

Date:

Monday 2 February 2026 at 4.00 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 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 5th January 2026

5. **Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Partnership Working in Early Help** (Pages 13 - 20)

6. **Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision** (Pages 21 - 46)

To receive evidence in respect of the Post 16 Partnership Excellence for All Working Group Strand

7. **Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme** (Pages 47 - 50)

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

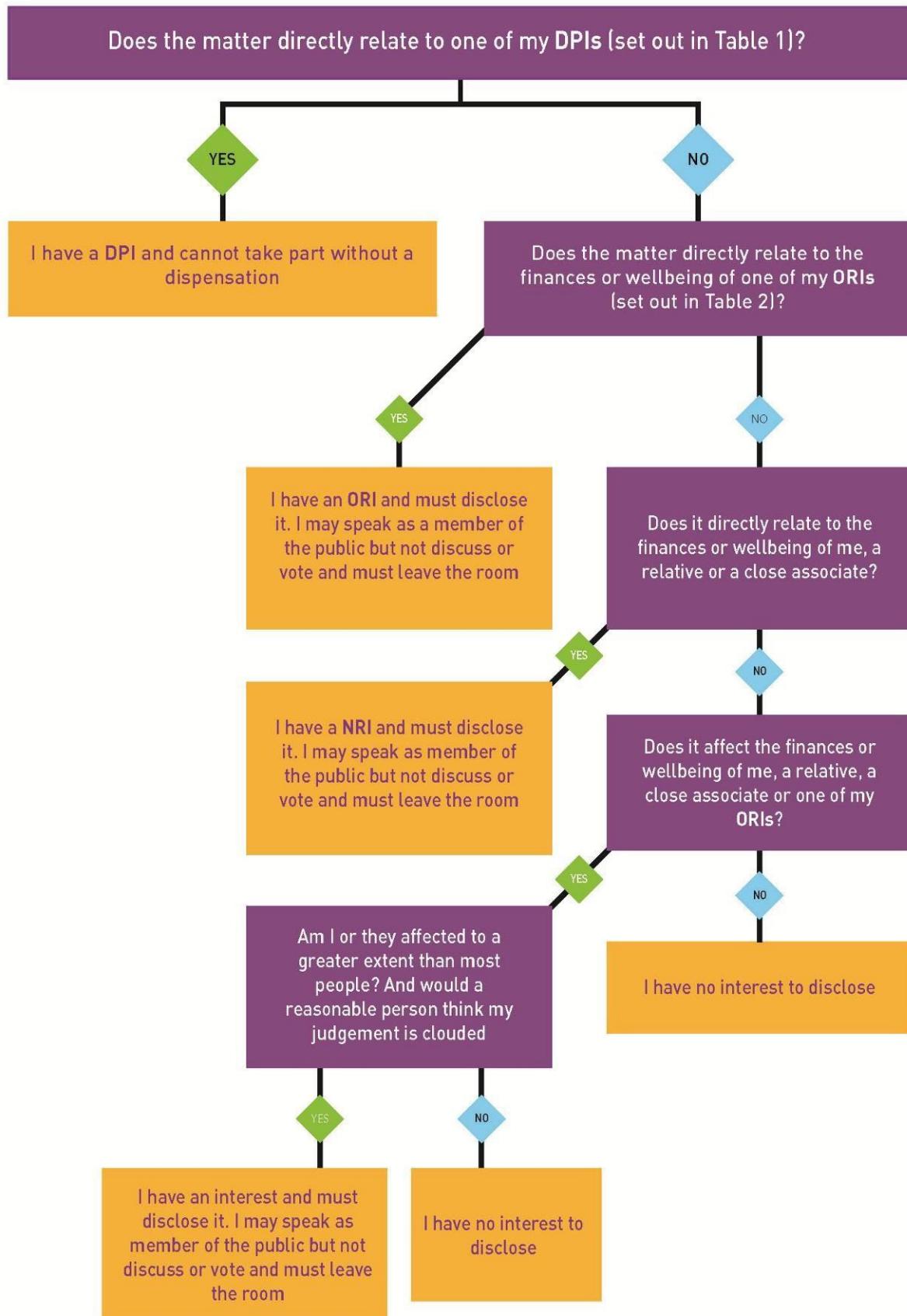


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	<p>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.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>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</p> <p>a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council</p> <p>—</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land and property	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'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.</p>
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(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.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(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.</p>

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

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

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

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

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Agenda Item 1

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 MUST 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.
 - o 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 immediately - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.
 - o 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.

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Agenda Item 4

People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday 5th January 2026.

Present: Cllr Marilyn Surtees (Chair), Cllr Paul Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley (sub Cllr Ian Dalgarno), and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: Vanessa Housley (Children's Services), Michelle Gunn, and Junita Agyapong (Corporate Services)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Ian Dalgarno

PEO/43/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

PEO/44/25 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Paul Weston wished it to be recorded for transparency purposes only that on item 5, Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision, he worked in the sector. However, he was not employed by any post 16 providers in the Borough or neighbouring boroughs.

PEO/45/25 Minutes

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PEO/46/25 Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision

A background presentation was received for the Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision from the review's link officer, Head of Service for Education and Inclusion, which included:

- Stockton's Post 16 Offer and 2025 Data for Provisional % A*- E and A*-B A level grades. This data was for those students who sat the exam only and did not include those who enrolled but dropped out of the course. It was noted that although the results were below the national average, both Stockton Sixth form and ETC had significant improvements in their students grades in 2025. Members requested that the data for the ETC be separated for Bede College and Stockton Riverside College.
- Post 16 Enrolment Data for 2024/5 and 2025/6. It was stressed that it was imperative that students attended the college/course that best suits their needs and talents, which may be out of Borough. However, in 2024/5 nearly 2,000 students were attending courses outside of the Borough which equated to £7million of funding. Members questioned the reasons for this and were informed that a survey of students had been carried out which would be shared with the Committee. Members requested data on the number of students from outside the Borough attending courses at the Borough five providers.
- Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) data. While there was a separate review of NEET taking place, it had an impact on this review insofar as

ensuring that the pathways for students were aligned as possible as they could be to their talents and ambitions to attempt to prevent them dropping out and becoming NEET. Members requested further information on socio-economic background of NEET.

- The Post 16 Partnership, which had been established for approximately one year to share best practice and work collectively to drive improvement within the sector. The partnership included head teachers, principals, and senior officers of the Council from careers service, school support, education, and economic development. Members expressed concern that the competitiveness between the providers to attract students would impact the effectiveness of the Partnership. Officers informed that there was evidence of a coherent collaborative approach by the providers. This included sharing strategies and teaching methods to achieve higher grades and working collectively to design and deliver master classes to each other.
- Relevant recommendations from the Appreciative Inquiry in Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment by Children and Young People (CYP) Select Committee. These were related to improving communication, extending the enrichment offer, strengthening understanding of career pathways, and strengthening transition arrangements. Senior officers were leading on each recommendation and were reporting to and being held account by different boards, including CYP Select Committee.

The Committee discussed the marketing of courses and the need to ensure that requirements and expectations were made clear to those enrolling to prevent students dropping out as a course was not right for them. Industry demand was also highlighted, and members requested data on how many students secured employment in their chosen industry after completing courses. Further information on both marketing and industry demand/employment would be shared during the review.

Careers advice given to school leavers was discussed, particularly for those young people who were unsure what path they wished to take. The Committee were informed that a Careers Leaders Network had been established to share effective practice, with leaders not only within the careers service and schools but also the Economic Development Team. The Economic Development Team were able to share with leaders information on needs from the industries and sectors within our Borough to communicate to young people as well as embed it within their curriculum.

Consideration was given to the draft scope and project plan for the review. The aim of the review would be to consider the current position, challenges, and proposed solutions in post 16 provision. The key lines of enquiry focussed on collaboration of stakeholders, careers advice available to school leavers, the promotion of courses and benefits and pastoral support offered by providers.

AGREED that the information be noted and draft scope and project plan of the review be approved.

PEO/47/25 Chairs' Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2025/26

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

AGREED the work programme be noted.

Chair:

People Select Committee

2 February 2026

Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations – Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

Summary

Members are asked to consider the Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the Review of Partnership Working in Early Help will be implemented and target dates for completion.

Detail

1. The Committee's final report of the Review of Partnership Working in Early Help was considered by Cabinet in January 2026. Cabinet accepted the recommendations contained within.
2. These are now subject to the procedure for monitoring the implementation of agreed recommendations. An Action Plan has been drawn up and is attached at **Appendix 1**. This sets out how the relevant departments will be taking forward the agreed recommendations and includes target dates for completion.
3. Members should consider and agree the Action Plan. The Committee will receive a detailed progress update on the implementation of recommendations approximately 12 months after the Action Plan has been agreed

Name of Contact Officer: Michelle Gunn

Post Title: Scrutiny Officer

Telephone number: 01642 524987

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

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ACTION PLAN: Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

No.	Recommendation	Proposed Actions / Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
1	A culture of shared responsibilities across the partnership is promoted to ensure that the principle of Early Help being “everyone’s business” is embedded within schools, health, and the voluntary sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a coordinated multi-agency communication campaign (schools, health, police, VCS, early years settings) to introduce the integrated Front Door and its benefits. • Provide clear partnership guidance outlining thresholds, pathways, and roles within Early Help. • Co-produce EH/Families First Strategy. • Host launch webinars and drop-in sessions for partners to build confidence and consistency in how Early Help concerns are managed. • Develop feedback loops so partners know the outcome of their contacts, reinforcing trust and shared ownership. • Develop Early Help Portal to log partnership activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher proportion of Early Help consultations or contacts made by schools, health, and VCS agencies rather than direct statutory referrals. • Reduction in inappropriate statutory referrals as partners gain clarity and confidence about thresholds. • Positive partner feedback on accessibility, clarity, and timeliness of the integrated Front Door. • Increased number of partners actively using the portal to record Early Help activity. • 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead Integrated Front Door	December 2026

ACTION PLAN: Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

No.	Recommendation	Proposed Actions / Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
2	The re-design of the front door to Children's Services embeds an Early Help focus, enabling timely outcomes and ensuring families are able to access the right support at the right time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the newly Integrated Front Door in April 2026. • Create user-friendly online triage and guidance tools so families and professionals can self-identify needs and access appropriate support pathways without needing to contact the Front Door unnecessarily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance reports reflect timely response to families. • Reduction in statutory requests. • Increase partnership responsibility. • Increase in EH Activity in house and externally. 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead Integrated Front Door	December 2026
3	Advice and training are developed for schools and other partners referring to the Children's Hub, to ensure families who could be better supported by Early Help services are forwarded to the most appropriate service for help and reduce demand on the front door.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a structured, multi-agency training programme delivered on a rolling basis to build partner confidence, competence, and capacity in supporting families early. • Embed School Support within the Front Door. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in statutory requests. • Increase partnership responsibility. • Increase in EH Activity in house and externally. 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead Integrated Front Door	December 2026
4	A programme of training, tools and professional guidance is developed to support non-local authority practitioners in holding lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a structured, multi-agency training programme delivered on a rolling basis to build partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in statutory requests. 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead	December 2026

ACTION PLAN: Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

No.	Recommendation	Proposed Actions / Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
	professional roles with children and families.	<p>confidence, competence, and capacity in supporting families early.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create user-friendly online triage and guidance tools so families and professionals can self-identify needs and access appropriate support pathways without needing to contact the Front Door unnecessarily. • Co-produce EH/Families First Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase partnership responsibility. • Increase in EH Activity in house and externally. 	<i>Integrated Front Door</i>	
5	The design of a multi-agency data impact assessment, combined privacy notice, and data sharing systems to ensure effective and timely communication between the Council and its partners is supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Families First Partnership Board bring together IG leads from the Council, Police, Health, Education, and VCS partners, to agree scope, responsibilities, timelines, and expected outputs. • Develop a Dashboard accessible to all partners. • Agree KPIs and dashboards to track data-sharing performance, timeliness, and accuracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in statutory requests. • Increase partnership responsibility. • Increase in EH Activity in house and externally. • Reducing duplication. • Increased partnership work 	Families First Partnership Board	January 2027

ACTION PLAN: Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

No.	Recommendation	Proposed Actions / Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
			and pooling resource.		
6	A robust data collection system is established to measure partnership delivery of Early Help services.	As above.	As above	As above	As above
7	The updated online offer is relaunched, promoting it to partners, schools, and residents. Self-navigation tools should also be introduced to empower families to access early, universal support without needing formal referral.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create user-friendly online triage and guidance tools so families and professionals can self-identify needs and access appropriate support pathways without needing to contact the Front Door unnecessarily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in families requesting support and reducing reliance on services to make referrals. • Increase in universal access to services and self-referrals. 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead Integrated Front Door	December 2026
8	Partners are encouraged to utilise Family Hubs, basing and/or providing services in the venues where appropriate to ensure that these are accessible to children and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further promotion of Family Hub offer. • Integration of Family Hubs within the Integrated Front Door, to educate partners of offer of support. • Increase in community engagement sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of the universal offer of support. • Reduction in statutory and targeted EH support. 		
9	Further support is provided for partners to understand the needs of SEND families to enable them to offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create user-friendly online triage and guidance tools so families and professionals can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of support available. 	Stacey McQuilling – Service Lead	December 2026

ACTION PLAN: Review of Partnership Working in Early Help

No.	Recommendation	Proposed Actions / Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
	appropriate Early Help service to these families.	<p>self-identify needs and access appropriate support pathways without needing to contact the Front Door unnecessarily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a structured, multi-agency training programme delivered on a rolling basis to build partner confidence, competence, and capacity in supporting families early. • Develop SEND offer within Family Hubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased level of support available for families with children within additional needs. 	Integrated Front Door Hazel Clark – Service Lead – Early Help.	

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People Select Committee

2 February 2026

Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision

Summary

The first evidence gathering session for the Committee's review of Post 16 Provision will consider evidence from the Post 16 Partnership Excellence for All Working Group Strand.

Detail

1. As part of the scoping process for the Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision, the Committee identified representatives from the Post 16 Partnership Working Group Strands as key contributors. A representative from the Excellence for All Strand, the Head of School for Egglecliffe School and Sixth Form College, will therefore be attending the February meeting.
2. The representative has been asked to provide the following information:
 - Collaboration to drive further improvements in outcomes
 - Engagement with local businesses
 - Pastoral arrangements within providers
 - Extra-curricular activities and opportunities provided
 - Funding/benefit advice available from providers
 - Any other aspects of the review's aims or key lines of enquiry you wished to comment on that are listed in the attached scope.

Following the question from the Committee at the January meeting, a breakdown of A*-B grades for Stockton Riverside College and Bede Sixth Form separately has also been requested. The presentation is attached.

3. A copy of the agreed scope and project plan for the review is also attached for information.

Name of Contact Officer: Michelle Gunn

Post Title: Scrutiny Officer

Telephone number: 01642 524987

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

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Excellence For All

Monday 2nd February

OUTSTANDING 2025

A-LEVEL RESULTS

OVER
25%
OF GRADES A*-A

52%
OF GRADES A*-B

100%
PASS RATE IN 21 SUBJECTS



Headline comparison	2019	2023	2024	2025
Student number	158	158	169	161
APS	36.7	35.03	34.84	35.00
Average Grade	B-	B-	C+	B-
%A*-A	27%	22%	24%	25.2%
%A*-B	54%	52%	54%	52%
%A*-C	83%	77%	76%	79%
%A*-E	100%	99%	98%	97.8%
Best 3 APS	35.70	35.17	34.87	34.85
%AAB or Higher (2+ facilitating)	17%	15%	13.50%	15.8%
VALUE ADDED				+0.1

The memory of her family's humble beginnings in India proved to be a motivating factor as Sophia Singh collected a brace of top grades in her GCSEs; grade 9 in English language, history, RS and science, grade 8 in English literature and maths, grade 7 in music and grade 6 French.

"My dad grew up poor and moved here when he was 15," said the 16-year-old, of Ingleby Barwick.

"He hadn't done that well at school but got an engineering apprenticeship, then a degree and masters. I think I must have his work ethic which pushed me to do well at school."

She now plans to study A levels in English literature, history, philosophy and maths with the hope of reading law at university, hopefully Durham.

"I'd like to work in employment and discrimination law as there is still a lot to do," she said. "I took part in the Law in Schools competition and we won the regionals. I have always wanted to help people."

Head of School Neil Gittins said: "We are incredibly proud of what our students have accomplished.

"These results reflect not only their hard work and commitment, but also the dedication of our talented staff who support them every step of the way.

"What stands out most is the resilience and determination our students have shown during a challenging time.

"We're excited to see where their journeys take them next."





Students celebrate GCSE success

A STUDENT who had to 'learn to live again' after the death of her father is celebrating success after reaching the next step of her journey to become a doctor.

Egglescliffe School student Sophie Boanas-Levitt saw her life turned upside down when her father was found dead in her room just before her mocks.

But the 16-year-old, of Egglescliffe, secured top results when she opened her GCSE results achieving grade 8 in maths, grade 7 in physics, geography, computer science, chemistry and biology and grade 6 in English language and literature.

"What stands out most is the resilience and determination our students have shown during a challenging time. We're excited to see where their journeys take them next."

Head of School Neil Gittins

She will now stay on at sixth form to study A levels in biology, chemistry and maths, before aiming to read a degree in medicine at Oxford. "I found my dad in my room and still get flashbacks," said Sophie, who also lives with epilepsy.

"It was a stressful time and I gave up in Year 10. I came back into school after two weeks and everyone knew about it but I felt depressed and lost motivation. I

"had to start again in Year 11 and put in so much effort to catch up. I was upset with my mocks and I isolated myself from everyone. I'd go to bed at 6pm and not talk to anyone at school.

"Then I realised I had to sort myself out so I started talking to others and my teachers about how I was feeling.

"Dad's death was a major shift in my life and I tried to hide from it. I had to learn to live again,

"In 2020 I developed epilepsy and had a seizure once a month. It takes a lot out of me when I have a seizure and the meds make me drowsy. I had no energy and some days I'd be in bed at 8pm. Then I was put on new meds and I haven't had a seizure in two years. I am still drowsy and it's hard to concentrate in exams but it is manageable. My dad used to push me and I know I can do well but sometimes need that extra support.

"Now, I'd like to be a GP, rather than work in a hospital, because I did work experience in a practice and it was great to see the relationships and the bonds doctors had with their patients."

A North-East born Chinese student was glad to be able to sit his GCSEs after a bureaucratic mix up left him stranded in Holland and facing deportation to China.

Egglescliffe School student Pierce Zhong attended a Scouting Association jamboree in the Netherlands just as his residency card was about to expire.

He had to travel to the Hague and the British Embassy and was told it could take a month to sort out.

In the end Pierce showed his out of date card to Border Control, his father also sent them an image of his new card and he was allowed in.



"We are incredibly proud of what our students have accomplished. These results reflect not only their hard work and commitment, but also the dedication of our talented staff who support them every step of the way. "

Head of School Neil Gittins

"I thought I was facing deportation and 20 years in China," said the 16-year-old who secured an amazing profile of high grades for his GCSEs – grade 9s in biology, chemistry, English literature, history, maths and physics, grade 8 in French and grade 7 in DT and English language.

He will now stay on at sixth form to study A levels in physics, chemistry, biology and further maths, with the hope of gaining entry to Oxford or Cambridge universities one day.

"I love technology and would like to do something with rockets or electric vehicles," he said.

"I'm really interested in what China is doing with EV infrastructure, particularly how robots swap vehicle batteries over rather than having to wait to charge.

"But there are also exciting opportunities in America so I could end up going either east or west."

Egglescliffe 6th form Recruitment

- Focus of post 16 group 2024 25
 - Recruitment, advertising primarily
- As we know
 - nearly 2,000 students decide to leave Stockton post 16
 - Over 40% of school leavers are choosing to attend out of Borough providers, equating to a loss of £7 million of funding across the five in Borough providers.
- Egglescliffe current cohort
 - Year 12 = 163
 - Year 13 = 172
 - Historically very stable = 160-170
- Challenges
 - Curriculum offer
 - Curriculum success
 - Incentives including travel incentives

Collaboration

- Recruitment in its purest form is difficult to solve in collaboration
 - Funding follows student
 - but could we be better
- Excellence strand
- If we offer the best and prove we are the best = students will stay in borough?
- Trial

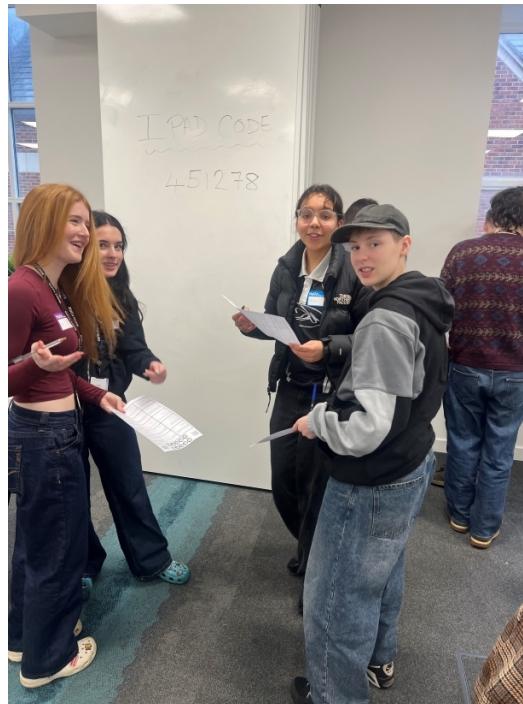
Collaboration

- Post 16 partnership
- Excellence for all working group
- Genuine collaboration to improve outcomes across the borough
- Two main strands on-going (trial)
 1. Business mentor support
 2. Teach meet style collaboration leading to master classes in achieving stronger exam outcomes

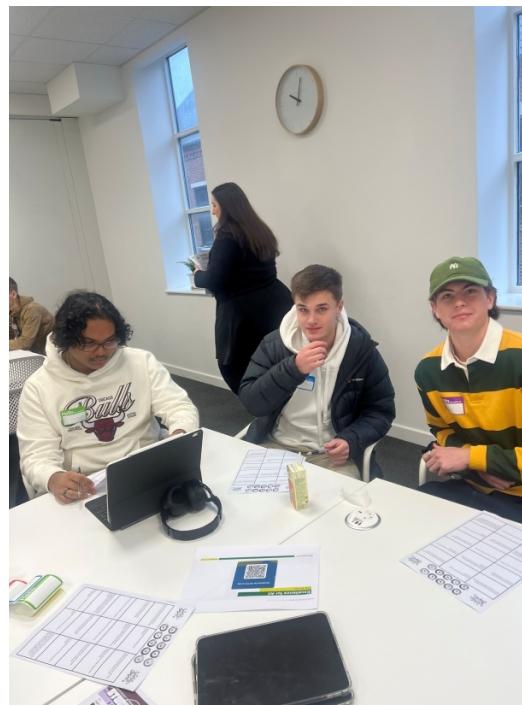
Business Mentor support

- SW leading an approach to combine education with business.
- Senior staff in schools / colleges invited to contribute to the plan
- Bede & Egglecliffe involved in the initial trial
- Under achieving / vulnerable students identified by both organisations
- A series of interventions planned and delivered in conjunction with Fallon Dunleavy, Employment and Training Hub Manager (part of Stockton's Economic Development team)
- Main threads - confidence, study skills, leadership, employability, knowledge of sectors

Communication skills



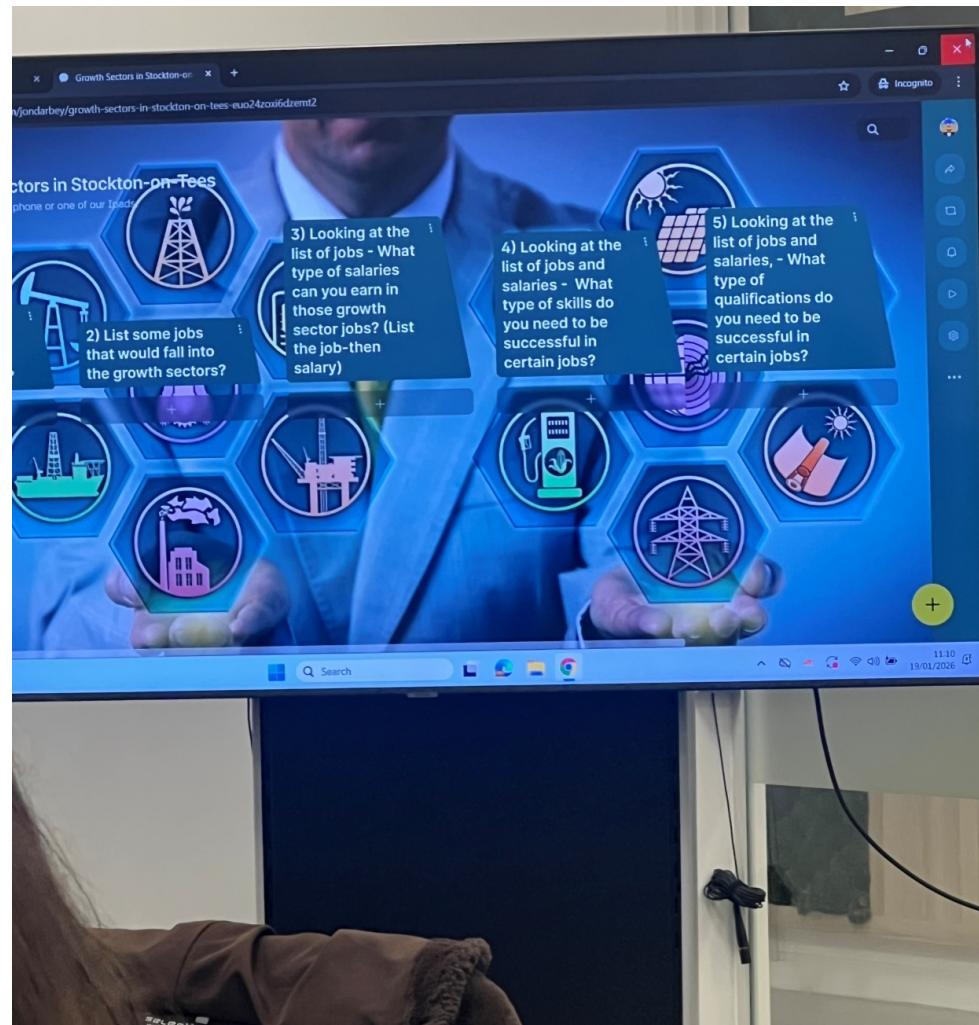
Interview the mentor



Business by Sector

Students asked to research

- business sectors
- salary
- qualification needed
- their interests



Master Classes to come

2. Choose the masterclass sessions you think could benefit you. You can choose as many as you want. *

- Leadership Masterclass
- Interview Skills Masterclass inc. develop speaking skills
- Confidence Building Masterclass
- Building Healthy Habits and Identifying Energy Zappers workshop
- Time Management/ Being Organised workshop
- Careers Workshop and help planning your next steps
- Study Skills & Revision Tips workshop
- Marketing Yourself - how to use LinkedIn/ social media to progress
- Building Resilience - how to overcome challenges
- Other

Teach Meet

- Staff across 8 subject areas came together in November to discuss, plan, implement a series of interventions
- What do students enjoy and are successful in?
- What do students find challenging?
- Which areas of the specification are challenging?
- What can we do together to close the gaps?
- Next session planned to Feb 20th
- Focus of meeting is to plan master classes to ensure students achieve B grade +
 - Exam skills
 - Essay skills
 - Question analysis
- Initial staff feedback

Additional Collaboration

- NEET information monthly
- Local employer info
- Business intelligence in terms of gaps, areas of growth
- Funding opportunities whenever they arise

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People Select Committee

Review of Post 16 Education

Outline Scope

Scrutiny Chair (Project Director): Marilyn Surtees Paul Weston (vice chair)	Contact details: m.surtees@stockton.gov.uk paul.weston@stockton.gov.uk
Scrutiny Officer (Project Manager): Michelle Gunn	Contact details: Michelle.gunn@stockton.gov.uk
Departmental Link Officer: Vanessa Housley	Contact details: Vanessa.housley@stockton.gov.uk
PMO Luke McGurn	Contact details: Luke.mcgurn@stockton.gov.uk
Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?	
The topic of Post 16 Education directly addresses Priority one: The best start in life to achieve big ambitions Key Move Giving children and young people the best possible start, in an inclusive community where everyone can thrive, as it includes the action to work with Schools and Post-16 providers to increase the number of children and young people in Education, Employment and Training at ages 16 – 18 years, helping to grow their ambitions and meeting the needs of local employers.	
What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?	
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. Achievement for young people at the end of their Post 16 Education is growing rapidly with a higher than national average A Level pass rate across the Borough of 97.7%.	
However, enrolment figures for in Borough providers have been impacted in recent years with more Stockton-on-Tees students choosing to attend out of Borough providers in Middlesbrough and Darlington, who offer similar courses. Only one out of Borough provider beats In Borough A Level A*-B outcomes.	
A survey of Young People approaching the end of Year 11 by the Careers team, asking about their readiness for leaving school, found that 13.1% of students had not had a careers discussion at all in advance of sitting their GCSEs. A further 18.1% of students surveyed said they had not made a clear decision about their next steps after school. These findings suggest that Stockton students are largely unaware of the current offer available to them and improvements are needed to the existing communications strategy to effectively reach the providers target audience.	
While the number of students completing Post 16 Education is growing, with an increase of over 300 students over 5 years, statistics show that a small minority of 16-17 year olds in the Borough are at risk of or have become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) since beginning	

Key Stage 5. Economic inactivity significantly impacts upon an individual's economic growth potential and is often associated with an increased likelihood of involvement in antisocial behaviour and crime. During the 2022/23 academic year, 1.6% more students who attended a Post 16 provider IN BOROUGH (5.3%) dropped out in Year 12 than those OUT OF BOROUGH (3.7%) Overall, 7% of our Year 13 students, whether they attended a Post 16 provider in or out of Borough were NEET by the end of November 2024. These numbers are much too high.

A minority of students choose to dropout within the first three months of starting a Post 16 qualification, therefore a core focus of the Post 16 enrichment strategy is to improve transitional support. Post 16 education involves an increase in independence, greater difficulty of work and a new structure to the day. These factors are often responsible for dropouts, but it is also important to consider other external factors such as health and wellbeing, financial situation, and access to transport. Transition from secondary school to Post 16 education need to be as seamless as possible, helping Young People to overcome some of these factors and avoid becoming NEET.

Therefore, areas that would benefit from development include:

- Attraction & Retention rates
- Current NEET statistics
- Internal awareness of strategic funding opportunities
- Communication & Marketing of our offer

The review aims to consider the current position, challenges, and proposed solutions in the Stockton-on-Tees post 16 provision. This will inform the Post 16 enrichment strategy currently in development.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- How well are stakeholders collaborating to minimise any challenges?
- What careers advice do school leavers receive prior to applying for courses/apprenticeships?
- How do school leavers find out about post-16 providers and courses available?
- What extra-curriculum activities do post-16 providers provide and how are these marketed?
- Are there any extra benefits that can be offered to school leavers by post-16 providers?
- What pastoral arrangements are in place at post-16 provisions?
- What financial support is available for school leavers to apply for?
- Which courses/providers are young people dropping out from?

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

Cabinet, Council, local schools, colleges and training providers, and young people of the borough

Expected duration of review and key milestones:

Eight months (reporting to Cabinet in September 2026)

Approve scope and project plan – January 2026

Receive evidence – February 2026 – May 2026

Draft recommendations – June 2026

Final report – July 2026

Report to Cabinet – September 2026

What information do we need?

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

Partnership Strategic Aims (Word and PowerPoint documents)

Current strategy/draft strategy

Current Post 16 brochure

List of courses available

[Children and Young People Scrutiny Review of Careers Provision 2020](#)

New information:

Views of Partnership members

Views of school leavers / findings from consultations carried out by careers service and Partnership

Comparisons with the offer of providers from other Local Authority areas

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?
Council Officers	Introductory presentation
Post 16 Strategic Board Working Strand Lead – Excellence for All	Collaboration to drive further improvement in outcomes Engagement with local businesses Pastoral arrangements within providers Extra-curricular activities and opportunities provided <u>Funding/benefit advice available from providers</u>
Post 16 Strategic Board Working Strand Lead – Communications and Marketing	Joint messaging to strengthen communication of Stockton's collective Post 16 offer When and how providers market their courses to school leavers The relationships between Bede, Stockton Riverside and Stockton Sixth Form colleges and local schools

Post 16 Strategic Board Working Strand Lead – Careers	Collaboration with Stockton's Careers Leaders Early intervention with students at risk of disengaging – Skills for Success Careers advice available both within schools and within post-16 provision Relationship with local businesses
Post 16 Strategic Board Working Strand Lead – Transitions	Measures in place to prepare for transition to post 16 education for all students Reasons why young people may become NEET
School leavers/students and their parents/carers	Their main priorities when choosing post 16 education The support they need to attend post 16 education Reasons why they may not continue with a course
<p>How will this information be gathered? (e.g. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)</p> <p>Committee meetings, attendance at partnership meeting, reports, desk-based research, focus group</p>	
<p>How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?</p> <p>Committee meetings, information submissions, focus group of service users</p>	
<p>How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Public bodies must have due regard for advancing equality which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>The review will contribute towards meeting the Council's requirements under this Duty by reviewing the provision, and barriers to education, for all.</p>	
<p>How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?</p> <p>The review will contribute to Focus Area 1 of the JSNA: All children and families have the best start in life as it will Post-16 Education will affect the Commitment of Transition: ensure there is a joined-up pathway that fully supports young people in their transition to adulthood. Ensuring that young people have access to good quality education and training after leaving school will give them the qualifications and skills that they need in the future to gain employment and begin their careers.</p>	

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

In considering the challenges and proposed solution to the current Post 16 offer the review will aim 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.

Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	November/December	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	02.12.26	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	05.01.26	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Determine whether Communications Plan needed		Link Officer, Scrutiny Officer
Obtaining Evidence	Working Group Lead for: Excellence for all Communication and marketing Careers Transition Focus groups: students; parent/carers; stakeholders Attendance at Partnership meeting	02.02.26 02.03.26 13.04.26 11.05.26 TBC TBC	Select Committee
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	8.06.26	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	June 26	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TBC	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	06.07.26	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	21.07.26 or 22.09.26	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet/Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	17.09.26	Cabinet / Approving Body

Agenda Item 7

People Select Committee – Work Programme 2025- 2026

Date <u>(4pm unless 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 Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan • Background Presentation	Haleem Ghafoor 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	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help • Catalyst • Best practice from other Local Authorities • Family First Reforms	Lucy Owens Hazel Clark, Aishah Waite & Jane Smith
Monday 3 November 2025	Monitoring: Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Cost of Living Response Monitoring: Initial Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facility Grant	Rebecca Saunders-Thompson TBC Sam Dixon

People Select Committee – Work Programme 2025- 2026

<u>Date (4pm unless stated)</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Monday 3 November 2025 (informal)	Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Evidence / Draft Recommendations 	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	Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan • Background Presentation 	Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn
Monday 2 February 2026	Monitoring: Action Plan Scrutiny Review of Partnership Working in Early Help Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Strand Lead Excellence for All 	Kellie Wigley & Aishah Waite Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn Neil Gittens
Monday 2 March 2026	Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Strand Lead Communications and Marketing 	Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn Noel Dennis, Erika Marshall

Work Programme April – July 2026

<u>Date (2pm unless stated)</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Monday 13 April 2026	Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Lead for Careers 	Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn Ian Caley & Fallon Dunleavy
Monday 11 May 2026	Monitoring: Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facilities Grant Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Lead for Transitions 	Sam Dixon Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn Mike Mackin
Monday 8 June 2026 (Informal)	Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision	Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn

People Select Committee – Work Programme 2025- 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of Evidence / Draft Recommendations	
Monday 6 July 2026	Scrutiny Review of Post 16 Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Report	Vanessa Housley & Luke McGurn

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