

People Select Committee

Agenda

Date:

Monday 8 September 2025 at 2.00 pm

Venue:

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

Cllr Marilyn Surtees (Chair) Cllr Paul Weston (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Hugo Stratton and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Agenda

1. Evacuation Procedure (Pages 7 - 10)

- 2. Apologies for Absence
- 3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes (Pages 11 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th July 2025

5. Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help (Pages 15 - 64)

To receive evidence from Family Action, PITSTOP, and Harrogate and District Foundation Trust as part of the Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

6. Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025-2026(Pages 65 - 66)



People Select Committee

Agenda

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: Scrutiny Officer Michelle Gunn on email michelle.gunn@stockton.gov.uk



Key - Declarable interests are :-

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

Members - Declaration of Interest Guidance

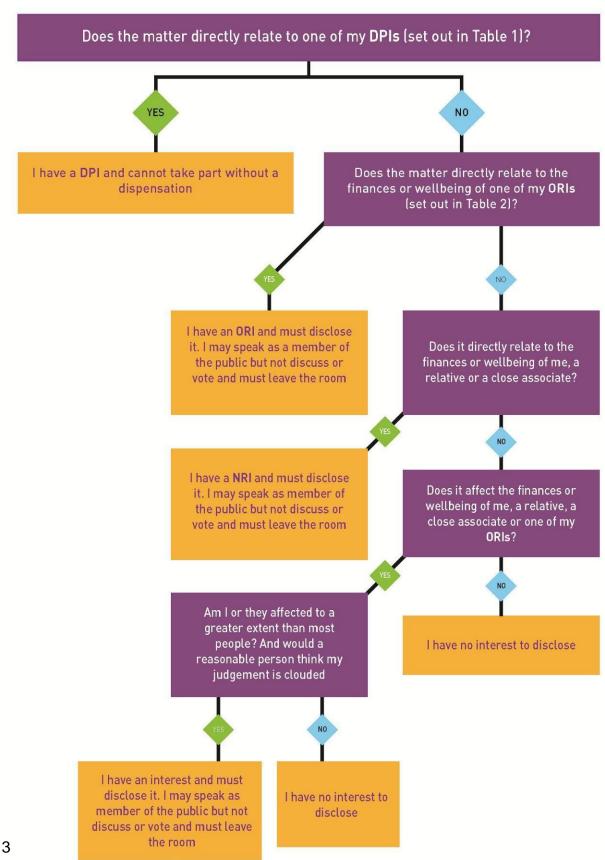




Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
	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
Contracts	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.

^{* &#}x27;director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

^{* &#}x27;securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.



Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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<u>Council Chamber, Dunedin House</u> <u>Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping</u>

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.

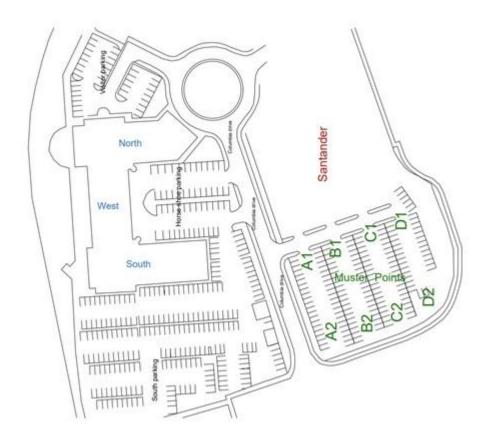
The emergency exits are located via the doors on either side of the raised seating area at the front of the Council Chamber.

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
 - o 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.
- o 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.

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Agenda Item 4

People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday 7th July 2025.

Present: Cllr Marilyn Surtees (Chair), Cllr Paul Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr

Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Hugo Stratton and Cllr Barry

Woodhouse

Officers: John Lathaen, Louise Nixon, Mandie Rowlands (Children's

Services), Aishah Waithe, and Michelle Gunn (Corporate

Services).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: None

PEO/17/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

PEO/18/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PEO/19/25 Minutes

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PEO/20/25 Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

The Committee received a presentation from the Service Lead for School Support and Sufficiency which covered:

- The School Support Team structure
- The current offer from the team, who worked with all schools across five cluster areas, including hosting solution circles, advice and signposting, and acting a Lead Professionals on complex cases.
- The number of Pupils on roll and number of pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM) in each cluster, with children in Thornaby and North Stockton cluster receiving the highest number of FSM.
- The number of Social Care referrals and External Early Help Assessments. It
 was highlighted that the 1,768 contacts into the Children's HUB from schools was
 not the number of individual children that were referred, as the same child could
 be referred for support several times.
- The outcomes that the Team around the School Service (TASS), wanted to achieve for children, which included not only improving attendance but making sure children knew how to ask for help and had someone they would be able to go to if they had an issue.
- The outcomes that TASS wanted to achieve for schools which included upskilling school staff to recognise any signs or changes in their pupils that indicated they

- could require early help, thereby ensuring that support was offered at the earliest opportunity.
- The level of support offered to schools, which would be agreed with schools based on the intelligence and ongoing conversations, with schools requiring targeted support receiving more than those that required preventative or universal support.

The key issues discussed included:

- The School Support Worker made sure that there were smooth transitions from primary to secondary school, as well as secondary to higher/further education. TASS was working to ensure that information on the child and the support they had received 'followed the child' and was shared with schools/colleges when they transitioned. They were also working towards sharing information with secondary schools on the post 16 outcomes for their pupils so that schools could put measures in place to prevent their former pupils becoming Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).
- The Team also worked with services outside of schools e.g. family hubs, so that
 conversations with the family, and support being offered, was carried out by the
 most appropriate person/service.
- A portal was being developed to ensure that any support received from external partners could be reported, and therefore a better picture of the family's needs could be built.
- Members asked what the biggest barrier to achieving the outcomes for both children and schools where and informed that these were attendance and communication with schools along with parents/carers. Work was ongoing to improve these. Raising the aspirations of children was also key.
- It was questioned what the target was for attendance and how it would be improved. Officers noted that they would work with individual schools to set their targets for attendance, and what their own barriers were. Best practice from schools both within and outside the Borough would be shared. It was important to ensure that the importance of attending school and education was introduced from primary school, along with how this would impact future employment. It was also noted that it would be a five ten-year plan. There was an acknowledgement that Covid had an impact on schools and attendance which needed to be reversed.
- FSM were discussed, and members questioned whether this was an indicator for families that needed support. Officers confirmed that it was and by identifying those areas where high levels of pupils received FSM there were able to ensure that resources were aligned to where there was a greater need for support. They also wished to help families to get to a place where they no longer needed to apply for FSM.
- The Government announcement regarding Best Start Family Hubs was raised and officers noted that they would respond to any initiatives that were put in place.

The Committee also received a presentation from the Service Lead for Children's Response and Assessment team regarding referrals to social care and Social Care Assessments. The presentation included:

- The role and remit of the assessment team, which included carrying out assessments when a referral was received from the Children's HUB regarding concerns with safeguarding.
- The total number of referrals received, referrals that led to No Further Action (NFA), and referrals that proceeded to action. The referrals could be made via

- phone call, email, or by the Police PPN. The biggest referrer was the Police, followed by Primary Schools, Local Authority, Secondary Schools and then Accident & Emergency.
- The key insights and possible implications, including the reasons for the number of referrals that led to NFA. Many of the referrals did not meet the threshold for action, however that did not mean that referral wasn't the right course of action as there may had been short term actions and/or services taken place within the 45 days that resolved the family's issues. Also, the family might not have given consent, despite trying several avenues, and therefore resulted in NFA.

The key issues highlighted and discussed included:

- The Social Worker had up to 45 days to complete an assessment, however many were completed sooner. Outcomes of the assessment included:
 - o A Child In Need Plan was made by the Children & Families team
 - o There might be a "step down" to Early Help service
 - o A Child Protection Plan was put in place, via a child protection conference
 - Child taken into Local Authority care
- If a Section 17 referral was made the parents must consent. If a Section 47 referral was made, when a child had a bruise or told someone they had been harmed, this was an enquiry and there was a greater need as the child was likely to be at significant harm.
- The referral criteria needed to be clarified to make sure that referrals were sent to the right place, e.g. Early Help rather than the Assessment team.
- Collaboration with partners was needed to ensure that the right support was given at the right time and thereby reduce the number of referrals that resulted in NFA. The team were offering ongoing support to referring partners.
- The Committee questioned what happened if the parents/carer refused to give consent for support and informed that, if there was a significant concern, a strategy meeting would take place and they could override the requirement for consent.

AGREED that the information be noted.

PEO/21/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025 - 2026

The timing of the Select Committee meetings was raised and it was noted that they clashed with another meeting. The Committee therefore agreed to move the meetings to 2pm start.

Members were reminded of the Children and Young People workshops taking place on 31 July and 29 September where partners had been invited to co-produce the Early Help Strategy. Members had been invited to observe and feedback to the Committee to inform the review, and the invitation would be recirculated.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

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Agenda Item 5

People Select Committee

8 September 2025

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN EARLY HELP

Summary

The third evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Partnership Working in Early Help will focus on the work of three of the Council's partners in Early Help.

Detail

- As part of the scoping process for this review the Committee identified several partners to provide evidence regarding the number of families they are working with and their experience of partnership working. Representatives from Family Action, Cleveland Police, and Harrogate & District Foundation Trust have therefore been invited to the September meeting.
- 2. Family Action have been invited to discuss the outline of the Outreach and Volunteer service, and what a strategic partnership means, as well as their views on partnerships and experience of how the partnership is working for them. They will also present data regarding the number of families they work with, re-referrals and the number of families they step up to targeted and statutory interventions.
- 3. Cleveland Police have been invited to discuss the PITSTOP initiative and how it is working in Stockton-on-Tees. The presentation will include data on referrals, how many referrals go to other services, and if there has been a reduction in CHUB police referrals. They will also present on re-referrals and their view on the multi-agency response.
- 4. The Harrogate & District Foundation Trust (HDFT) delivers 0-19 services and therefore invited to present data on the number children active to them and families they are working with. They will also discuss their experience of the partnership and how it works for them.
- 5. The presentations from Family Action and HDFT are attached, along with a copy of the agreed scope and project plan for this review for information. The presentation from PITSTOP will follow.

Name of Contact Officer: Michelle Gunn

Post Title: Scrutiny Officer **Telephone No:** 01642 524987

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

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Family Action Stockton-on-Tees in Strategic Partnership with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council



Family Action Mission and Vision

We all have our own family stories, some tougher than others. But the story of today doesn't have to be the story of tomorrow, for any of us. Family is a doing word. Together, we change lives. And it's what we have been doing for over 150 years.

Our mission

- Family Action supports people through change, challenge or crisis. It's what
 we've done for over 150 years. We protect children, support young people and
 adults and offer direct, practical help to families and communities.
- We see first-hand the power of family to shape lives, for better or worse, so we speak up for the importance of family in national and local policymaking, amplify family voices and represent the changing needs of families in the UK today.



Family Action Mission and Vision

Our vision and ethos:

- At Family Action, our vision is of a society that understands the importance and power of family as a foundation for individual futures and connected, resilient communities.
- Because family is the key to positive futures, for individuals and society:
 whether it's recognising the value of family networks and support in the
 present or understanding the impact of trauma from the past,
 understanding the power of family to shape futures at every age is vital.

Our Values:

- People focused
- Mutual respect
- Excellence
- Can do





Overview of the Strategic Partnership

The strategic was formed in 2022 as part of the Family Support comprocess; this included two core services:

- Stockton Family Outreach and Volunteering Service
- Stockton Family Time Service

The council had a clear vision regarding the strategic partnership and the benefits an alternative approach to commissioning could achieve including:

- Creation of a coherent offer across the system.
- Service alignment.
- Provision of a broader range of support.
- Strengthening of community partnerships and assets.





The Strategic Partnership in Practice

Key Elements:

- Joint visioning sessions to align the two organisations
- Joint development of the services theory of change model
- Mutually agreed and reviewed risk register
- Focus on continuous improvement planning and implementation including joint auditing process
- Robust data impact assessment process, privacy notice and shared recording system in place
- Collaborative planning of jointly aligned initiatives
- Embedded within the Early Help system with a smoother transition for families across the system
- Focus on emerging needs and opportunities; working collaboratively to be solution focused and consider system change as required
- Social value with £72,000 of SV achieved in 2024/25



Family Outreach and Volunteering Service



Family Outreach

- The Family Outreach Service works with the whole family unit. Providing early help support to families who require additional support to achieve or maintain positive outcomes.
- The service supports families with a range of support needs including:
 - Practical & Emotional Support
 - Family Routines & Boundaries
 - Debt Management & Budgeting
 - Support with housing and benefit processes
 - Accessing Grants & Emergency Grants food bank/baby bank
 - Building self confidence
 - Reducing social isolation
 - Support attendance at appointments
 - Encourage social interaction in the community
 - Navigate & Signpost to other services
 - Liaison with schools and other services





Family Outreach Headline Data

1ST July 2024-30th June 2025:

- 284 whole family referrals received.
- 5 re-referrals of families who had previously accessed support.
- Referred 14 families onto children's social care (step up).





Volunteering and Community Engagement

- Recruitment and support of volunteers in family focused opportunities such as Family Hub based Stay and Play sessions; Biscuit Ninja's; EPEC parenting intervention delivery; Volunteer drivers; HAF delivery; etc.
- Engagement with communities not routinely accessing universal services such as Port Clarence and Tilery to enhance opportunities and provision within communities.
- Delivery of the holiday HAF programmes for families to ensure children are able to access fun, healthy and engaging activities throughout the school holidays.
- Partnership development and opportunities such as Stockton Arc, Tees Valley Museums, Shape the Play, etc.



Family Case Study



Additionality within Stockton-on-Tees



Family Line: First line support for every family and any family issue

- If parents/adults are feeling overwhelmed, worried or upset about any aspect of their family life, whether in the present or something from their past, FamilyLine is here for them. FamilyLine offer free emotional support, information and guidance on family relationships including siblings conflict, parenting, caring, financial worries and more.
- Open Monday-Friday, 9am to 9pm.
- Callers must be 18+.





Established Partnerships

- The ARC
- Stockton Globe
- Tees Valley Museums
- The National Literacy Trust
- Shape the Play
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Libraries Services
- Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP)
- Healthwatch
- Stockton International Riverside Festival
- National Institute for Health Research
- The Dogs Trust
- The Festival of Thrift
- Stockton and Darlington Railways









Established Partnerships

Spotlight on The ARC: Stockton Arts Centre

Are an established Family Action Partner who have supported our services through the provision of free, low cost or enhanced opportunities for families including:

- Movie Club Cinema Tickets for Families
- Access to shows for Families attending our HAF programme
- Access to Refugee Week Events for families
- Provision of free theatre tickets to Family Action Volunteers as part of volunteer week celebrations
- Access to targeted events such as those provided for care experienced children
- Family Action Facilitation at the Pop-Up Pride Event held at the ARC which also provided supporting volunteers with access to free training





Established Partnerships

Spotlight on Tees Valley Museums

Have become a key partner of Family Action providing a range of additional activities, opportunities and structured visits for the families we support. Examples include:

- Collections work with families in Port Clarence which included supporting families to develop collections, have a beach visit, create part of a museum exhibit and attend the Preston Park museum. For families in Port Clarence who often have limited opportunities due to lack of transport this was really impactful.
- Kirkleatham Hall regularly host HAF visits for families, ensuring family units have the opportunity to access cultural experiences alongside all of the fun activities on offer at the museum.





The Toy Appeal

- Families report they are struggling to keep the magic of Christmas alive making impossible decisions like whether to heat their home, buy food and essentials or a present for their children.
- Parents who can't afford a present, or have to give something practical like bedding or school books, worry their children won't believe in Santa anymore or think they've done something wrong when he doesn't come.
- Every year the service facilities the toy appeal ensuring all families receive gifts to give their children reducing the impact of any socio-economic disadvantage.





Wider Christmas Giving

Family Action also undertake the following every Christmas to support families in Stocktonon-Tees who are active to our service:

- Christmas Dinner Hampers
- Christmas Eve Boxes
- Access to Feeding Families Boxes
- Support access to Family Events







Community Opportunities

- Families are supported to take part in workshops and parades for community events such as SIRF, Stockton Sparkles, The Festival of Thrift and the Folk Festival. Often encouraging individuals to 'step outside of their comfort zone' and experience a sense of belonging within their local area.
- Facilitation at community events e.g. Pop-up Pride activities, Going for Gold events, etc.
- Development of additional opportunities in targeted areas such as Tilery and Port Clarence; creating opportunities for families via our own provision and connections with others such as employment and skills.

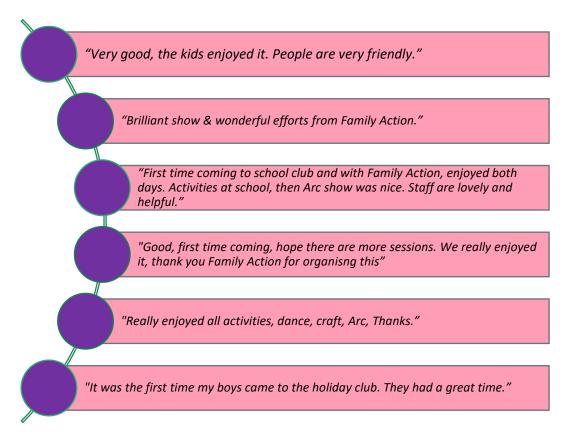




Families, Food and Fun

- Eligible families are identified and supported to access our Families, Food and Fun offer (DfE funding via Public Health).
- Delivered during specific school holiday periods to provide fun, healthy activities to children alongside food provision.
- Fantastic opportunities are created for role modelling to parents, informal education on a range of topics, structured play, personal development and ability to create happy memories for families with no cost to them.
- Supported by volunteers including young volunteers who regularly give their time to support delivery.

Families, Food and Fun: Feb Feedback







Wider Benefits

- Sharing of National Practice e.g. Small Steps offer, Family Time Hertfordshire
- Practice sharing with other organisations e.g. Social value overview provided to Eastern Ravens to support new service mobilisation.
- Access to Family Action Communities of Practice to share thematic learning for application in the Stockton-on-Tees Borough.
- Families have access to internal Family Action grants; these are often specific in nature however have been impactful.
- Charitable status therefore able to accept donations and additional grant funding opportunities.
- Staff volunteering initiatives supporting other local organisations such as Little Sprouts and Teesside Vineyard Church Baby Bank (social value).





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Data regarding number of families partners are working with & how many they refer to LA

O-5 UP (targeted single agency support) - 252 O-5 UPP (multi-agency support) - 278

5-19 UP (targeted single agency support) - 90 5-19 UPP (multi-agency support) - 42

We are unable to gather at this time how many referrals specifically to Early Help due to more than one agency on SAFER referral form





Data regarding the number of families returning to partners for early help services

Data not available within 0-19 service







Partners experience and views of the partnership and how it works for them

Working wells

- Positive relationship with Family Action
- When we have strong relationships with staff within early help, have really positive experience.
- When we are invited to TAF feel these are beneficial
- Positive feedback regarding Family Hub offer
- We liked the concept of the SMART team and feels this promoted partnership working
 teamHDFT





Partners experience and views of the partnership and how it works for them

Where we can feel we can improve

- Understanding of the different teams within early help service
- Staff report that they feel they would like to strengthen relationships, I.e.. positive relationships from co-working in Billingham hub
- At times can feel working in silo, rather than in partnership
- Services have started as pilots, not then continued creating a gap
- Unclear regarding referral criteria at times
- Outcome of assessment not always shared (re support offered) following referral
- Not always aware that Early Help are working with the child and family
- Staff report frequent change and unclear on roles
- At times duplication between 0-19 and family hub offer, would like to have more joined up working regarding this



PITSTOP

DS Cheryl Hall

CAVA – Child Abuse & Vulnerable Adults

Cleveland Police

1. Introduction & Background

PiTstop (**Partnership Integrated Triage**) is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to support with triaging information shared by Cleveland Police where the level of need for direct referral through for urgent safeguarding and a statutory social care response is not met with the information held by police at that time, but there is vulnerability identified relating to a child/young person or adult to warrant further information sharing. This includes promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and adults through a multi-agency approach, to improve outcomes by enhanced information sharing and robustness in decision making, ensuring appropriate intervention is offered at the earliest opportunity.

It is an approach developed by Humberside Police, working with the four local authorities in that area.

Cleveland Police is committed to introducing PiTstop across the force area, commencing with a six month pilot scheme in the Stockton-on-Tees District commencing on Monday, 4 March 2024 & still ongoing

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

1. <u>Aims & Objectives</u>

Page

PiTster is designed to facilitate early identification and understanding of level of need, harm, and risk. Proportionate and relevant information is shared to ensure that need, harm, and any possible risk are identified as early as possible, and the most appropriate level of support can be provided to address needs.

- Better informed decisions ensuring earlier, proportionate, and necessary prevention, diversion and interventions for children, families and vulnerable adults
- Victim identification and invention. Pooled knowledge from safeguarding partners to identify hidden need harm and risk. Hidden victims are identified through third-party reporting.
- Harm identification and reduction for individuals, families and communities. PiTstop is a safe haven where the full partnership picture is seen and inform activity to reduce and prevent harm and risk
- Extension of Right Care Right Person

PiTstop is chaired by the police who will present the individuals separately discussing the following:-

- Type of concern i.e risk in the home, risk outside the home
- Supporting or corroborating information from police systems, consent given/overridden

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Partnerships Involved

- Children's Social Care CHUB
- Adult Safeguarding Team
- Early help Children
- Cleveland Police
- ➤ Health 0-19 Integrated Public Health Nursing
- Education
- ➤ Housing Homeless Solutions
- > CGL
- Youth Justice
- Harbour

Threshold

1. PPN Workflows into PiTstop

Child Concern PPNs, Vulnerable Adult PPNs and Domestic Abuse PPNs, where thresholds are not met, should be considered for PiTstop.

Child Concern PPN

- Initial triage by CAVA DS applying the Thresholds.
- ➤ Threshold met Direct referral to Front Door
- ➤ Threshold not met but concerns refer to PiTstop
- Parties active to Social Care Information Share with Social Care
- ➤ No concerns identified NFA.

Domestic Abuse PPN

All APPN's referred to PiTstop will have been Secondary Risk Assessed by PVP Hub Safeguarding Officers. Considerations for referral may be two pronged – from both a Child and Adult perspective.

The current threshold used by PVP Hub for referral to Childrens Services is as follows:

- > UBB
- Child Under 1 year old
- > 3 incidents in six months
- > 4 incidents in twelve months
- ➤ Plus consideration of Local Authority Thresholds
- Professional Judgement

Our threshold is lower than the Local Authority Threshold, therefore cases to be submitted to PiTstop will be ones that meet our threshold but not the Local Authority ones. Additionally, if no thresholds are met (Police or Local Authority) but there are concerns, then consider sending to PiTstop.

It is anticipated that PiTstop will be the most appropriate route for some mediums but predominantly standards with children.

High Risk – Direct Referral into Front Doors

Medium Risk - LA Threshold met - refer to Front Doors

Medium Risk – LA Threshold not met – concerns but insufficient for referral – PiTstop

Medium Risk – Open to Social Care – Share

Medium Risk – No concerns identified - NFA

Standard with Children – LA Threshold Met – Direct Referral into Front Doors

Standard with Children – LA Threshold not met – concerns but insufficient for referral – PiTstop

Standard with Children - Open to Social Care - Share

Standard with Children – No concerns identified – NFA

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┪	ii. The number of PPN's received	by the CHUB	
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age o	Number of PPN's received by t	the CHUB	
ď	(SBC)		
9			
Ì	Apr-23	391	
Ì	Apr-24	393	
Ġ	% increase/decrease	0.51%	
Ì	May-23	437	
ı	May-24	326	
Ì	% increase/decrease	-25.40%	
ı	Jun-23	356	
Ì	Jun-24	239	
Ì	% increase/decrease	-32.87%	
Ì	Jul-23	410	
Ì	Jul-24	372	
	% increase/decrease	-9.27%	
Ì	Aug-23	431	
Ì	Aug-24	315	
Ì	% increase/decrease	-26.91%	
Ì	Sep-23	347	
Ì	Sep-24	338	
4	% increase/decrease	-2.59%	
Ì			
İ			
ł			
ł	iii. CHUB Outcomes in relation to	PPN's	
ł			
ł		APRIL – SEPTEMBER 23	APRIL – SEPTEMBER 24
ł	Total Outcomes	2372	1983
ł	Total Gutomios	2012	1000
	SBC PPN's resulting in SC referral	572	454
ł	220 1 1 1 1 0 1 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0	24.11%	22.89%
ł			
	SBC PPN's resulting in EH referral	355	187
		14.97%	9.43%
ł			3070
	SBC PPN's resulting in NFA, A&G or RTOA	1445	1342
ŀ	,	60.92%	67.68%
ł			

CHUB PPN figures



<u>Partnership Integrated Triage (PiTstop) Trial Evaluation Report – The Children's Hub</u>

Background/Context

The Children's Hub (CHUB) is the front door for children's Social Care services in Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees. The CHUB is responsible for responding to all referrals in relation to children living in the Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees area, who are not already active to Social Care, and ensuring that children receive the right support at the right time. The CHUB is a multi-agency partnership; multi-agency professionals are physically co-located and they work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

The demand on the front door and the volume of work responded to by the CHUB has increased by 73% since 2018.

In March 2024, PiTstop (a Police led initiative) was introduced in relation to children/young people living in the Stockton on Tees area. One of the aims of PiTstop was to reduce the demand on the CHUB by diverting Police referrals (PPN's), which are screened/assessed by Police as not meeting a safeguarding/Social Care (Level 4) threshold, from the CHUB to PiTstop.

Although PiTstop is led and coordinated by Cleveland Police, Social Care staff in the CHUB have been an integral part of this process. CHUB Officer's respond to initial requests from Police in relation to whether children subject to PPN's are active to Social Care or not. CHUB Social Worker's interrogate Social Care systems in preparation for the PiTstop meetings which they then subsequently attend. During PiTstop meetings, CHUB Social Worker's provide advice in relation to threshold i.e whether a PPN needs to be escalated to the CHUB for screening and decision making.

Data

I was asked to collate and analyse data, in relation to PPN's relating to Stockton children, during the periods of March – August 2024 (the PiTstop pilot) and March – August 2023 (the

comparative time period prior to the PiTstop pilot) to establish whether or not PiTstop had been effective in terms of reducing the number of PPN's sent to the CHUB.

I have collated and analysed the same data for the same time period in relation to PPN's relating to Hartlepool children in order to provide further comparisons.

i. Overall Contacts Received by the CHUB

	MARCH 23 – AUGUST 23	MARCH 24 – AUGUST 24	COMMENTS
Number of SBC Contacts Received by the CHUB (from all agencies)	6981	6585	Number of contacts decreased by 5.67%
Number of HBC Contacts Received by the CHUB (from all agencies)	3811	4321	Number of contacts increased by 13.38%
Number of SBC PPN's Received by the CHUB	2478	1836	Number of PPN's decreased by 25.90%
Number of HBC PPN's Received by the CHUB	1378	1681	Number of PPN's increased by 21.98%
% of SBC PPN's Received	35.5%	27.9%	% of PPN's decreased by 7.6%
% of HBC PPN's Received	36.16%	38.90%	% of PPN's increased by 2.74%

When comparing the data for March – August 2024 to the data for March – August 2023;

➤ The overall number of contacts received by the CHUB increased by nearly 14% for Hartlepool children but decreased by 5.67% for Stockton children.

- ➤ The number of PPN's received by the CHUB for Stockton children decreased by 25.90% and the number of PPN's received by the CHUB for Hartlepool children increased by 21.98%.
- ➤ The percentage of PPN's received (calculated against the number of CHUB contacts received by the CHUB overall) decreased for Stockton by 7.6% but increased for Hartlepool by 2.74%.

ii. The number of PPN's received by the CHUB

	Number of PPN's received by the CHUB (SBC)	Number of PPN's received by the CHUB (HBC)
March 2023	453	183
March 2024	327	257
% increase/decrease	- 27.81%	+ 40.43%
April 2023	391	166
April 2024	367	346
% increase/decrease	- 6.13%	+ 108%
May 2023	437	254
May 2024	296	291
% increase/decrease	- 32.26%	+ 14.5%
June 2023	356	241
June 2024	206	235
% increase/decrease	- 42.13%	- 2.48%
July 2023	410	301
July 2024	338	275
% increase/decrease	- 17.56%	- 8.63%
August 2023	431	233
August 2024	302	277
% increase/decrease	- 29.93%	+18.88%

When comparing the data from March – August 2024 to the data from March – August 2023;

For Stockton children, there has been a consistent decrease in the number and the percentage of PPN's received by the CHUB during March – August 2024. Not only has

- it been consistent; it has also been significant. For example; in March, May, June and August 2024, there was around a 30-40% reduction in the number of PPN's being received by the CHUB compared with the same months in 2023.
- For Hartlepool, four out of the six months saw an increase in the number and the percentage of PPN's received by the CHUB during March August 2024; two months in particular (March and April 2024) saw a significant increase when compared with the same months in 2023.
- In June 2024, the CHUB received more PPN's for Hartlepool children than for Stockton children which has never been the case before.

iii. CHUB Outcomes in relation to PPN's

	MARCH – AUGUST 23	MARCH – AUGUST 24
HBC PPN's		
resulting in	300	267
SC referral	(21.7%)	(15.8%)
SBC PPN's		
resulting in	578	417
SC referral	(23.3%)	(22.7%)
HBC PPN's		
resulting in	84	72
EH referral	(6.09%)	(4.28%)
SBC PPN's		
resulting in	368	155
EH referral	(14.8%)	(8.5%)
HBC PPN's		
resulting in	993	1341
NFA, A&G or	(72%)	(79.7%)
RTOA		
SBC PPN's		
resulting in	1532	1264
NFA, A&G or	(61.8%)	(68.8%)
RTOA		

The vast majority of PPN's received by the CHUB (60-80%), across both LA's, still result in NFA (No Further Action), A&G (Advice & Guidance given by the CHUB) or a

- RTOA (Referral to Other Agency); this has remained the same for Stockton despite the introduction of PiTstop.
- Across both LA's, only 15-25% of PPN's result in a referral to Social Care.
- Across both LA's, only 5-15% of PPN's result in a referral to Early Help.
- In response to PPN's, the CHUB refers around twice as many cases to Stockton Early Help than it does to Hartlepool Early Help. However, this has been the case for several years and therefore, is irrespective of PiTstop and is more likely due to the difference in Early Help offers, criteria and resources in each LA area.

Feedback from CHUB Staff

On the ground, and at a practice level, it is recognised that, over the last six months, there have been increasingly less low-level/'inappropriate' PPN's referred to the CHUB for Stockton compared with Hartlepool.

However, there continues to be PPN's received by the CHUB for Stockton which do not meet the criteria/threshold for Level 4 and would be more appropriate for PiTstop. Similarly, there have been occasions when PPN's presented at/discussed in PiTstop have been considered as clearly meeting threshold for Level 4 and should have been referred to the CHUB. These have been challenged on a case-by-case basis which the Police have actively welcomed and responded to.

Initially, when PiTstop meetings were being held daily, this had a significant impact on the CHUB; both in relation to CHUB Officer and CHUB Social Worker time/resource and in relation to the day-to-day standard operating procedure. There were many occasions when a CHUB SW was unable to attend the PiTstop meeting due to the volume of work in the CHUB and the need for safeguarding/potential safeguarding contacts/referrals to take precedence over PiTstop. However, on such occasions, the CHUB still provided information to the PiTstop Chair in relation to previous SC involvement, previous CHUB contacts etc.

Conclusion

The overall demand on the CHUB, in terms of the volume of contacts/referrals received, across both LA's and from all sources, remains high and on an upward trajectory; despite the implementation of PiTstop. This is evidenced by the CHUB PMF which is collated and presented to the CHUB Board on a quarterly basis.

However, during Q1 2024-2025 (the 2nd, 3rd and 4th month of PiTstop), the number of HBC contacts received by the CHUB was the highest it has ever been since the CHUB was incepted in 2016 whilst the number of SBC contacts reduced. Also, the data for March – August 2023 and March – August 2024 tells us that the number and percentage of PPN's (when compared to the number of overall contacts received by the CHUB) decreased consistently and significantly for Stockton whilst the number and percentage of PPN's (when

compared to the number of overall contacts received by the CHUB) increased fairly consistently and, in some months significantly, for Hartlepool.

Therefore, it could be argued that this was/is as a direct result of PiTstop; especially given that Police are the single highest referrer to the CHUB and given that PiTstop was trialled in Stockton and not Hartlepool.

On a day-to-day practice level, the CHUB Managers have seen, and what has felt like, a reduction in the number of PPN's for Stockton which are/what would have previously been considered to not meet threshold for Level 4 and/or considered to be 'inappropriate'.

Understandably, there has been, and there continues to be, occasions when threshold applied by the Police is disputed i.e when a PPN is referred to the CHUB as opposed to PiTstop and vice versa. However, on such occasions, the Police have been open to and accepting of professional challenge from the CHUB Managers which they have been receptive to and have swiftly acted upon.

As the PiTstop trial has evolved, there has been a reduction in the frequency of PiTstop meetings; from daily to 2 or 3 times per week. The reduction in the frequency of meetings has made the CHUB's servicing of PiTstop much more manageable; it has been much less time/resource-intensive and has allowed for minimal disruption to the CHUB standard operating procedures.

On a different, but similar, note, it is clear that, despite PiTstop, the CHUB continue to receive a high number of PPN's which are not resulting in a SC or EH referral. As much as 60-80% of PPN's, across both LA's, are resulting in NFA, A&G or RTOA.

Recommendations

- 1. PiTstop to continue in relation to Stockton PPN's and, if possible, to be rolled out in relation to Hartlepool PPN's.
- 2. PiTstop Meetings to be held twice per week; preferably on Tuesday and Friday.
- 3. Professional challenge, in relation to threshold applied by Police, to continue.
- 4. Police thresholds, as a whole, to be reviewed given the high number of PPN's which are not resulting in a SC or EH referral.
- 5. Further review/evaluation to be completed in 12 months time which needs to include the effectiveness of early intervention as a result of PiTstop. We need to be assured that PiTstop is having a lasting and longer-term impact in terms of reducing the demand at the front door and achieving the best outcomes for children and their families.

Leah Hanson

Head of Service

23.10.2024

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People Select Committee
Review of Partnership Working in Early Help
Outline Scope

Scrutiny Chair (Project Director): Cllr Marilyn Surtees	Contact details: m.surtees@stockton.gov.uk
Scrutiny Officer (Project Manager):	Contact details:
Michelle Gunn	Michelle.gunn@stockton.gov.uk
Departmental Link Officer:	Contact details:
Kellie Wigley	Kellie.wigley@stockton.gov.uk
PMO Link	Contact details:
Aishah Waithe	Aishah.waithe@stockton.gov.uk

Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

Early Help focusses on support and interventions for children and their families when needed most therefore this review will contribute to priority one – the best start in life to achieve big ambition. In particular it will contribute to the following key moves:

- Giving children and young people the best possible start, in an inclusive community where everyone can thrive
- A safe community for all children and young people

The review will also contribute to priority two – health and resilient communities, key move ensuring happy and healthy lives for all.

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

Early Help (EH) offers support to children and their families who require help with a range of presenting issues including behaviour, family relationships, problems at school, budgets or debt, children's routine or other difficulties they may be experiencing.

The Department for Education have recently published Families First Partnership Programme (FFP), which is the start of the National reforms and expectations on Local Authorities.

The vision of the programme

The FFP programme will support safeguarding partners to bring together targeted early help, child in need, and multi-agency child protection into a seamless system of help, support and protection. This includes services and workforces, such as family support workers, social workers and other specialist and alternatively qualified practitioners, coming together to support families.

By targeted early help, child in need and child protection, we mean:

• Targeted early help: children and families with multiple and/or complex needs that require a plan to be in place and a lead practitioner appointed;

- Children in Need (Section 17, Children Act 1989): a general duty for local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need or are disabled, and promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs;
- Child protection (Section 47): the duty on the local authorities to investigate where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

This review will aim to gain a greater understanding of the effectiveness of the partnership and early help offer across the partners.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- Are families getting the right support at the right time to prevent escalation of needs?
- Consideration of No Further Action (NFA) rate from Statutory Assessment
- What is the local authority's and partnership offer across EH?
- What is the demand on external partnerships to deliver EH interventions?
- How effective and strong is the partnership offer?
- How accessible are services?
- How clear is the offer for both professionals and families, and how easy is it to navigate?
- How effective are information sharing protocols across the partnership?

Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

Cabinet, Council, partners

Expected duration of review and key milestones:

7 months (reporting to Cabinet in January)

Approve scope and project plan – May 2025 Receive evidence – June 2025 – October 2025 Draft recommendations – November 2025 Final report – December 2025 Report to Cabinet – January 2025

What information do we need?

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

- Early Help System Guide https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-early-help-system-guide
- Families First Partnership Programme https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/families-first-partnership-programme
- Scrutiny review of Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment chromehttps://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s8755/Select%20Committee%20Report.pdf

New information:

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)	What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?		
SBC Officers:	 Background information Feedback from Early Help Strategy workstreams The offer of support/what services are they offering? How many families are working with partners? How many families re-referrals are received? NFA rate with Social Care Assessments 		
Partners including those on the Children & Young People Partnership Integrated Care Board Tees Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust Education Police Catalyst Family Action HDFT 0-19 Stockton Parent Carer Forum	 Data regarding number of families partners are working with & how many they refer to LA Data regarding the number of families returning to partners for early help services Partners experience of the partnership and how it works for them Partners views on partnership 		
Other Local Authorities including pathfinder LA for the new reforms, Lincolnshire and Sunderland	Best practice examples of how other LA's deliver Early Help with their partners		
Service users	 Service users experience of accessing and navigating the service Service users experience of the online offer 		
How will this information be gathered? (e.g. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)			
Committee meetings, reports, case studies, desk based research, focus group of service user			
How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?			
Committee meetings, information submissions, focus group of service users			

How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?

The Equality Act 2010 protects everyone from discrimination on grounds of nine Protected Characteristics (including – but not limited to – age, gender, disability, ethnicity), and advance equality of opportunity for those with Protected Characteristics.

Public bodies must have due regard for advancing equality which includes:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

The review will contribute towards meeting the Council's requirements under this Duty, particularly in relation to the outcomes for more vulnerable children.

How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

Early Help ensures that children and their families have access to support and interventions when they are needed therefore the review will directly contribute to Stockton-on-Tees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030: Focus Area 1: All children and families have the best start in life

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:

This review will contribute to greater understanding of interventions and approaches which are effective at supporting children and families at the earliest opportunity. The review will also identify where partnership working can be improved.

Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	April 2025	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	22.04.25	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	12.05.25	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Determine whether Communications Plan needed	TBD	Link Officer, Scrutiny Officer
Obtaining Evidence	Evidence SBC	02.06.25	Select Committee
	services/officers	07.07.25	
	Service User Focus Groups	08.09.25	
	Feedback from Focus Groups and best practice from LA's	06.10.25	
	Evidence from Partners		
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	03.11.25	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	November	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TBD	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Final Agreement of Report	Approval of final report by Committee	08.12.25	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	20.01.26	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet/Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	15.01.26	Cabinet / Approving Body

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL

Agenda Item 6 People Select Committee – Work Programme 2025- 2026

Date <u>(4pm unless</u> <u>stated)</u>	Topic	Attendance
Monday 7 April 2025	Monitoring: Action Plan Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facilities Grant	Sam Dixon
Monday 12 May 2025	Monitoring: Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Cost of Living Response	Haleem Ghafoor
	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan • Background Presentation	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite
Monday 2 June 2025	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • Early Help & Family Hubs	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite Hazel Clark and John Lathaem
Monday 7 July 2025	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • Social Care • School Support	John Lathaem & Aishah Waite Louise Nixon Mandie Rowlands
Monday 8 September 2025	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • PITSTOP • HDFT • Family Action	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite Cheryl Hall Sarah Massiter Emma Crawford
Monday 6 October 2025	Monitoring: Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Cost of Living Response	Rebecca Saunders- Thompson TBC
	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite Lucy Owens Emma Zenaj TBC
Monday 3 November 2025	Monitoring: Initial Update Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facility Grant	Sam Dixon

People Select Committee – Work Programme 2025- 2026

Date (4pm unless stated)	Topic	Attendance
Monday 3 November 2025 (informal)	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite
Monday 8 December 2025	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help – Final Report	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite
Monday 5 January 2026		
Monday 2 February 2026		
Monday 2 March 2026		