence the required 10%, £1.7m, for Special Educational Needs, without the need to identify further savings.

However, there has been a worsened position on Children's Social care and a significant increase in the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit, which has risen to £17.1m, driven primarily by continued growth in the numbers of children with Education, Health & Care Plans.

The Capital Programme has been updated to reflect the inclusion of new schemes and the completion of projects as at the financial year end.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To update Cabinet on the Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the outturn position for 2025/26

Recommendations

1. Note the outturn position for the year ended 31 March 2026 and the updated Capital Programme.

Detail

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

GENERAL FUND

2. The following table sets out the financial position for each Directorate at 31 March 2026. The reasons for any significant variances from those previously reported are summarised in the paragraphs below.

Directorate	Annual Budget £'000	Actual Outturn £'000	Actual Variance Over/(Under) £'000	Projected Variance Q3 Over/(Under) £'000	Movement from Q3 £'000
Adults, Health & Wellbeing	107,384	107,391	7	716	(709)
Children's Services	63,735	67,858	4,123	3,141	982
Community Services, Environment & Culture	58,163	58,003	(160)	893	(1,053)
Finance, Transformation & Performance	14,407	13,396	(1,011)	(881)	(130)
Corporate Services	12,203	11,953	(249)	(256)	7
Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	3,301	3,235	(66)	(60)	(6)
Corporate Items	7,449	5,637	(1,812)	(916)	(896)
Total	**266,641**	**267,474**	**833**	**2,637**	**(1,804)**
Pay Offer	0	632	632	600	32
Transformation Savings Shortfall	0	700	700	700	0
DSG 10% High Needs Stability Grant	0	1,700	1,700	0	1,700
Revised Total	**266,641**	**270,506**	**3,865**	**3,937**	**(72)**

Adults, Health and Wellbeing

3. Demand for residential services for older people, including those with mental health conditions has increased in the quarter, generating a further overspend of £587,000.

4. Costs associated with direct payments and care at home services for people with Mental Health conditions for were lower than forecast, generating an additional saving of (£478,000).

5. The previous MTFP report to Council in February, referenced additional income of £300,000 through the Better Care Fund pooled budget. The figure agreed with the North-East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board was £440,000, providing an additional amount of £140,000 used to fund increased social care pressures.

6. Use of Public Health grant has been reviewed at the year-end enabling a further £428,000 to be redirected, supporting wider Council activity in areas which improve health and wellbeing.

7. There are further savings within the Housing Service due to staffing vacancies and maximisation of grant funding (£400,000).

Children's Services

8. Members will be aware of the continued growth in demand relating to Children's Social Care and the escalation of costs for external residential provision. Alongside many other Council's across the country, this continues to be a major challenge for Children's Social care budgets. There has been an increase in children in external residential placements since December, as well as additional cost pressures on placements due to fee increases and greater support requirements, this has led to a further overspend at the year end of £1,300,000.

9. There has been a reduction in the number of children with disabilities requiring services, leading to reduction of (£200,000) against previously projected expenditure position.

10. Additional grant funding has been secured at the end of the year of (£140,000).

11. It should be noted that despite the financial challenges within the Directorate significant work continues to drive permanent recruitment and thus limit the dependency on agency staffing. This is borne out by the reduction in agency expenditure between financial years and critically delivering continuity of care and enhanced stability for some of our most vulnerable people.

Community Services, Environment & Culture

12. The expenditure on Home to School transport continued to increase by a further £139,000. This was driven by a combination of increased demand and the costs associated with placements, such as passenger assistants and general route costs from the supplier.

13. Additional income has been received in the Ground Maintenance service which accounts for an improvement in the position of (£195,000).

14. Transport and Highways have improved the position by (£315,000). This is due to ongoing work on reviewing charging into external grants, alongside a number of new cycleway schemes commencing through the design phase and as such officer time charged into the capital programme to reflect time spent on these emerging projects.

15. Due to a milder winter the Operational Highways were require to deliver a reduced number of gritting runs alongside some additional income leading to a movement of (£225,000).

16. Further income has been received within the Building Cleaning service relating to external work and this accounts for a movement of (£105,000).

17. There were a number of smaller savings across a range of services, primarily arising from staffing. This accounts for around (£200,000) movement between Q3 and year end.

Finance, Transformation & Performance

18. (£191,000) additional income received from the Hampton by Hilton Hotel dividend.

Corporate Services

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

Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

20. There have been no significant movements in the position for Regeneration and Inclusive Growth.

Corporate Items

21. Throughout the year, NNDR and grant reviews have been undertaken to maximise opportunities for identifying savings. This has included additional in-year NNDR income through Section 31 (S31) grants, reflecting compensation for business rates reliefs. These reviews have collectively enabled £900,000 of additional income to be offset against a range of wider council services.

Dedicated Schools Grant

22. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ringfenced grant received to deliver defined education services including Schools, Early Years and Special Educational Needs (High Needs). The grant is awarded by the Department for Education on an annual basis, and the amount is determined by a national formula. Members will recall in previous reports, that the Council is experiencing growing demand in services and costs for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND). This is also true of many Councils across the Country.

23. The Dedicated Schools Grant is accounted for in a separate ring-fenced account and guidance states that any deficit should not be funded from the Council's General Fund. This deficit is therefore not currently included within the Council's overall budget. The deficit at 31 March 2025 was £6.72m. The forecast position in the February report was anticipated to be £13.62m by 31 March 2026.

24. The table below summarises the year-end financial position for the DSG budget. This shows and in-year overspend on the High Needs Block of £11.5m, partially offset by an underspend on the Early Years Block of (£847,000) and Schools Block of (£252,000), resulting in a net in-year overspend of £10.4m. The cumulative DSG deficit at 31 March 2026 is now £17.135m.

Dedicated Schools Grant	**Annual Budget** **£'000**	**Actual Outturn** **£'000**	**Actual Variance Over/(Under)** **£'000**	**Projected Variance Q3 Over/(Under)** **£'000**	**Movement from Q3** **£'000**
DSG Expenditure					

Schools Block	178,410	178,158	(252)	(200)	(52)
Central Schools Block	1,205	1,198	(7)	0	(7)
Early Years Block	33,509	32,662	(847)	0	(847)
High Needs Block	45,060	56,575	11,515	7,099	4,416
Total DSG Expenditure	**258,184**	**268,593**	**10,409**	**6,899**	**3,510**
DSG Funding	(258,184)	(258,184)	0	0	0
In-year deficit	0	10,409	10,409	6,899	3,510
Unusable Reserve at 31/03/2025			6,725	6,725	0
Cumulative Unusable Reserve (DSG Deficit)			**17,134**	**13,624**	**3,510**

25. Details of any significant variances against budget incurred during the year 2025/2026 are:

- Increase in number and cost of placements in Independent Schools (£3.7m) and in other LA schools/academies (£2.3m).
- Increase in number of top-ups plus additional payments to SBC mainstream and special academies (£3m).
- Cost of providing high needs funding to new Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs)/SEND Units in SBC schools (£1.2m)
- Increased cost of Post-16 high needs support in specialist colleges (£426k).
- Increase in number of top-ups plus additional payments to SBC maintained mainstream schools (£475k).
- Increase in the cost of Alternative Provision for pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion (£238k).
- (£460,000) underspend against the Early Years budget relating to timing of the grant funding and its relationship to census points.
- (£290,000) underspend within the Schools Growth Fund due to marginally lower admission numbers in September 2024 for specific schools resulting from basic need requirements.

26. There is a statutory override in place until 31st March 2028, meaning that any deficit on the DSG is accounted for separately within an unusable reserve within the Council's accounts.

27. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement included some announcements on the approach to addressing DSG deficits, whilst the Government transitions to reform the SEND system, with further information published in spring. The initial phase will address historic deficits accrued up to 31 March 2026. All local authorities with a SEND deficit will be eligible to receive a High Needs Stability Grant, subject to approval of a Local SEND Reform Plan by the Department of Education, covering 90% of their High Needs-related DSG deficit accrued up to the end of 2025-26, which will be paid in 2026/27. Local authorities will need to plan to be able to meet the cost of the residual deficit 10%.

28. In preparing the year-end financial position, the positive movement across directorate budgets has enabled sufficient funding to be identified to set aside the required 10% (£1.7m) in reserves, avoiding the requirement to identify further savings.

29. The statutory override remains in place until 31st March 2028. Further information is anticipated from Government regarding potential future funding for further deficits which may accrue in 2026/2027 or future years.

Collection Fund

30. The Collection Fund is a ringfenced account which includes the actual amount collected for both Council Tax and Business Rates (NNDR). In line with statutory requirements the Council forecasts the overall surplus or deficit on the collection fund in January, which is used in budget setting for the following year. Actual performance of the amount of Council Tax and Business Rates collected is not known until the end of the financial year.

31. As the precepting authority, the Council's collection fund accounts for income on behalf of Parish and Town Councils within the borough, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Cleveland Police as well as the Council itself. The surplus or deficit positions on the collection fund therefore include income for partners as well as the Council.

32. Council Tax performance during the year has been positive, with a year-end surplus of £1.753m. The estimated surplus was declared in January 2026 and the SBC precepting share included within the MTFP Report in February 2026.

33. Business rates has closed the year with a deficit of £1.7m, of which SBC's share is £859,000. This compares to the forecast position of £567,000, so there is an overall movement of £292,000, which will be reflected within the budget setting for 2027/28. Business rates are accounted for one year in arrears due to the nature of the system. This reflects the timing differences, as projections are based on the most up-to-date information available at the time, aligned with government national return requirements, although these timelines do not fully align with the budget-setting process.

34. In addition, the authority has received Section 31 grant funding to compensate for national business rate reliefs provided to businesses. This funding has been included within corporate items in the revenue outturn position reported above.

35. As outlined in the budget report, significant changes to local government funding will be introduced from 2026/27, including a major review of how business rates are distributed among local authorities. As a result, a further reconciliation of business rates is anticipated during 2026/27.

36. The authority will continue to closely monitor local collection levels and any national policy changes throughout the year, with updates incorporated into regular Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) monitoring reports and the budget-setting process for 2027/28.

General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserves

37. The Council is required to maintain adequate levels of reserves. Reserves are an important part of the Council's financial strategy and are held to create long-term budgetary stability. Reserves enable the Council to manage change without undue

impact on the Council Tax and are a key element of its strong financial standing and resilience.

38. The Council holds the following reserves:

- General Fund Balances – this is a working balance serving as a financial safety net for unseen expenses or fluctuations in revenue. This is the reserve of last resort.
- Earmarked reserves – are funds set aside for specific projects and initiatives.
- Ringfenced or Partnership reserves – use is subject to conditions for example school balances held on behalf of schools.

39. The total General Fund Balance at 31 March 2026 is £8m, in line with the agreed level and as outlined in the report to Cabinet in February 2026.

40. The Council's general fund balance has remained at £8m since 2022/23. Members will recall that the MTFP report in February includes an allocation of £1m per annum to increase General Fund Balances to £11m by 2028/29. Resources will need to increase beyond this £11m to ensure the general fund balances are reflective of the continually growing budget, but this is anticipated to be an achievable increase within the MTFP period. The level of general fund balances will be reviewed annually to assess the suitability. Given the current level of general fund balances the Council should aim to hold 5% of Net Revenue Expenditure in General Fund balances, this is estimated to be £15.6m by 2028/29 based on the current MTFP.

41. To fund the overspend in 25/26, as agreed in the budget report in February 2026, reserves amounting to £3.865m have been used. The earmarked reserves position has reduced from an opening position of £30.3m to £27.5m at the year-end.

42. Details of earmarked reserve balances at the year-end are presented in the table below:

Earmarked Reserves	**Opening Balance 25/26**	**Movement 25/26**	**Closing Balance 25/26**
	£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**
Capital Scheme Reserves	(6,693)	1,551	(5,142)
Insurance Fund	(5,193)	676	(4,517)
Service Development & Improvement	(3,457)	1,283	(2,174)
Partnership / Statutory Reserves	(2,474)	332	(2,142)
Transformation & Implementation	(2,207)	(2,552)	(4,759)
MTFP Support Reserve	(2,213)	1,150	(1,063)
Pooled Funds and Interest Rate Risk	(1,962)	962	(1,000)
PFI Scheme Liability	(1,547)	127	(1,420)
Public Health Reserve	(1,175)	419	(756)
DSG Deficit Support Reserve	0	(1,700)	(1,700)
Schools Related Reserves	(3,368)	573	(2,795)
Total	**(30,289)**	**2,820**	**(27,469)**

43. The year-end closing balance of earmarked reserves is higher than projected in the budget setting report in February. This is due to reprofiling the use of reserves and most reserve balances remain committed for specific purposes. This does not alter the reserves policy within the budget report to Council in February 2026.

44. Members will recall that the MTFP report included a provision of £3m per year to increase the MTFP Support Reserve, which is necessary to mitigate future financial risks, or negative performance against budget. The Council should aim to hold 5% of Net Revenue Expenditure in the MTFP Support Reserve, this is estimated to be £15.6m by 2028/29 based on the current MTFP numbers. The projected balance on this reserve at the end of 2028/2029 is £10m, subject to no further funding being required to mitigate future overspends.

45. Reserves are monitored as part of the Council's financial budgetary control processes. Throughout 2026/2027, reserves will continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis, with commitments and projections updated to update cashflow and planned usage forecasts.

Medium Term Financial Plan Outlook

46. The budget report to Council in February identified the ongoing financial pressures and growth in demand across many council services; within Children's and Adult's Social Care, Home to School Transport and educational support to children with special educational needs. These areas have been significant drivers in the year-end position.

47. Strengthened financial monitoring will be implemented throughout 2026/2027. In addition to the existing quarterly budget monitoring, there will be targeted oversight of more volatile budgets and key cost drivers. This enhanced monitoring will be reviewed regularly by the Corporate Management Team, enabling timely development and implementation of actions to address emerging financial pressures.

This approach will include focused updates on areas within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), including:

- Demand-led pressures, particularly within Children's and Adult Social Care
- Delivery of Transformation Reviews and associated savings
- Inflationary impacts, including National Joint Council (NJC) pay award agreements
- Global economic uncertainty, such as fluctuations in energy and fuel costs
- Management of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits and future funding arrangements for SEND beyond current announcements
- Additional areas subject to transformation reviews, including Waste Collection and Disposal, and income generation through fees and charges

48. Members will recall there is an estimated budget gap of £6.7m in 2026/27, rising to £13.8m in 2027/28 and £18.4m in 2028/29. The Council is taking a planned approach to transformation and change, using the Powering our Future Framework. Work is well underway with the second phase of Transformation Reviews, focusing on day to-day efficiencies, alongside Service Reviews and cross-council transformation. This approach will continue to ensure services are fit for purpose to address the challenges faced, and that the Council continues to be a high-performing, sustainable council that does our best for communities.

49. There is a separate report on this meeting agenda titled ‘Powering our Futures – Transformation Reviews Update’ which provides an update on the progress of the reviews and the impact upon the MTFP.

CAPITAL

50. The Capital Programme is summarised below and shown at **Appendix A.**

CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2029	Current Approved Programme £’000	Programme Revisions £’000	Completed Schemes 2025/26 £'000	Variances (Completed Schemes) £'000	New Approvals £’000	Revised Programme £’000
School Investment Programme & Children’s Services	21,354	486	(1,851)	(18)	8,483	28,454
Inclusive Growth	9,794	0	(1,248)	(2)	0	8,544
Regeneration	149,051	282	(6,338)	(268)	1,300	144,027
Transportation	26,041	211	(9,556)	(84)	916	17,529
Community & Environment, Culture & Leisure	27,552	413	(4,090)	(4,544)	1,561	20,891
Adults, Health & Wellbeing	6,808	0	(472)	3	0	6,341
Xentrall ICT	900	(242)	0	0	0	658
Council Wide	19,350	(734)	0	0	0	18,616
Total Approved Capital MTFP	**260,852**	**417**	**(23,555)**	**(4,913)**	**12,260**	**245,061**

51. Members will note that the programme has been updated to reflect the approvals contained within the 2026/27 Budget Report and to reflect changes to the programme resulting from the sourcing of external funding. The changes are summarised in **Appendix B.** The Programme has also been updated to reflect schemes which have completed in 2025/2026.

Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment

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

Corporate Parenting Implications

53. None

Financial Implications

54. The report updates Members on the financial position at the year-end for 2025/26 and Capital Programme. Financial implications are covered in the main body of the report.

Legal Implications

55. There are no specific legal implications.

Risk Assessment

56. The report provides an update to Members on the year-end position as at 31 March 2026. The MTFP is included within the Council's Strategic Risk Register. The current approved MTFP identifies a large budget reduction required, with Transformation Plans in place via the Council's Powering our Futures Programme. Constant and frequent monitoring of the financial position will be ongoing to measure delivery of the plan and the risk level revised in line with this.

Wards Affected and Consultation with Ward/Councillors (refer to Concordat for Communication and Consultation with Members)

57. N/A

Background Papers

58. Medium Term Financial Plan Update & Strategy Report to Council 18 February 2026

Name of Contact Officer: Clare Harper

Post Title: Chief Financial Officer

Telephone number: 01642 528377

Email Address: clare.harper@stockton.gov.uk

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

Appendix A

CAPITAL PROGRAMME Up to 2029	Current Approved Programme	Programme Revisions	Completed Schemes 2025/26	Variances (Completed Schemes)	New approvals	Revised Programme	Expenditure Apr 2018 - March 2026
SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME & CHILDRENS SERVICES							
School Investment Programme	20,545,580	(329,619)	(1,851,480)	(17,871)	7,749,556	26,096,166	9,048,230
Children Investment	809,162	816,092	0	0	733,570	2,358,824	448,212
SCHOOL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME & CHILDRENS SERVICES	**21,354,742**	**486,473**	**(1,851,480)**	**(17,871)**	**8,483,126**	**28,454,990**	**9,496,442**
INCLUSIVE GROWTH							
Inclusive Growth & Development	7,044,564	0	0	0	0	7,044,564	4,824,256
Office Accommodation	2,750,000	0	(1,247,907)	(2,093)	0	1,500,000	228,261
INCLUSIVE GROWTH	**9,794,564**	**0**	**(1,247,907)**	**(2,093)**	**0**	**8,544,564**	**5,052,516**
REGENERATION							
Stockton Town Centre Schemes	18,785,032	853	0	0		18,785,885	1,828,478
Reshaping Town Centres	8,255,275	(5,027)	0	0	0	8,250,248	521,909
Billingham Town Centre	30,000,000	0	0	0	0	30,000,000	303,281
Thornaby Town Centre	34,210,923	78,856	(4,637,730)	(62,270)	1,300,000	30,889,779	12,667,554
Re-Development of Castlegate Site	30,881,638	205,409	205,409	(205,409)	0	31,087,047	27,835,626
Yarm & Eaglescliffe LUF	23,909,840	1,881	(876,096)	0	0	23,035,625	16,109,761
Asset Maintenance	2,716,284	0	(1,029,449)	0		1,686,835	1,029,450
Wayfinding	291,717	0	0	0	0	291,717	0
REGENERATION	**149,050,709**	**281,972**	**(6,337,866)**	**(267,679)**	**1,300,000**	**144,027,136**	**60,296,059**
TRANSPORTATION							
City Regional Sustainable Transport	13,222,198	79,762	(9,361,743)	(130,881)	746,636	4,555,973	6,647,659
Other Transport Schemes	11,147,245	110,056	(193,803)	46,803	0	11,110,301	2,992,395
Developer Agreements	1,671,647	20,759	0	0	169,785	1,862,190	1,314,707
TRANSPORTATION	**26,041,090**	**210,577**	**(9,555,546)**	**(84,078)**	**916,421**	**17,528,464**	**10,954,762**
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE & LEISURE							
Energy Efficiency Schemes	737,636	9,208	(625,512)	(34,488)	0	86,844	331,240
Environment and Green Infrastructure	10,551,863	(24,980)	(3,464,864)	(4,509,875)	309,059	2,861,202	2,173,436
Waste	8,125,939	428,903	0	0	0	8,554,842	5,812,430
Building Management & Asset Review	188,611	0	0	0	1,251,682	1,440,293	87,737
Vehicle Replacement	7,948,278	0	0	0		7,948,278	945,617
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE & LEISURE	**27,552,327**	**413,131**	**(4,090,376)**	**(4,544,363)**	**1,560,741**	**20,891,459**	**9,350,460**

ADULTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING							
Adults & Public Health Investment	202,000	10	0	0	0	202,010	45,459
Housing Regeneration	2,979,419	0	0	0	0	2,979,419	22,514
Private Sector Housing	3,626,960	0	(471,789)	3,299	0	3,158,470	1,996,455
ADULTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING	**6,808,379**	**10**	**(471,789)**	**3,299**	**0**	**6,339,899**	**2,064,428**
XENTRALL ICT							
Xentrall ICT Network	900,000	(242,085)	0	0	0	657,915	657,915
XENTRALL ICT	**900,000**	**(242,085)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**657,915**	**657,915**
COUNCIL WIDE							
Unallocated council wide invest to save	19,350,000	(733,570)	0	0	0	18,616,430	0
COUNCIL WIDE	**19,350,000**	**(733,570)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**18,616,430**	**0**
Total Approved Capital MTFP	**260,851,811**	**416,507**	**(23,554,963)**	**(4,912,786)**	**12,260,287**	**245,060,856**	**97,872,582**

Appendix B

Programme Revisions 2025/26

Children's Services

- £146,000 of revenue costs and associated funding removed from the capital programme for St John the Baptist temporary classrooms, in line with accounting regulations.

Regeneration

- £205,409 has been added to the Urban park budget. This relates to a saving of this amount made once all of the compensation events in respect of the demolition contract had been finalised.

Transport

- Yarm/Stockton Cycleway LUF2 (design), additional funding added in from TVCA LUF2, £129,206.

Community Services Environment and Culture

- £428,903 has been added the Capital Programme in respect of SBC share of the Joint Waste Management Strategy for Residual Municipal Waste Treatment, funded via loan from TVCA.

Finance, Transformation and Performance

- £242,085 of Xentrall's ICT Network works have been revised to reflect final delivery and costs attributed between capital and revenue in line with accounting regulations and removed from the capital programme along with the associated funding.

Council Wide

- £733,570 of the council wide borrowing approval has been moved into Children's Services to deliver the complex needs children's homes in line with the Cabinet approval.

Completed Schemes 2025/26

Children's Services

- Planned Maintenance Schemes on a range of schools have been delivered in 2025/26.

Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

- Several planned maintenance schemes have been delivered across a range of Council Buildings.

- The Council Chamber has been completed in 2025/26.

- Thornaby Towns Fund - Skills Development (NETA) has completed in 2025/26.

- Yarm Town Hall and toilets have completed and are closed out of the programme.

Transportation

- A number of transport schemes, including the annual City Regional Sustainable Transport programme for 2025/26 have been delivered and are closed out.

Community Services Environment and Leisure

- A number of energy efficiency schemes, the largest being Billingham Forum, completed in 2025-26.

- Flood Coastal Resilience Programme – Tees Tidelands planned project has been removed after the phase 2 project proposal was not deemed as viable following ongoing dialogue with the funder, the Environment Agency. A report providing greater detail on this scheme and the key lessons learned as a consequence of the work undertaken will be presented to a future Committee meeting in the coming months.

Adult Services

- The Local Authority Housing Fund scheme has completed and been closed out of the capital programme within private sector housing.

New approvals

Children's Services

- Additional £4.650m grant (AP Free school) from DfE added to the programme, to invest in High needs provision.

- Additional £3,088,428 grant (HNPCA) from DfE added to the programme, to invest in High needs provision

- Additional £733,570 grant from DfE added to the programme, to invest in Complex Needs Children's Homes. This is to be match funded by council contribution.

Regeneration

- Additional funding received from Sport England of £1,300,000, this has contributed to the Regeneration of the Town Centre, more specifically Thornaby pool.

Transportation

- 2026/27 City Regional Sustainable Transport allocation £699,836 has been added to the Capital Programme for Carriageway resurfacing.

- Developer agreement funding of £130,889 added for preliminary work on the Horse & Jockey Roundabout.

Community Services Environment and Leisure

- Worsall Road Culvert, additional funding received from the Environment Agency of £130,000.

- As per April cabinet report, a Depot provision has been added, which is to be funded by grant received from the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, of £1,096,682.

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 JULY 2026

People Select Committee Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Education – Executive Summary

Summary

1.1. This report outlines the findings and recommendations following the People Select Committee's scrutiny review of Post-16 Education.

1.2. There is a strong Post-16 offer in Stockton-on-Tees, with five providers offering a range of courses and qualifications to fulfil a variety of different passions and career aspirations, namely Conyers School and Sixth Form, Egglescliffe School and Sixth Form College, Stockton Sixth Form College, and The Education Training Collective (Etc), which has two site, Bede Sixth Form College, Stockton Riverside College. Etc also have the NETA site which has an engineering focus.

1.3. The review aimed to consider the current position, challenges and proposed solutions in Stockton-on-Tees' post-16 provision. In doing so, the review aimed to assist in increasing attraction and retention of post-16 education, reduce the number of young people becoming NEET, and lead to better outcomes for the young people of the Borough.

1.4. A Post-16 Partnership has been established to enhance strategic collaboration and communication between providers, improve the quality of education and training in the borough, share best practice and innovative approaches, identify and address common challenges facing the sector, and develop and implement strategies to promote the offer more widely. The partnership has senior representatives from all the providers, careers service, school support, education. Economic development and other relevant stakeholders.

Excellence for All

1.5. While there is a natural competitiveness between the providers, who are seeking to recruit students to their courses, genuine collaboration is taking place via the Post-16 Partnership to improve outcomes across the borough. The Excellence for All Work Strand is focussing on ensuring there is a strong offer with good outcomes across the borough that encourage students to enrol at in-borough providers. Two trials have taken place to address the outcomes: Business Mentor Support – Excellence for All, which aims to support students fulfil their full potential and bridge the gap between education and work; and Teach Meets which aims to bring teachers together to share best practice, practical innovations, and personal insights.

1.6. Further collaboration taking place includes providers receiving monthly information on young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), information on funding opportunities as these arise, and local employer information and business intelligence in terms of gaps and areas of growth, with sectors now speaking directly to students which has proved to be more powerful than providers sharing the information with students. Partnerships are in place with providers to offer industry placements, provide the learning for apprenticeships, and co-create curriculum with employers in key growth sectors.

Communication and Marketing

1.7. The Committee heard how the different providers are communicating and marketing their courses to schools both within the Borough and the wider Tees Valley area through a range of engagement activities targeted at Years 9 – 11, however there are some activities regarding careers choices aimed at younger year groups. Engagement and recruitment activity begins in September and continues throughout the year.

1.8. The Post-16 Partnership Communication and Marketing Work Strand aims to work together to keep students local and has developed a communications and marketing initiative spanning industry engagement, careers provision, transitions, and enrichment programmes. Activities that have taken place include creating a framework to map current engagement activity and identifying growth sectors and businesses, producing a Post-16 brochure showcasing each provider as part of place brand messaging of Stockton-on-Tees being a place to study, live, work and play, and Mystery Shopper exercises.

1.9. The Work Strand is now building on this foundation by developing a school engagement toolkit available for all staff showcasing the local offer, Alumni success stories profiling local people who built careers in Stockton-on-Tees and Digital ambassadors advocating for Stockton-on-Tees. Postcards directing prospective students to the Post-16 Brochure and a glossary of terms making this easier to understand are also being developed and a Stockton Post Secondary Pre-Open Event is planned for September 2026, giving young people and parents a chance to get initial information on all providers in one convenient location

1.10. Providers have seen an increase in engagement from school leavers at events and this has resulted in a significant increase in the number of applications to all in-borough providers. It should be noted, however, that school leavers may apply for more than one course including at providers out of borough.

Careers Advice

1.11. Providing early advice and guidance is considered essential in supporting young people to choose the right post-16 pathway for their talents and ambitions and secondary schools and colleges have a duty to provide careers education to all their students in Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5. Schools fulfil this duty either in-house by directly employing a qualified Careers Adviser, or by contracting with a Careers Guidance provider. SBC’s Careers has contracts with five schools. It also currently provides targeted support to Year 11 residents in Stockton-on-Tees who require further support, with the demand and complexity increasing significantly over time.

1.12. Both universal and targeted Careers Guidance is also available in all colleges/Years 12 and 13. This include in-house staff and SBC Careers, who currently offer progressive tailored support. SBC Careers is aiming to develop systems across colleges where they are made aware of declining attendance, attainment, or behaviour early so that support can be offered before crisis or students leave.

1.13. A Phase 2 Transformation Outcome-based review regarding Opportunities for Young People in Employment (OYPE) has been taking place at the same time of the Scrutiny Review, with a focus on operational redesign of the SBC Careers Service current service model to improve NEET outcomes via early intervention and digital first as well as operating within a reduced budget. The review is ongoing and will be undertaken in alignment with, and complementary to, the Scrutiny Review of Post-16 Education, ensuring consistency and that Scrutiny recommendations are included. The findings and outputs from this review will be considered alongside the Scrutiny Review and will inform recommendations.

1.14. In addition to careers advice and guidance provided in schools and colleges, the Employment & Training Hub has also been delivering programmes for young people of the borough to raise their knowledge, ambitions, and personal skills. These include Skills for Success, Excellence for All, Youth Guarantee Trailblazer, Care Experience Young Person Recruitment Coordinator, and Industry Insights.

1.15. The Careers Network Work Strand supports colleges to identify gaps in career education, share good practice and highlight innovative and inspiring opportunities. This has included working with Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), who are relaunching their Business Directory, and facilitating dialogue between schools and colleges and the TVCA Work Experience Coordinator. Roadshows activities are also being developed for Key Stage 3 Work Experience Week and “How To” guides shared for Key Stage 4 Work Experience Week. Finally, a Parent & Carer guide to careers has been developed.

Transitions from School to Post 16 Provision

1.16. The Committee were informed that the Transitions Work Strand aims to strengthen retention and progression as well as understand challenges faced by providers and how best to give advice and guidance to young people and parents/carers. A student survey has been conducted to find out what influences their decisions when applying for courses. There is a wide range of courses available, all providers are rated as Outstanding or Good by OFSTED, and outcomes are competitive. The survey results reiterated that the in-borough provision offer is competitive.

1.17. However, the survey highlighted that transport is an important factor, with young people choosing to attend providers that are quick and easy to get to. In some areas of the Borough it is easier to travel to out-of-borough providers, with direct and frequent bus routes, rather than travel across town which may take longer and require changing buses.

1.18. The survey also highlighted early engagement and awareness as being important when making post-16 choices. A shared language and messaging are important to help young people and parents/carers understand the different pathways, and a Jargon Buster has been proposed to simplify the process.

1.19. SBC teams are assisting in the transition to post-16 by ensuring providers have the information they need to support vulnerable learners in to the right provider/courses, and the multi-agency event Preparing for Adulthood Day proved to be effective.

However, there are still challenges including late identification of non-attenders and inconsistent application systems, and a Borough-wide data framework using both school and college data management systems is being developed to strengthen this.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

1.20. In April members were informed that NEET was 7.3%, a rise from 5% in 2020. The impact of additional staff resources in Leaving Care Team and Employment & Training Hub has not yet been seen in the national data for Care Experienced young people NEET rate, however smaller caseloads and increased proactive support for those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) has had a positive impact on reducing the NEET rate.

1.21. The OYPE review that has taken place is proposing a new service model and operational redesign to improve awareness of opportunities, strengthen transitions, and influence a reduction in NEET rates.

Conclusion and Recommendations

1.22. The Committee recognises the importance of building on the strong foundations already in place for post-16 collaboration and improving outcomes. The Committee concludes that with sustained focus and collective commitment, there is significant opportunity to further enhance post-16 education in Stockton-on-Tees, improving participation, reducing NEET levels, and enabling more young people to achieve their potential while contributing to the borough’s future economic growth.

1.23. The Committee recommends that:

1. Transition support is strengthened by developing a consistent borough-wide transition framework between schools and post-16 providers, including clear pre-enrolment guidance, earlier course matching, data sharing, and structured support during the first term/end of Year 12 when drop-out risk is highest.

2. Early warning systems for flagging declining attendance, behaviour, and attainment are embedded across all post-16 providers with clear escalation and intervention pathways are in place before disengagement reaches crisis point.

3. Collaborative initiatives that are showing signs of successfully assisting young people, such as Teach Meets, Skills for Success, and Business Mentor Support, are expanded to all providers and prioritising subjects with historically smaller student cohorts.

4. Communication between all providers and young people and their parents/carers regarding the Post-16 in-Borough offer is strengthened

5. Careers education is embedded in to the curriculum in all schools and post-16 providers to ensure young people choose the right pathways for them and reduce early withdrawal by:

   - ensuring careers advice and guidance/post 16 options are available from Year 9 (or earlier) to enable young people to build their knowledge

- developing resources and staff training to show how subject-specific knowledge and skills translate into employment, business and industry

- give clear course expectations, progression routes and employment outcomes to reduce early withdrawal from and dissatisfaction with courses.

6. Labour-market intelligence and cohort growth data is utilised to plan academic, vocational and apprenticeship provision more strategically, to ensure capacity keeps pace with demand and competition between age groups does not disadvantage younger learners.

7. Cross-provider enrichment opportunities are broadened to not only create a more competitive offer compared with regional competitors but also raise aspirations.

8. Post-16 providers explore collaborative approaches and strategic networks to address transport barriers, highlighted as a significant influence on post-16 choice including connectivity to all in-Borough post-16 providers and cost, so young people can access efficient, cost effective in-borough provision.

9. Post-16 providers ensure that vocational courses provide coherent pathways to meet industry requirements

Name of Contact Officer: Michelle Gunn

Post Title: Scrutiny Officer

Telephone number: 01642 524987

Email address: michelle.gunn@stockton.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 JULY 2026

Children and Young People Select Committee Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision – Executive Summary

Summary

1.1. This report summarises the findings of the Children and Young People Select Committee's scrutiny review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision.

1.2. At the outset of the review a number of schools had applied to be additionally resourced provision. However, interest from the secondary sector had been disappointing and some secondary schools with Enhanced Mainstream Schools (EMS) provision had chosen not to transfer into Additionally Resourced Provision (ARPs).

1.3. The purpose of the scrutiny was therefore to receive an update on the implementation of the transfer from September 2025 and engage with the secondary schools to encourage additional applications from the secondary sector. The Select Committee wanted to fully understand the barriers to schools becoming ARPs and identify ways that that these could be overcome to secure the provision required for children and young people in the Borough.

1.4. The Committee were mindful that not having a full complement of secondary schools taking up the places risked undermining the effectiveness and reach of this key element of the local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy and meant that there might be implications for children upon transition to secondary. For example, there might not be the same type or level of support available to them, potentially creating pressure on special school places and missed opportunities for inclusive education in mainstream settings.

1.5. The Committee agreed the following key lines of enquiry for their work:

- How will the transfer improve the outcomes for children with special educational needs across our Borough?
- How does the project support the Council's vision and strategy for SEND provision?
- What does DfE Guidance tell us?
- Will the changes ensure that there is sufficient and suitable educational provision for SEND pupils in both primary and secondary?
- What are the barriers to secondary schools becoming additionally resourced provision?
- How can the number of ARP placements in secondary be increased?
- To what extent do families and schools understand the changes and how will they be engaged during implementation?
- Can lessons be learnt from the primary ARP model and the higher uptake?
- Is the funding provided to ARP adequate and sustainable for them to provide the support needed?

1.6. Contributions were obtained from Council Officers, Stockton Parent Carer Liaison Forum, North East and North Cumbria ICB and Stockton-on-Tees Primary and Secondary Schools.

1.7. Early in the scrutiny review, the Government announced that it would be publishing a White Paper outlining the intended approach to SEND reform. The announcement came amid increasing calls for action regarding the rising number of registered SEND pupils and the associated challenges faced by councils. Following the announcement, the Select Committee decided to pause the review to await the detail of the White Paper.

1.8. In May 2026 the Select Committee received a presentation on the White Paper and considered the implications for their work. The Select Committee agreed to summarise the evidence collected and key findings and advise Cabinet that they would be concluding their work given that the Government was now making plans to direct all schools to have Inclusion Hubs.

Key Findings and Conclusions

- There has been a rise in demand for SEND provision, including increasing EHCP numbers, with a projected further 9% increase, placing ongoing pressure on the system
- Parents have low confidence in mainstream secondary provision, with 90% expressing concern that needs cannot be met without additional specialist support. Feedback from families highlights insufficient capacity, limited choice and gaps in provision, alongside practical barriers such as distance and transport. Parents report significant concerns about children's wellbeing, including anxiety, school refusal and risk of harm where needs are not adequately met, and strongly favour smaller, specialist or adapted environments. There is a consistent call from parents for a more flexible, needs-led system, with greater emphasis on tailored support, continuity, and meaningful parental involvement
- The ARP model significantly increased local capacity, with 155 additional places created across primary and secondary phases, improving the availability of SEND provision within mainstream settings
- The development of ARPs was strongly collaborative, involving the Council, schools, health partners and families
- Early evidence indicates that ARPs are enabling better outcomes for children and more inclusive practice
- Schools report that ARPs and inclusive approaches are having a positive impact on pupil outcomes, including improved attendance, engagement, independence and achievement
- Inclusive practice is also benefiting the wider school community, with improved staff skills, stronger school ethos and greater acceptance of diversity
- Site visits confirmed that inclusive, well-led school environments can deliver strong outcomes, even with high proportions of SEND and disadvantaged pupils
- The national SEND White Paper introduces significant future changes, including a shift away from ARPs and SEND units towards school-led inclusion hubs and a stronger universal offer. These reforms will require the Council to adapt its current model

1.9. Overall, the evidence shows that the move from EMS to ARPs and SEND Units has been a positive and necessary step in modernising SEND provision in Stockton-on-Tees. It has created additional capacity, improved local access to education, and strengthened inclusive practice within mainstream schools. Feedback from school visits and early indications suggest better outcomes for children and a more sustainable financial position for the local authority.

1.10. Looking ahead, the Council will need to adapt its current model to respond to national SEND reforms, which may require further transformation towards inclusion-focused approaches within mainstream schools. Ongoing focus on early intervention, workforce capacity, and co-production with families will be critical to ensuring that all children with SEND receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

Recommended

1.11. That Cabinet note the contents of the report.

Statutory Forward Plan

Key Decisions

1 January 2026 - 31 July 2026

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Billingham Town Centre Update To consider governance and delegated authority arrangements arising from previous Cabinet decisions relating to Billingham Town Centre and to determine the appropriate decision-making framework for any future actions associated with the project. Key Para No	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Cabinet	16 Jul 2026	Cabinet	Meeting.	tracey.carter@stockton.gov.uk		

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Procurement Plan / Higher Value Contracts The report seeks approval from Cabinet for the procurement of higher value contracts where commitments are made in 2026/27. The report includes contracts not approved in the March 2026 Annual Procurement Plan because they were not known or did not have sufficient detail at that point in time. Key Para No	Director of Corporate Services	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Cabinet	16 Jul 2026		Meetings and email	martin.skipsey@stockton.gov.uk Martin.skipsey@stockton.gov.uk		EPIA not required

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Environment, Leisure & Green Infrastructure (POF Ph2) Cabinet is recommended to approve the proposals, which adopt a proactive and balanced approach to achieving the best possible outcomes. The proposals are designed to ensure the effective and responsible use of Council resources, while maintaining a clear focus on delivering sustainable services. They support the delivery of Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings, alongside a structured review of the most critical functions currently delivered	Chief Executive	Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure and Culture	Cabinet	18 Jun 2026	Cabinet	Meetings	Craig.Willows@stockton.gov.uk craig.willows@stockton.gov.uk		An EPIA has been completed

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Adult Social Care Fees and Charges The purpose of this report is to seek authority to consult on a proposal to introduce fair and transparent administration fees across several adult social care functions. These include Appointee, Court appointed Deputyship, Deferred Payment Agreements (DPA's), interest on DPA's and Deceased estates. The proposals are intended for public consultation. Key Para No	Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care	Cabinet	14 May 2026	Integrated Care Board Service Users Wider public engagement	Letter out to inform people subject to Stockton Borough Council appointee Survey 2 Face to Face meetings Notice on Stockton Borough Council web site.	adam.carabine@stockton.gov.uk Carol.Malham@stockton.gov.uk		EPIA required

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction The report will provide an update in relation to the commencement of a new Local Plan, Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD (which is being submitted with a recommendation for adoption) and the Article 4 direction (which has been subject to consultation). Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD The SPD has been produced, following the decision of Council in January 2026, to ensure proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. It assists in the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Cabinet	14 May 2026		Statutory consultation / notification undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation.	simon.grundy@stockton.gov.uk planningpolicy@stockton.gov.uk		An Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) has been undertaken

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan Council endorsed a recommendation for a full update of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan in January 2024. Fundamental changes to the planning making system have occurred through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (“The Act”) and subsequently The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026. Combined ‘The Act’ and ‘Regulations’	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Council	20 May 2026	The Local Plan process will be subject to statutory consultation at various stages of its preparation in accordance with the associated regulations.	Statutory notices and consultation to be undertaken in accordance with regulations.	simon.grundy@stockton.gov.uk planningpolicy@stockton.gov.uk		Yes EPIA this will be fully considered and undertaken during the development of the Local Plan and associated evidence base, should the relevant authorisation be given to commence the Local Plan.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Depot Provision Update Depot provision update and key acquisition and disposal decision. Key Para No	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Cabinet	23 Apr 2026	Cabinet	Meetings	tracey.carter@stockton.gov.uk Kieran.Meighan@stockton.gov.uk	Private Meeting Notice -28 Day Notice - acquisition of a depot April 26	EPIA required

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Post-16 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transport – Approval on statutory consultation Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council currently provides discretionary post-16 SEND transport to approximately 185 learners, including 29 learners aged 19+. This provision is not a statutory requirement. Demand and associated costs for community transport services continue to rise, with overall expenditure projected to exceed £11 million by 2028/29. Post-16 transport costs are increasing year-on-year and represent a significant and growing area of discretionary spend. The Council is therefore considering potential changes to its Post-16 SEND Transport Policy to ensure that provision remains sustainable, fair and aligned with statutory duties. A range of options are being considered.	Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Cabinet	23 Apr 2026	Stockton Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) met with SBC officers on 16 February 2026 for early engagement. This meeting underlined the need for clear timelines, accessible consultation materials, and opportunities to share lived experiences. SPCF also emphasised the need for safe and public transport, alongside clarity on available transport support (e.g. free bus passes), and recognised the separate proposed expansion of Independent Travel Training seeks to promote independence and better long-term outcomes for young people.	A statutory consultation will be undertaken for a minimum of 28 working days during term time. Consultation will include an online survey, targeted engagement with stakeholders, listening events, and collaboration with representative groups including the Stockton Parent Carer Forum. Consultation materials will be designed to be clear and accessible.	Representations may be submitted via the Council's online consultation platform and by email to the responsible service. Details of how to respond, including the closing date for representations, will be set out in the consultation materials.	Forward Plan Proforma 2026 - Post-16 Transport	YES – An Equality Impact and Poverty Impact Assessment has been completed and will remain a live document, to be updated in light of consultation responses and to inform any subsequent decision-making.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Supported & Temporary Accommodation - Adults & Families, Children & Young People The report seeks approval from Cabinet for the procurement of Supported and Temporary accommodation provision for Adults & families and Children & Young People). Key Para No	Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Cabinet	18 Jun 2026	Cabinet	Meetings.	jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk Adults/families = jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk Children/young people = jane.smith@stockton/gov.uk		EPIA to be completed

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Levelling Up Fund - Yarm Public Realm Update on outcome of consultation undertaken in regard to public realm proposals on Yarm High Street. Consideration of and decision on next steps Key Para No	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Cabinet	12 Mar 2026	None specific beyond consultation already undertaken.		iain.robinson@stockton.gov.uk Via email towncentresinvestmentteam@stockton.gov.uk		Community Impact and Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment to be completeed

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Annual Procurement Plan/ Higher Value Contracts The report seeks approval from Cabinet for the procurement of higher value contracts. The report includes all known contract awards scheduled for 2026/27. Key Para No	Director of Corporate Services	Cllr Paul Rowling	Cabinet	12 Mar 2026	Cabinet	Meetings and email	julie.marsden@stockton.gov.uk Martin.skipsey@stockton.gov.uk		EPIA not required.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
A Children's Integrated Front Door The Children's Hub is the first point of contact for anyone who has a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person who lives in Stockton-on-Tees. The Children's Hub is delivered in partnership with, and managed by, Hartlepool Borough Council. The Families First nationally mandated reforms for children's services and the strategic direction of both Hartlepool Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council means the current approach is not consistent with the future direction of children's services for both Authorities. In June 2025 Cabinet endorsed the disaggregation of Stockton's Children's Safeguarding Front Door from Hartlepool. This paper serves as an update and a request for the delegated safeguarding functions to be returned to	Director of Children's Services	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Cabinet	9 Feb 2026	The Children and Young People's Partnership Hartlepool Borough Council Cleveland Police Integrated Care Board (ICB) Tees Esk Wear Valley Trust Harrogate District Foundation Trust Education Partners Commissioned Domestic Abuse Services	Meetings with partners involved in the current Children's Hub arrangements Partnership meetings supported by the Department of Education The Families First Partnership Board	aishah.waithe@stockton.gov.uk		An EPIA has been completed and quality assured for the process, details of which are included in the Cabinet report.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy The report to Council to set the Council's budget and Council tax for 2026/27 and approve the Medium Term Financial Plan. Key Para No	Director of Finance, Transformation & Performance	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Council	18 Feb 2026	Members briefings and meetings will be held with Councillors.	Members briefings and meetings will be held with Councillors	clare.harper@stockton.gov.uk		

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Re-procurement of the Stockton drug and alcohol treatment and recovery service Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to commission drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services as part of their public health duties. The current Stockton service has been delivered by Change, Grow, Live (CGL) since 2020 under a five-year contract originally ending on 31st March 2025. To enable appropriate planning and alignment with wider system developments, the contract has been extended to 31st March 2026. A re-procurement is therefore required to ensure continuity of this statutory service. Decisions are needed on the procurement route, the proposed provider, and the financial envelope for the new contract to enable timely and effective commissioning arrangements to be put in place.	Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care	Cabinet	15 Jan 2026			sarah.bowman-abouna@stockton.gov.uk sarah.bowman-abouna@stockton.gov.uk		A separate community impact assessment was not undertaken. However, the potential impact on communities has been considered through the completion of a health needs assessment, service reviews, and stakeholder engagement, including staff, people with lived experience, residents, and partner organisations. The findings from this work have informed the development of the financial options for re-procurement and the assessment of the minimum viable service model.

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Revising the Public Spaces Protection Orders in Stockton Town Centre and Norton Town Centre 2026-2029 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) are designed to prevent individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour (ASB) in public spaces. PSPOs are very common across England & Wales, especially in town centre areas. Stockton-on-Tees has had one in place since 2023, covering the town centre areas of Stockton and Norton. PSPOs only last 3 years, and so the current Order is due to expire in April 2026. PSPOs are made by local authorities under powers conferred to them by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. As per the request from the Council's Community Safety Select Committee this year, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has evaluated the current Order, its conditions and	Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety	Cabinet	12 Mar 2026	Countless national & regional PSPO examples were reviewed in the initial first design phases of the revised drafts – and as part of the evaluation into the 2023 Order – 9 local authorities were directly contacted by the Council's Community Safety Dept. in 2025 (a further regional local authority was contacted in 2026), where in-depth discussions took place over the principles and enforcement of PSPOs, in an exercise in learning, development, and best practice sharing. SBC Community Safety has kept in contact with four of those other LAs throughout this process, as to continue sharing best practice and aid in SBC's development of the revised Order and accompanying implementation strategy/enforcement policy. Once the design of the drafts was completed following discussions between SBC Community Safety		adam.bateman@stockton.gov.uk Adam.Bateman@Stockton.gov.uk		

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Article 4 Direction Small Houses of Multiple Occupation (Use class C4) To seek approval for implementing an Article 4 Direction to control the proliferation of small Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The Planning system categorises HMOs as either use class C4 (small houses in multiple occupation) consisting of between three and six persons with basic shared facilities, or for HMO's over six residents fall into the Sui Generis (meaning a 'class of its own') classification. Although planning permission is required for a change into the Sui Generis classification, it is permitted development (i.e. no permission is required) to change from a dwelling (Use class C3) to a small HMO (use class C4). An Article 4 direction provides a mechanism where the use of permitted	Director of Regeneration & Inclusive Growth	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Council	15 Jan 2026	Councillors	Meeting with full Council.	chris.renahan@stockton.gov.uk		

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy The report to Council to set the Council's budget and Council tax for 2026/27 and approve the Medium Term Financial Plan. Key Para No	Director of Finance, Transformation & Performance	Cabinet Member for Resources and Transport	Council	18 Feb 2026	All Members of the Council.	Members briefings and meetings will be held with Councillors.	clare.harper@stockton.gov.uk clare.harper@stockton.gov.uk		

Description of Matter / Decision Required Key Decision?	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Leader	Identity of Decision Taker (eg Cabinet or Council or Joint Arrangement)	Decision Due Date	Principal Consultees	Method of Consultation	How Interested Parties may submit representations to decision-takers and end date for represent-ations	Reports and background papers submitted to decision-taker for consider-ation	Notes / Comments
Housing Strategy 2026-2036 Updated and refreshed Housing Strategy to ensure it remains relevant to the local Housing environment, provides a clear market position statement, and evidence to support future funding initiatives / opportunities. Key Para No	Director of Adults Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing	Cabinet	11 Dec 2025	Cabinet	Meetings and emails	jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk		EPIA will be completed.

This page is intentionally left blank

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Protection of Property	
Achieved since last meeting	Initial meetings to discuss the scope of this review were held in May 2026 (officer) and June 2026 (tri-partite). In order to avoid the evidence-gathering phase being interrupted by the August recess, it was agreed to present the draft scope and plan to the Committee for approval at the July 2026 meeting (evidence sessions would then start in September 2026).
Problems or concerns	None
Planned this / next month	As above, a draft scope and plan will be presented to the Committee for approval at the July 2026 meeting.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	**North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) Quality Account 2025-2026**: The annual NTHFT Quality Account item was considered at the Committee meeting in May 2026. Senior University Hospitals Tees (UHT) personnel presented a summary of the first (draft) UHT Quality Account which gave an overview of both NTHFT and neighbouring South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) performance against the joint 2025-2026 quality priorities – the intended priorities for 2026-2027 were also shared. Focusing on NTHFT-related information, subsequent Committee questions were raised on: • the timeline for anticipated service changes across the UHT footprint to be announced • whether there were plans to add a DEXA (Dual-Energy X-ray Absorptiometry) scanner to the local Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) so bone density checks could be offered • ensuring quality of discharge letters • the further rise in the number of patients waiting over 12 hours in A&E • the ageing University Hospital of North Tees estate • the latest staff Friends & Family Test results • cancer-related targets / lack of data • violence towards staff • recent media regarding potential job losses Following the meeting, the Committee agreed its third-party statement for inclusion in the Trust's published Quality Account document – this was sent to UHT on 3 June 2026 and can be found at https://www.nth.nhs.uk/resources/quality-accounts-2025-2026/ (see pages 142-144). **CQC / PAMMS Inspections – Quarterly Update**: A report was presented at the Committee meeting in June 2026 detailing the findings of both CQC and PAMMS inspections that had been published in the fourth quarter (January to March 2026) of 2025-2026. Members welcomed what was a very positive quarterly

	period, with all contracted providers being rated 'Good' following recent CQC (2) and PAMMS (12) inspection outcomes. **PAMMS Annual Report 2025-2026**: The latest PAMMS Annual Report covering the 2025-2026 period was presented to the Committee in June 2026. Outcomes of assessments for contracted care homes (covering nursing, residential, learning disabilities, and mental health) showed that, of the 29 inspections carried out, two services were rated 'Excellent' overall, 26 services had received a 'Good' overall PAMMS rating, and one service had been graded 'Requires Improvement' overall – this was an improvement when compared to 2024-2025. **Norton Medical Centre**: In March 2026, the CQC published its latest view of Norton Medical Centre following an inspection in October 2025. The practice's overall rating remained 'Requires Improvement', but whilst the 'effective' and 'responsive' domains had been upgraded, the 'well-led' domain was downgraded to 'Inadequate' (prior to the publication of these findings, the CQC served a warning notice on Norton Medical Centre on 17 November 2025 for failing to meet the regulations relating to safe care and treatment). Following a subsequent Committee request, representatives of Norton Medical Centre attended the June 2026 meeting to provide its response, with Member questions focusing on concerns raised by practice staff, the composition of / value placed on the Patient Participation Group (PPG), medication management, the results of a recent staff survey, and role of / support from other relevant organisations (e.g. NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB), Primary Care Network (PCN), Cleveland Local Medical Committee (LMC)).

NHS Updates / Consultations	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	**NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)**: Early-May 2026 marked an important milestone for the NENC ICB as it brought its transition programme to a close and started a new chapter as a strategic commissioning organisation. In line with national NHS guidance and the Model ICB Blueprint, the NENC ICB had reduced both running and programme costs while reorganising to support its new role and operating model. The five-year strategic commissioning plan sets out how the NENC ICB will work with partners to plan and commission services for the 3.2 million people it serves, building on its shared ambition of *Better health and wellbeing for all*. **NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)**: The NENC ICB was working with the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), Healthwatch, and other partners to improve NHS patient transport services and consider ways to make it fairer, clearer and more consistent. People who used patient transport in the North East, along with carers and family members, were encouraged to take part in a survey and share their experiences and views before any decisions were made.

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Regional Health Committees	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	**Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**: Middlesbrough Council was hosting the Committee in 2026-2027. The first meeting of the new municipal year took place on 2 June 2026 where agenda items included the appointment of the new Chair, a NHS England / Northern Neonatal Network presentation on the delivery of neonatal care across the North East and North Cumbria region, and a Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) update on its review of Adult Eating Disorder Services. Senior University Hospitals Tees (UHT) personnel also presented the joint (North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)) Quality Account 2025-2026 and gave details of planned workforce reductions across the UHT footprint. The next meeting was scheduled for 23 July 2026. Although the agenda was still to be confirmed, a request was made at the June 2026 meeting for an item to be included on access to specialist community perinatal mental health services. **Southern Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**: No meetings are currently scheduled. **North East Regional Health Committee**: No meetings are currently scheduled.

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	The following update was considered by the Committee since the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting: **Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care**: The second update on progress of outstanding actions in relation to recommendations from the Committee's previously completed review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care was considered in May 2026, with subsequent discussion points covering access to / use of digital health records and NHS app content. Given one recommendation still had associated actions that were yet to be deemed 'fully achieved', it was agreed that a further update on this would be provided to the Committee in around six months. Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows: • Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care (TBC – late-2026) • Reablement Service (September 2026) • Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service (TBC – early-2027)
Requests for more information	None

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

2026-2027 Scrutiny Reviews
• Protection of Property

Remaining 2026-2027 Meetings (all 4.30pm unless stated)	
Tuesday 21 July 2026	Tuesday 15 December 2026
Tuesday 22 September 2026	Tuesday 19 January 2027
Tuesday 20 October 2026	Tuesday 16 February 2027
Tuesday 17 November 2026	Tuesday 23 March 2027

Children and Young People Select Committee
Chair's Update July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Additionally Resourced SEND Provision
The purpose of the scrutiny was to receive an update on the implementation of the transfer from September 2025 and engage with the secondary schools to encourage additional applications from the secondary sector. The Select Committee wanted to fully understand the barriers to schools becoming ARPs and identify ways that that these could be overcome to secure the provision required for children and young people in the Borough. However, early in the scrutiny review, the Government announced that it would be publishing a White Paper outlining the intended approach to SEND reform. The announcement came amid increasing calls for action regarding the rising number of registered SEND pupils and the associated challenges faced by councils. Following the announcement, the Select Committee decided to pause the review to await the detail of the White Paper. In May 2026 the Select Committee received a presentation on the White Paper and considered the implications for their work. The Select Committee agreed to summarise the evidence collected and key findings and advise Cabinet that they would be concluding their work given that the Government was now making plans to direct all schools to have Inclusion Hubs. An Executive Summary setting out findings and conclusions appears elsewhere on this agenda. Cabinet is being asked to note the report.

Scrutiny Review – Children Not in School
The Executive Summary of the Select Committee's final report was considered at the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting. The recommendations focused on strengthening consistency and partnership working to reduce time out of education and improve outcomes for vulnerable children. Collectively, the recommendations aimed to ensure that all children and young people are supported to access suitable education safely and in a way that meets their individual needs. The final report was considered by Cabinet in June and all recommendations were approved. An Action Plan is scheduled to be considered by the Select Committee in September.

Scrutiny Review – Alternative Provision
A tri-partite meeting was held on 25 June and the July meeting of the Select Committee will be receiving an introductory presentation and considering the scope and project plan for the review. This scrutiny review will examine the Council's approach to Alternative Provision (AP), assessing whether current arrangements meet need and improve outcomes. The following key lines of enquiry have been identified: • What are the reasons that children are placed in alternative provision? • How has demand changed over time? What does the data tell us?

Children and Young People Select Committee
Chair's Update July 2026

- Are particular groups more likely to access alternative provision?
- What proportion of children return to mainstream education? How is this managed?
- What is the AP Framework? How is quality measured?
- What are the outcomes for children accessing alternative provision? How is progress monitored? How is attendance tracked?
- How is alternative provision commissioned and monitored? What is the average cost per placement? Is there sufficient local provision? How is provision regulated?
- How do we ensure robust safeguarding in all AP settings?
- What do children and young people say about their experience of AP? How are their voices heard? How are mental health and emotional wellbeing supported?
- How do we engage with parents/ carers?
- What preventative strategies are in place in mainstream schools?
- How well to partners work together? Is there a shared AP strategy?
- What are the rules around OFSTED registration?

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	None – the next overview meeting is September 2026
Problems or concerns	None
Requests for more information	None

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or concerns	Outstanding monitoring: • Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Relationships - A further progress update to be scheduled in due course • Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment - Ongoing

Remaining 2026-2027 Meetings (all 5.00pm unless stated)
15 July 2026 16 September 2026 14 October 2026 11 November 2026 16 December 2026 13 January 2027 10 February 2027 17 March 2027

Community Safety Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Children affected by Domestic Abuse	
Achieved since last meeting	A draft action plan in relation to the report's recommendations was presented to, and subsequently approved by, the Committee in May 2026. Members welcomed news of the recent agreement by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland to extend funding for the University Hospital of North Tees Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) by a further six months (one of the Committee's key recommendations).
Problems or concerns	None
Planned this / next month	The first update on progress of the agreed actions will be considered in early-2027.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Scrutiny Review – Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget	
Achieved since last meeting	The second evidence-gathering session for this review was held in May 2026 and featured a further contribution from the SBC Community Services, Environment & Culture directorate, including examples / effectiveness of similar schemes at other Local Authorities. Early feedback from the SBC Ward Councillor survey was also considered, and questions were agreed for a Town and Parish Council survey, as well as a survey for local residents (to be circulated to existing engagement mechanisms via the SBC Community Engagement Team). The third, and final, evidence-gathering session took place in early-July 2026 where the SBC Digital Services and Systems department gave a presentation on a proposed new process for submitting CPB and WTB requests. Feedback from the Town and Parish Council survey was also considered, along with responses received from local residents.
Problems or concerns	None
Planned this / next month	The Committee will consider a summary of the evidence received at an informal session in late-July 2026 – draft recommendations will then be formulated.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Community Safety Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Alley Gates	
Achieved since last meeting	Initial meetings to discuss the scope for this review have taken place during June and July 2026.
Problems or concerns	None
Planned this / next month	A draft scope and plan will be presented to the Committee for approval in late-July 2026.
On track – yes / no	Yes

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	The following update was considered by the Committee since the last Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting: **Welcoming and Safe Town Centres**: The first update on progress of agreed actions in relation to recommendations from the Committee's previously completed review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres was considered in May 2026, with subsequent discussion points covering retail crime and a lack of appropriate punishment for shoplifters, House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) applications, recent incidents of arson and shoplifting in Ingleby Barwick, and community safety planning around the new Stockton waterfront urban park. Given some actions were yet to be fully achieved, a future update would be required in early-2027. Future progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows: • Fly-Grazed Horses (TBC) (*note: in November 2025, Cleveland Police was approached to see if there were any developments from a force perspective that might enable some further progress on this issue – to date, no further information has been provided*) • Welcoming and Safe Town Centres (TBC – early-2027) • Children affected by Domestic Abuse (TBC – early-2027)
Requests for more information	None

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	**Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP)**: Minutes of previous SSP meetings were periodically included on Committee agendas so Members were sighted on developments within that forum.
Requests for more information	None

Community Safety Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

2026-2027 Scrutiny Reviews
• Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget • Alley Gates

Remaining 2026-2027 Meetings (all 4.30pm unless stated)	
Thursday 30 July 2026	Thursday 17 December 2026
Thursday 1 October 2026	Thursday 28 January 2027
Thursday 29 October 2026	Thursday 25 February 2027
Thursday 26 November 2026	Thursday 25 March 2027

This page is intentionally left blank

People Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Post 16 Provision	
Achieved since last meeting	The Committee considered information from the Post 16 Partnership transitions strand in May 2026, which included the outcomes of a student service regarding influences on their decisions for post-16 education. The information highlighted the importance of data sharing, communication, and transport. The Committee held an informal meeting in June 2026 to review the evidence received throughout the review and draft recommendations. The final report and recommendations were subsequently agreed at the July meeting. The review found that there has been genuine collaboration taking place contributing to increased engagement, rising applications numbers, and stronger alignment with local labour market needs. The Committees recommendations build on these strong foundations to further enhance communication approaches between schools, providers, young people and parents/carers, earlier careers education, and improved transitions support. The report will be presented to Cabinet in September 2026.
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	NA
On track – yes / no	Yes

Scrutiny Review – Procurement and Tendering	
Achieved since last meeting	A scope and project plan for the next review was presented and subsequently agreed at the meeting in July 2026, and background information presented. The aim of the review will be to ensure procurement processes deliver value for money, are competitive, and transparent. The review will be examining the Council's own procurement processes and receiving information from internal officers. The Committee also wishes to understand how the Council operates in the wider region, along with areas of best practice in procurement processes. Evidence will therefore be requested from North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) and Local Government Association (LGA). The Local Chamber of Commerce will be invited to share their experience of the Councils procurement process.
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	The first evidence session will be held in September
On track – yes / no	Yes

People Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	A progress update was received for Disabled Facilities Grant. There were eight outstanding items, with two agreed as achieved and four on track. The recommendations regarding arrangements with Registered Providers and producing a register of adapted properties had slipped, however discussions were ongoing and progress was being made, including promoting landlord applications with a pilot in place with North Star. The next progress updates will be received by the Committee as follows: • Partnership working in Early Help – September 2026 • Disabled Facilities Grant – November 2026
Requests for more information	None

Overview / Performance and Quality Assurance	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	The Committee received overview reports from Corporate Services and Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Services at the May meeting. The reports outlined key achievements and challenges in 2025-26, as well as emerging issues within these areas. Members gave positive feedback on the Council's new recruitment video that was shown. The importance of digitalisation and move towards livestreaming to increase transparency and communication with residents were also highlighted by members.
Requests for more information	None

Next Scrutiny Review
TBC

2026-2027 Meetings (all 2.00pm unless stated)
Monday 7 September 2026 Monday 5 October 2026 Monday 2 November 2026 Monday 7 December 2026 Monday 4 January 2027 Monday 8 February 2027 Monday 8 March 2027

Place Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

Scrutiny Review – Animal Welfare	
Achieved since last meeting	The Scope and project plan was considered and agreed at the May 2026 meeting. The Animal Welfare service performs several critical functions and interventions to protect the public and ensure the welfare of animals, however, it is facing increasing pressures on demand, complexity of cases, and increasing costs. The aim of the review will therefore be to address the challenges to the long-term sustainability and cost of services and thereby continue to provide excellent care for animals and ensure the safety and well-being of the community. A range of Council services and partners were identified as contributors to the review, including Licensing, Adult Social Care, Cleveland Police, animal charities and veterinary practices. The committee also received background information regarding the service, which outlined the statutory duties regarding stray dogs, along with discretionary duties to protect animal welfare and public safety, how these duties are carried out and high standards achieved, and a breakdown of the increasing pressures. In June, the Committee received evidence from the Licensing Service regarding their role in regulating activity through administration and enforcement of licenses and how this supports animal welfare within the borough. A star rating system was in place, assessed on welfare standards and risk levels, which helps the public make informed choices and encourages better standards. There has been a steady increase in licensed premises, and licenses are granted for one, two or three years depending on their star rating. Adult Social Care also attended in June to give evidence regarding their role in looking after residents' pets when taken into temporary care or hospital under their temporary protection of property statutory duties. The majority of pets being looked after are cats and dogs, but has also included birds, fish, rabbits and snakes. The pets are either supported through commissioned kennels, separate to the ones used by Animal Welfare Services, or a pet sitting service when kennel capacity is limited, and the cost of this recharged to the pet owner.
Problems or concerns	None
Planned next month	Cleveland Police will be attending the July meeting to give evidence regarding their roles and responsibilities for dangerous dogs and animal welfare, along with their partnership role with the Council. A site visits to the two kennel services the Council uses will also be arranged.

Place Select Committee
Chair's Update – July 2026

On track – yes / no	Yes

Monitoring	
Key Issues / Problems or Concerns	A progress update on affordable housing was received in May, and two recommendations were agreed as fully achieved, with the website being updated to provide regular updates to applicants regarding properties available and demand, and changes to the Common Allocation Policy not resulting in any unintended consequences. However, demand from priority applicants continues to exceed the supply of available properties advertised through Tees Valley Homefinder. Only one recommendation was outstanding, regarding the investigation of a hybrid model to address the borough's affordable housing need and this was due to the impact being long term. A further progress update was requested in six months. Progress updates regarding previously completed reviews will be received by the Committee as follows: • Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste Collections (July 2026) • Muslim and Faith Burial (October 2026) • Burial Provision (December 2026) • Affordable Housing (December 2026)
Requests for more information	None

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

Next Scrutiny Review
• TBC
Remaining 2026 - 27 Meetings (all 4.00pm unless stated)
Monday 13 July 2026 Monday 14 September 2026 Monday 12 October 2026 Monday 9 November 2026 Monday 14 December 2026 Monday 11 January 2026 Monday 15 February 2027 Monday 15 March 2027

Executive Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2026-2027

In addition to the Standing Items:

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

Date	Item	Attending
19 May	Scrutiny Review of Capital Projects – Report of Place Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information Scrutiny Review of Children Affected by Domestic Abuse – Report of Community Safety Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information Scrutiny Review of Children Not in School - Report of Children and Young People Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information ASC Front Door Business Case/Options Appraisal	Michelle Gunn Gary Woods Judy Trainer Callum Titley
21 July	MTFP Outturn Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Education – Report of the People Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision – Executive Summary for Information	Clare Harper Michelle Gunn Judy Trainer
22 September	MTFP Quarter 1 Stockton on Tees Plan and Performance Update Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Complaints Report and SBC Complaints Report	Clare Harper Geraldine Brown Ged Morton Gemma Jackson Lisa Williams
17 November	Scrutiny Review of Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget – Report of Community Safety Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information	Gary Woods
15 December (Additional Meeting)	MTFP Quarter 2	Clare Harper

19 January	Scrutiny Review of Animal Welfare, Kennelling, and Protection of Pets – Report of Place Select Committee – Executive Summary for Information	Michelle Gunn
23 March		

Regular Reports
- Council Plan Updates
- Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Updates
- Select Committee Final Reports (Executive Summaries)