

People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday 3rd November 2025.

Present: Cllr Marilyn Surtees (Chair), Cllr Paul Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr John Coulson (sub Cllr John Gardner), Cllr Niall Innes and Cllr Hugo Stratton

Officers: Sam Dixon, Rebecca Saunders-Thompson (Regeneration and Inclusive Growth), Kellie Wigley (Children Services), Junita Agyapong and Michelle Gunn (Corporate Services)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr David Reynard, and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

PEO/32/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

PEO/33/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PEO/34/25 Minutes

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PEO/35/25 Progress Update - Scrutiny Review of Cost of Living Response

The Committee considered a briefing report providing an overview of the key projects undertaken by the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees and Community Engagement team, in partnership with other Council teams and external stakeholders. This was requested following a progress update in May where recommendation two, regarding the provision of pre-loved uniforms, remained incomplete.

The team had coordinated preloved school uniforms donations over two summers, arranging the successful Council's Summer Here to Help events and working in partnership with Thirteen and Family Hubs. They were involved in distributing 600 backpacks filled with school essentials as part of the Junction Multibank 'Back to School' campaign. The Second Dance Prom Project had collected over 200 preloved outfits and held the first of a series of catwalk events to relieve the financial pressure of attending prom events. Phase two of the Free School Meals Auto-Enrolment commenced in July 2025.

AGREED that the progress update be noted and no further updates required.

PEO/36/25 Progress Update - Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facilities Grants

The Committee considered a progress update including assessments of progress following implementation of the recommendation from the Scrutiny Review of Disabled

Facilities Grants. This was the first time an update had been presented to the Committee and one of the actions had been assessed as fully achieved, while the remaining were on track except for recommendation 8 regarding flat pack extensions which had slipped.

A report was noted for recommendation two regarding the Impact on Health and Social Care, which was based on information gathered by Bristol University in conjunction with Foundations in 2024 and reflected the situation in Stockton-on-Tees. The Committee therefore did not believe that a further study was required and the agreed that the recommendation be assessed as fully achieved.

An update on the conversations with Thirteen Group was noted, which related to recommendations four and five. Future working arrangements had been proposed which would ensure that assessments and adaptations requests would be forwarded by Occupational Therapists direct to Thirteen to evaluate and determine approval and a process map being drafted which would be shared with all ward members. Adaptations for Thirteen tenants would be carried out by Thirteen unless it was beyond their capacity, e.g. extension, whereby Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council would carry out the works and reclaim the costs. Monthly meetings would be held to monitor Thirteen's waiting lists, budget commitments and expenditure. The DFG team were now working with Tees Valley Home Finder to match residents who needed adaptations and wished to move with properties that had these. While it was acknowledged that the conversations had been slower than anticipated, Members were pleased with outcomes of these.

The Committee commented on the hard work that had taken place by officers to implement the recommendations which, although ongoing, had already made improvements to systems and impacted positively on residents' lives. Members thanked all the teams involved.

AGREED that Progress Update be noted, and the assessment of progress be confirmed. The next progress update would be presented in six months.

PEO/37/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025 - 2026

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme.

AGREED the work programme be noted.

Chair: